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2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

## **Statement by Canada – General Debate**

Delivered by Mr. Richard Arbeiter  
Political Director and Assistant Deputy Minister, International Security and Political Affairs, Global Affairs Canada

New York, April 27, 2026

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2026 Conférence des Parties chargée d'examiner le Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires

## **Déclaration du Canada – Débat général**

Prononcée par M. Richard Arbeiter  
Directeur Politique et Sous-ministre adjoint, Sécurité internationale et affaires politiques, Affaires mondiales Canada

New York, 27 avril 2026

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Mr. President, colleagues,

We gather today in support of the NPT—the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation architecture.

For five decades, it has curbed proliferation, enabled peaceful nuclear cooperation, and supported arsenal reductions.

However, as key arms control arrangements lapse and shared constraints erode, the NPT is no longer simply foundational; it has become **load-bearing**.

That weight cannot be borne by words alone, nor by broken promises, evasive doctrines, or narrowing transparency.

Credibility begins with naming reality:

Safeguards and safety norms are being undermined; arsenals are being modernized and expanded; restraint on nuclear testing is weakening; doctrines blur intent and reduce predictability; and deterrence is evolving into more complex trilateral and multipolar dynamics.

When States Parties agreed to the 1995 indefinite extension, **it was a good-faith contract—not a gift**—to strengthen review, advance disarmament, and address regional security.

These commitments stand unless fulfilled, collectively revised, or replaced.

Yet Article VI obligations are not being translated into near-term disarmament priorities.

As a NATO Ally, Canada understands the security realities.

As a non-nuclear weapon state, we also see the risk of deferral becoming the default.

Canada brings candour and consistency to both of these discussions, applying the same standards to partners and others alike.

This Conference must advance disarmament and reduce nuclear risks, with principled transparency, credible follow-through, and real accountability.

Non-proliferation is central to this effort.

Disarmament cannot gain traction if safeguards are treated as optional or if non-compliance is met with ambiguity.

Robust verification, full implementation of comprehensive safeguards and the Additional Protocol, and continued strengthening of safeguards are not technical formalities, but are essential to confidence in this Treaty.

That credibility is being tested worldwide.

The ongoing conflict linked to Iran's nuclear programme underscores that these are not abstract debates, but realities with serious regional and global consequences.

Iran's failure to cooperate with the IAEA to resolve longstanding safeguards questions, including 440kg of unaccounted-for highly enriched uranium, is a serious challenge that must be addressed.

Nuclear safety and security must be upheld in all circumstances.

Canada opposes any action, by any State, that creates nuclear safety and security risks, including military activity near nuclear facilities.

We support the IAEA's work in Ukraine, including at the Zaporizhzhia NPP, where Russia's illegal military presence and attacks against energy infrastructure pose unacceptable risks.

We also condemn the DPRK's continued nuclear activities in violation of Security Council resolutions.

Colleagues,

Non-proliferation and disarmament reinforce one another; both are indispensable to the Treaty's credibility.

That same balance requires attention to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Treaty endures because it constrains risks, but also because it enables peaceful nuclear applications that support development, energy security, health, and climate-related objectives under the highest standards of safety, security, and safeguards.

As a champion of peaceful uses, Canada possesses unmatched structural advantages across the entire nuclear value chain—including uranium mines, reactor technology, a strong export track record, a skilled and growing workforce, and strong regulatory reputation—and we are looking for states with whom we can partner to mutually benefit. Canada offers safety, security, and long-term energy independence—a complete, end-to-end and integrated nuclear solution including ongoing expertise and support and sound waste management guidance.

Colleagues,

This Conference will be judged by results: what we deliver now, and what we implement before we meet again.

Our task is clear: advance arms control and disarmament, restore transparency and predictability, secure CTBT entry into force, strengthen safeguards, and expand peaceful uses with the highest standards.

Not with rituals—but with results.

Thank you.