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U.S. Department of State Diplomacy in Action

United States Closing Statement at the 2010 NPT Review Conference

Remarks

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As Prepared for Delivery

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Mr. President, Committee Chairs, and distinguished delegates, over a year ago in Prague, President Obama set out a vision for the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons and outlined a realistic path to achieve that goal. Over the last four weeks, the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have worked tirelessly and with great dedication to review the implementation of the NPT and reaffirm the international consensus it embodies.

Under the President's leadership, the United States has made every effort to renew that consensus. We have reaffirmed our NPT commitments to make progress toward nuclear disarmament and guarantee access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes to all those abiding by their nonproliferation commitments. This Treaty matters because it is the principal international legal instrument holding member states accountable, discouraging the spread of proliferation, and bringing the benefits of nuclear energy to all corners of the world. As President Obama said in Prague last year, "Rules must be binding. Violations must be punished. Words must mean something."

The Final Document this Conference adopted today advances President Obama's vision. It reflects our collective commitment to uphold and strengthen this cornerstone of the international nonproliferation regime. It also demonstrates our unified resolve to strengthen the Treaty's three pillars – disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy – with the inclusion of recommendations for follow-on actions.

This forward-looking and balanced action plan establishes benchmarks for future progress and concrete actions.

It commits parties to work to achieve the President's vision to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons and recognizes the steps the United States and others have taken to advance this disarmament agenda.

It recognizes the achievement of the U.S.-Russia New START agreement and reflects our shared interest in achieving deeper reductions of all types of nuclear weapons and reducing their role in the international system.

It encourages the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the urgent need to get on with long-delayed talks on a fissile material cutoff treaty.

It affirms that the Additional Protocol and comprehensive IAEA safeguards agreements represent the enhanced standard for verification of the NPT and essential for the IAEA to carry out its international safeguards responsibilities.

It emphasizes that peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be made available to all Parties in conformity with the NPT's nonproliferation provisions, and recognizes the importance of multilateral mechanisms for assurance of nuclear supply and related fuel cycle services.

And we are pleased to note that the President's report highlights the view of most in this hall that Parties are to be held responsible for violations of the NPT committed prior to withdrawal, and that consultations and actions by nuclear suppliers are needed to discourage abuse of the Treaty's withdrawal provision.

We note further that the final document calls on states to comply fully with the NPT in order to uphold the treaty's integrity and the authority of its safeguards system. In that regard, we recall Secretary Clinton's statement at the opening of this Review Conference, noting that "Iran is the only country in this hall that has been found by the IAEA Board of Governors to be currently in noncompliance with its nuclear safeguards obligations." We note that Iran has done nothing to enhance the international community's confidence in it by its performance in this Review Conference.

The final document also includes an agreement to hold a regional conference in 2012 to discuss issues relevant to a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems. We have long-supported such a zone, but we recognize that essential precursors must be in place for its achievement.

The Parties should know that we take seriously our commitments with respect to this regional conference, and we will work with the countries in the region to create conditions for a successful conference. We note, however, that our ability to do so has been seriously jeopardized because the final document singles out Israel in the Middle East section, a fact that the United States deeply regrets.

We also wish to call out the text concerning North Korea. The United States deplores North Korea's repeated defiance of international law and its international obligations and commitments. North Korea should understand that it will never achieve security or acceptance by the international community without the complete and verified abandonment of its nuclear weapons programs. North Korea's behavior, particularly its failure to implement its commitments under the Six Party Talks, to include its return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards at an early date, calls into question the utility of negotiations with North Korea. The Six Party Talks can be an effective mechanism only if North Korea takes early and irreversible steps to return to compliance with the NPT and its nonproliferation commitments and establishes through action its credibility as a negotiating partner.

In conclusion, we remain deeply grateful for the contributions made throughout this month that have resulted in such a thorough review and constructive outcome. However, the hard work is only now beginning. All of us are now charged to carry out the commitments made at this Conference. We look forward to working with our fellow Parties in other appropriate venues, including the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Conference on Disarmament, to ensure that the legacy of this Review Conference is one in which all of us can take pride.

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