

Sri Lanka Statement
Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the
Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear
Weapons
Vienna: 2nd May 2012

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Peter Woolcott, on your election as Chairman and assure you of our fullest cooperation in your tasks ahead. It is our firm belief that under your able guidance, the committee will achieve success.

To begin with, we would like to affirm that the statement delivered by the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement at this forum on 30 April 2012 reflects the position of Sri Lanka as well.

Mr. Chairman,

We take this opportunity to reiterate our call for a balanced and non-discriminatory approach in addressing the three pillars of the NPT. It is our fervent hope that the State Parties to the Treaty would work collectively and diligently to realize this call. Meaningful contributions of all delegations at this meeting as well as at the future meetings of the Committee would ensure that we move forward in an ambience of accommodation and trust towards the successful conclusion of the Review Conference in 2015.

Sri Lanka believes that the NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament as well as for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We need to pursue progress in all these areas if we are to realize a world free of nuclear weapons. Achieving universalization of the Treaty is imperative.

We all have stakes in the success of the Review Conference in 2015. A key to achieving success is the fulfilment of all aspects of the carefully negotiated, delicately balanced outcome of the 2010 Review Conference. This includes, among other things, the reiteration of commitment made by the Nuclear Weapons States to accelerate concrete progress on steps leading to nuclear disarmament. Identifying comprehensive and verifiable steps, as well as a precise and realistic time table is therefore a must.

It is against this backdrop that we encourage the implementation of the 13 practical steps, agreed during the 2000 Review Conference to advance progressively and systematically towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Sri Lanka, as one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), played a pivotal role in rallying support for the call for disarmament, during its chairmanship of the Movement in 1976. The First Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament was an outcome of this call. It was recognized then- and continues to be reiterated to date- that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are interlinked and cannot be pursued in isolation. This essential fact needs to underlie all our efforts as we engage in deliberations on organizational and substantive aspects of the 2015 Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT provides that states have an inalienable right to the development, research and production and use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. While it is the right of an individual state to pursue such an option when it chooses to, it is important to note that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety and nuclear security rests with such state. However, the central role of the IAEA in facilitating effective implementation of safeguards standards remains more pronounced. This notwithstanding, states exercising this inalienable right would be well advised to put in place more effective safeguards, especially in light of recent Fukushima-Daichi experience.

Sri Lanka accords importance to all multilateral treaties aimed at securing a world free of weapons of mass destruction. We are committed to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to its early entry into force. We also recognize that the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) is a means to address the proliferation of fissile material which amounts to nuclear weapon proliferation. We believe that these instruments would assist in controlling the proliferation of nuclear arsenals.

Mr. Chairman,

As we advance towards the Review Conference of 2015, we must recognize that it is the target date for the realisation of MDGs as well. The linkages between nuclear disarmament and MGDs need to be strengthened and all efforts should be taken to create an ambience through the process of consultations and other related inclusive, participatory approaches in the lead up to the Review Conference, and also through confidence building measures, to enable the realisation of MDGs. Mr. Chairman, we trust that your leadership would provide the direction and thrust to that task.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman

