



CROATIA

Statement by

Ms. Maja Drmač

Head of Department for Cooperative Security and Arms Control, Ministry of
Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia

at

the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Check against delivery

New York, 29 April 2026

Distinguished Chair, Excellencies,

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and would like to add the following in its national capacity.

We gather at a time of mounting geopolitical instability, marked by rising nuclear risks and intensifying strategic rivalry. In this context, the NPT remains indispensable. It is the cornerstone of global efforts to prevent proliferation, advance disarmament, and ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Safeguarding and reinforcing the NPT is not optional—it is a strategic necessity for international peace and security.

The global security environment is deteriorating at an alarming rate. Arms control architectures are eroding, trust is diminishing, and emerging technologies are reshaping the risk landscape. Any weakening of the NPT undermines global stability. We call on all States Parties to fully and unequivocally implement their obligations across all three pillars. The case of the DPRK remains a clear and urgent warning of the consequences of non-compliance.

Nuclear safety and security risks have escalated, particularly in Europe. Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including military operations near nuclear facilities, places millions at risk and is wholly unacceptable. Its irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and coercive posture dangerously raise the risk of escalation and are incompatible with its obligations under the NPT.

We are also deeply concerned by the scale of China's nuclear expansion. We urge China to uphold its testing moratorium, engage substantively on risk reduction and verification, and support the CTBT framework.

Croatia is equally clear that Iran must never acquire a nuclear weapon. We call on Iran to fully comply with its NPT obligations, cooperate fully with the IAEA, and engage constructively in negotiations toward a credible and verifiable agreement.

The International Atomic Energy Agency remains central to the credibility of the non-proliferation regime. Its safeguards and its role in enabling the safe and peaceful use of nuclear technology are essential for maintaining trust and supporting sustainable development. A strong, independent, and well-resourced IAEA is indispensable.

At the same time, rapid advances in artificial intelligence are introducing new strategic uncertainties. Robust, inclusive, and effective multilateral approach is urgently required. Human control over nuclear decision-making must remain absolute. In this context, the continued delay in the entry into force of the CTBT is unacceptable. The global moratorium on nuclear testing must be upheld and strengthened without exception.

Croatia's position is shaped by its own experience. Having endured aggression and successfully transitioned from non-alignment to full integration into Euro-Atlantic structures, Croatia understands both the cost of insecurity and the value of collective defence. This underpins our firm commitment to a rules-based international order.

Croatia neither possesses nor seeks nuclear weapons. However, we are clear-eyed about today's realities: credible deterrence remains essential to prevent conflict. As a committed member of NATO, Croatia contributes actively to collective defence. Allies have increased defence investment to reinforce readiness, resilience, and deterrence. This is not escalation—it is responsible action to

preserve peace, protect democratic societies, and prevent further proliferation. NATO's nuclear arrangements remain fully consistent with the objectives of the NPT.

At the same time, Croatia remains firmly committed to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons, achieved through a realistic, step-by-step, and verifiable process that ensures equal security for all. Deterrence and disarmament must advance in parallel.

The challenges we face are serious, but manageable and NPT remains our most effective instrument. Croatia reaffirms its unwavering commitment to multilateralism, international law, and collective security.

Thank you.