



The Delegation of the United States of America to the
2010 Review Conference of the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
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**STATEMENT BY
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to the

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OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madam Chair, let me start by congratulating you on your selection for the important task of guiding us today and henceforth. My delegation and I will support you steadfastly. Our discussion today is a key opportunity to review and assess specific regional challenges confronting the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This Review Conference is an occasion for all of us to demonstrate clearly our collective will to face these challenges to the NPT head on instead of leaving them to future generations. Only if we, as Parties to the NPT, choose to address these regional challenges seriously will the NPT continue to serve as the preeminent bulwark against the spread of nuclear weapons.

The United States is under no illusion that the current challenges in the Middle East, Northeast Asia, and South Asia will be resolved easily. We must not, however, mistake the difficult for the impossible. The United States is confident that the international community, working together in a concerted manner, *can* resolve these seemingly intractable regional issues and, in doing so, move us closer to our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Madam Chair, I would first like to discuss the Middle East, a region of particular importance to this Review Conference. At the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, the United States, together with the other two Depositaries of the NPT, introduced a Resolution on the Middle East, which called upon *all* States Party to exert their utmost effort to help establish the Middle East as a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. This Resolution is as important today as it was in 1995. Our support for the Resolution remains undiminished.

A Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery is achievable, but it will not emerge overnight. It will require a concerted effort among all states, within and outside the region, to remove obstacles to its realization and to take practical and concrete steps toward this goal. The United States is fully committed to working with all states to develop and implement such steps without further delay.

The United States continues to encourage all Middle East states to adhere to international nonproliferation and disarmament norms. As such, achieving NPT universality remains an objective of U.S. policy.

Closely linked to that objective, achievement of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East remains a key foreign policy goal for the United States, as it should be for all States Party to the NPT. Achievement of such a peace offers the best prospect for realizing a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. The United States is fully committed to the objective of comprehensive peace, which we define as peace between Israel and the Palestinians, peace between Israel and Syria, peace between Israel and Lebanon, and the full normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab states. We continue to engage intensively with all parties in an effort to make progress toward this objective and to realize the goal of two states, Israel and Palestine, existing side by side in peace and security. We urge all states to work constructively toward this objective.

Madam Chair, allow me now to turn to the issue of Iran. Despite Iran's continuing disregard for its Treaty obligations since our last Review Conference, the United States, in coordination with our P5+1 partners, has undertaken an unprecedented effort to engage Iran. Unfortunately, after more than 15 months, Iran remains unwilling to pursue constructive engagement: Iran still refuses to meet with the P5+1 on its nuclear program or to comply with its NPT and IAEA safeguards obligations, or to take steps that begin to build international trust and confidence in its nuclear intentions.

To be clear, the United States does not dispute Iran's right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in compliance with its nuclear nonproliferation obligations. Indeed, we actively supported an IAEA proposal to provide fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor, which supplies medical radioisotopes for Iran's people. But Iran failed to take this chance to build confidence and chose instead to further undermine confidence by increasing its enrichment level to 20% and announcing yet more enrichment facilities. We must make clear to Iran that with rights come obligations – obligations which Iran so far has refused to honor.

Since the last Review Conference – indeed, for more than twenty-five years – Iran has flouted its responsibilities by refusing to cooperate fully with the IAEA or to meet its safeguards obligations. In 2006, Iran reneged on its pledge to implement the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement. In 2007, Iran unilaterally reneged on its binding obligation to declare nuclear facilities to the IAEA when the decision is made to construct them, making it the only NPT party that refuses to do so. These actions removed tools the IAEA could have used to help allay international concerns regarding the true purpose of Iran's nuclear program.

More troubling, it was revealed last September that Iran has been constructing a clandestine uranium enrichment facility at Fordow, near the city of Qom. Iran's construction of the Fordow facility is in contravention of UNSC resolutions and its refusal to declare the facility prior to beginning construction violates Iran's IAEA safeguards agreement. Iran then announced this past winter its intention to construct ten additional enrichment sites. Of further concern, in February of this year, Iran informed the IAEA that it would begin to enrich LEU close to 20% but did not provide the Agency sufficient time to adjust safeguards procedures.

Iran is refusing to comply with its legal obligations under relevant UNSC resolutions, resolutions that were adopted due to concerns regarding the proliferation risks presented by the Iranian nuclear program and its continued noncompliance. Iran continues to enrich uranium at Natanz, and to build a heavy water reactor at Arak and the enrichment facility at Fordow, in direct contravention of UN Security Council resolutions.

Iran's disregard for its NPT and IAEA obligations continues to give the international community cause for grave concern regarding the peaceful nature of its nuclear program. Regrettably, Iran's behavior is not a recent development. Since 2003, IAEA reports have made it clear that Iran's violations of its safeguards obligations go back as far as 1984, covering the period of this and the previous five NPT Review Conferences. The IAEA Director General's latest report to the Board of Governors once again notes Iran's ongoing refusal to cooperate with the IAEA's investigation into the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.

The United States calls upon Iran to comply with its international obligations relating to its nuclear program and to take advantage of the offer of engagement, which remains on the table. Through its actions, Iran is damaging the NPT's credibility and the prospects for both a WMD-free Middle East and NPT universality.

Iran, however, is not the only country in the Middle East whose actions raise serious concerns regarding its commitment to the NPT and IAEA safeguards. We call on Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA investigation into its clandestine nuclear activities. We note with concern that Syria has actively hindered the Agency's investigation of the clandestine reactor at Dair Alzour and the IAEA's efforts to determine that all nuclear material in Syria is being used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

We note Director General Amano's call at the opening of the Conference for progress towards resolving this matter, and in that regard we urge Syria to allow unfettered access to any information, individual, or site that the Agency deems essential for it to fulfill its obligations under the safeguards agreement. We further wish to reaffirm the IAEA's authority to demand such access.

Despite these serious compliance concerns, there have been some positive developments in the Middle East since the last Review Conference. We welcome the steps Iraq and Libya have taken to come back into Treaty compliance and reassure the international community of the exclusively peaceful nature of their nuclear activities. We also note that since the Review of the Treaty, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia have concluded Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements with the IAEA, the United Arab Emirates has signed an Additional Protocol, and Libya has brought an Additional Protocol into force. We invite all states in the Middle East to participate, without delay and without precondition, in the IAEA's strengthened safeguards system, including the Additional Protocol.

NORTHEAST ASIA

Madam Chair, North Korea's nuclear program represents another threat to regional and global security and an additional urgent challenge to the global nonproliferation regime. North Korea's violations of its NPT obligations, followed by its announcement of withdrawal from the Treaty and two announced nuclear tests in subsequent years, underscore the imperative to prevent abuses of the Treaty. These actions highlight the importance of addressing NPT violations and efforts by parties to withdraw while in noncompliance with the Treaty, and ensuring that such actions have meaningful consequences.

Since its announcement of withdrawal from the NPT, North Korea has taken a series of actions that threaten international peace and security and imperil the nonproliferation objectives shared by the community of responsible nations. The United States condemns North Korea's announced nuclear tests of October 2006 and May 2009. The United States also deplores North Korea's proliferation activities, including its apparent clandestine nuclear cooperation with Syria; its decision in April 2009 to reverse course on its denuclearization commitments, including the expulsion of IAEA personnel; and its continued defiance of the UN Security Council.

Ending North Korea's illicit nuclear, missile, and other WMD-related activities is a critical element of our collective effort to strengthen the nonproliferation regime. The international community must maintain its unified resolve, and we urge continued full and transparent implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874.

The United States will never accept North Korea as a nuclear-weapon state. In close coordination with our partners, we continue to pursue the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. We call on North Korea to fulfill its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement, to abide by its UN Security Council obligations, and to return, without delay, to the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

SOUTH ASIA

Madam Chair, the situation in South Asia poses a unique set of challenges. We remain deeply concerned by the dangers posed by nuclear weapons and their delivery systems in South Asia. We continue to urge India and Pakistan to exercise restraint and to discuss and implement confidence-building measures designed to reduce regional tensions. We continue to encourage all parties to take an active role in international efforts to combat nuclear proliferation. We also hope that all countries in the region will eventually be able to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states.

CONCLUSION

Madam Chair, unless Parties work together to address the unique nonproliferation challenges in the Middle East, Northeast Asia, and South Asia, we risk undermining the effectiveness and credibility of the NPT and of the global nonproliferation regime as a whole. As difficult as the challenges before us are, the United States refuses to view any of these regional obstacles as insurmountable. In the words of President Obama, "such fatalism is a deadly adversary, for if we believe that the spread of nuclear weapons is inevitable, then in some way we are admitting to ourselves that the use of nuclear weapons is inevitable."

Thank you, Madam Chair.