



**PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2015 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

**GENERAL DEBATE**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DELL HIGGIE**

**AMBASSADOR FOR DISARMAMENT**

**22 APRIL 2013**

*Check against delivery*

Mr Chairman

First of all, I would like to offer my delegation's congratulations to you on your assumption of the Chair of this important meeting, and to reassure you of New Zealand's full support as you undertake your responsibilities over the coming two weeks.

New Zealand is pleased to associate itself with the statement delivered by Brazil on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, and with the statement by Australia on behalf of the Vienna Group of 10.

Mr Chairman

The 2010 Action Plan's adoption by consensus was a critical achievement for the health of this Treaty. By allowing all State Parties to express their collective will and determine how the Treaty was to be implemented over the following five years, it provided us with a clear way forward. And it made this Review Cycle unique by placing it within the parameters of a specific, and in many cases time-bound, list of actions.

One of the clear benefits of such an approach is that it makes our work measurable. Many academic institutions and civil society groupings have continued, this year, to put out assessments of how well we all, as NPT members, are doing in meeting the standards we set in our Action Plan. I would have to say that even if one is of an optimistic frame of mind – one inclined to find glasses half-full rather than half-empty – one can only agree with these assessments that there is room for considerable improvement.

Mr Chairman

New Zealand reaffirms the need to implement all three pillars of the NPT – nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses – in a balanced and transparent way if the Treaty's aims are to be achieved.

The implementation of the Treaty's nuclear disarmament commitments remains as important to my delegation as ever. Our statement to be delivered in the cluster one debate on nuclear disarmament will of course go into greater detail on this subject. But it is fair to say that we are afraid that the

momentum on nuclear disarmament that was so tangible when we met in 2010 is in danger now of dissipating.

Further urgent work is required to ensure that the promise of 2010 is realised. This is particularly true with regard to Action 5, which, for New Zealand, remains a pivotal element of the 2010 outcome. We underline the importance of fulfilling its undertakings and we particularly look forward in this regard to the nuclear-weapon States' report on this action step next year.

New Zealand takes some heart from the fact that, this year, we have the opportunity to advance our collective nuclear disarmament responsibilities in several fora, including via the Oslo conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the open-ended working group. New Zealand's participation in the full range of international initiatives aimed at taking us towards the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world is a reflection of our deep commitment to this Treaty and the decisions and outcomes of its Review Conferences, which remain an integral part of the Treaty's fabric.

A significant element of the 2010 outcome related to the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. New Zealand, too, regrets the failure to convene last year the conference called for in the 2010 Action Plan. We recognise, however, the significant efforts towards that end, including on the part of the facilitator, and continue to hope that the conference can be convened very soon.

Mr Chairman

New Zealand strongly believes that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. An effective non-proliferation regime provides assurances of compliance critical to the full realisation of the Treaty's goals. Through our own actions, New Zealand is committed to ensuring the integrity of the Treaty's safeguards system. And we reaffirm that all States Parties have a duty not only to live up to their own obligations under this system, but to address issues of safeguards compliance wherever they arise. We remain deeply concerned about any issue of non-compliance with safeguards obligations and we call on Syria and Iran to take concrete steps to resolve the international community's concerns in this regard.

Mr Chairman

New Zealand recognises the right of all States Parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with Articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT. We continue to emphasise, however, that the enjoyment of that right carries with it the obligation to ensure the highest possible standards of safety and security. The tragic accident at Fukushima only underlined the importance of meeting that obligation and of international efforts to ensure those standards are constantly reviewed and updated. New Zealand's strong support for the Nuclear Security Summit process, as well as the work underway through the IAEA, provides a concrete expression of our commitment to these principles.

Mr Chairman

Today, more than half way between the 2010 and 2015 Review Conferences, much remains to be done if we are to accomplish the goals we set for ourselves in 2010. The task before us will take persistence and a renewed determination.