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STATEMENT BY MR GILBERT OH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA, AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2020 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE, VIENNA, 2 – 12 MAY 2017

Mr Chairman,

1 My delegation extends our congratulations to you on your election as Chairman of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT RevCon). We look forward to a productive two weeks under your leadership as we explore ways to address the challenges confronting the NPT.

Mr Chairman,

2 Like many States Parties to the NPT, we were disappointed at the failure to adopt a Final Outcome Document by consensus at the NPT Review Conference (RevCon) in 2015. As we embark on a new review cycle, there are few encouraging signs that we will have a positive outcome for the 2020 RevCon. Discussions on achieving parallel progress across the three fundamental pillars of the NPT have become more divisive and politicised. Progress on convening a conference to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction has stalled. Negotiations on a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons have commenced, borne out of frustration by the wider UN membership at the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament by Nuclear Weapon States (NWS).

3 Notwithstanding these challenges, Singapore still firmly believes that the NPT remains the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime. It is not in the interest of any party, including the NWS, for the NPT to fail. It is therefore more important than ever for all NPT States Parties to reaffirm their commitment to uphold the NPT and fulfil their respective commitments and obligations. There needs to be greater progress in disarmament, a collective commitment towards non-proliferation, and the maintenance of the inalienable right of States Parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in a safe and secure manner. Please permit me to elaborate on some of these points.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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Pillar 1: Disarmament

4 On nuclear disarmament, our view remains that the NWS have a special responsibility to fulfil their end of the “grand bargain” of the NPT, and work towards the full implementation of Article VI of the NPT. While we are fully aware that the international strategic environment has become more challenging in recent years, NWS can still demonstrate more concrete progress towards disarmament. This includes fulfilling the commitments contained in the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 NPT RevCon.

5 The NWS and their allies also cannot dismiss the concerns of the broader UN membership on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Last October, the 71st UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on “Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations”. The resulting UN Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, which saw the participation of the majority of NPT States Parties, completed its first session in March 2017 in New York. While the Conference is a potential avenue to advance disarmament efforts, we urge all stakeholders, including the NWS, to participate constructively in subsequent sessions. This is so that the interests of all parties, including their security concerns, can be meaningfully taken into account in the final negotiated instrument. We look forward to continuing discussions in June and July.

6 We further note the convening of the open-ended informal consultative meeting by the Chair of the high-level Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) expert preparatory group in March 2017. We look forward to receiving updates on the work of the group, which could be an opportunity to build positive momentum towards the conclusion of an FMCT.

Pillar 2: Non-Proliferation

Mr Chairman,

7 **Nuclear non-proliferation** is an essential pillar of the NPT to strengthen international peace and security. We call on all NPT States Parties who have not concluded an IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement or the Additional Protocol to do so expeditiously.

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8 Singapore is particularly concerned about the actions of the DPRK and the recent escalation of tension in the Korean Peninsula, including the DPRK's two nuclear tests in 2016 and subsequent ballistic missile launches. We strongly urge the DPRK to refrain from further provocative actions, comply fully with its obligations arising from all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions, cooperate with the IAEA to resume verification activities under full-scope comprehensive safeguards, and return to the NPT. We also urge the DPRK to exercise self-restraint and refrain from actions that may aggravate the situation. We further call for the resumption of dialogue on the Korean Peninsula to defuse tensions and create conditions conducive to peace and stability.

Mr Chairman,

9 A key development since the last RevCon in 2015 was the agreement between the E3/EU+3 and Iran on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Singapore commends the continued commitment and political will of all parties in honouring their undertakings under the agreement. It is vital for the JCPOA to be fully and effectively implemented, not just for the E3/EU+3 and Iran, but also for the international community. All parties should therefore remain committed to the agreement and fulfil their respective obligations. We also call on Iran to continue to cooperate fully with the IAEA on all safeguards-relevant issues. This will reassure the international community of the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities.

Pillar 3: PUNE

Mr Chairman,

10 Singapore reaffirms the inalienable right of all States Parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, in particular to support their efforts to attain the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But we also believe that the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy carries responsibilities and obligations. It is important that a strong nuclear safety and security culture is cultivated and observed in the process of using nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

11 Singapore is committed to working with the international community to support the IAEA's efforts to improve international nuclear safety and security practices. At the regional level, Singapore is part of the ASEAN Network of

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) to establish a regional environmental radioactivity database and an Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) framework. We are also planning to jointly conduct a regional training course on EPR with the IAEA this year under the Singapore-IAEA Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) MOU.

Mr Chairman,

12 To conclude, we hope that all States Parties will participate at this First Preparatory Committee meeting in an active and constructive manner. This will set a positive tone for us to achieve concrete outcomes in building the momentum towards a successful 2020 RevCon, and decisively dispel doubts about the legitimacy and relevance of the NPT.

13 Thank you, Mr Chairman.

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