



**MINISTÈRE
DE L'EUROPE
ET DES AFFAIRES
ÉTRANGÈRES**

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

**Eleventh Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-
Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

(April 27 – May 22, 2026)

Statement by the Minister

Check against delivery

President,

Ministers,

Excellencies,

In 1968, nearly 60 years ago, and at the cost of tremendous diplomatic efforts, the international community managed to reach an agreement to avert the greatest of all risks. The risk of a widespread nuclear arms race. The devastation a nuclear war could have inflicted on all of humanity.

By signing the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the nations of the world succeeded in regulating force by law. To place force under the authority of law. To safeguard the peace and security of peoples.

If this treaty is now nearly universal, if it still stands today while all other arms control treaties have expired,

it is first and foremost because its architects did not seek to deny the balance of power, but to organize it in their mutual interest.

It is also because they clearly established the rights and obligations of each party.

Working toward nuclear disarmament through general and complete disarmament. Preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and sharing access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Three pillars that have underpinned global security.

Three pillars that are cracking today as the world becomes more brutal.

Three pillars that France intends to defend, convinced that there is no alternative—neither possible nor desirable—to full compliance with this treaty.

Allow me to address them one by one.

The first pillar: disarmament.

After a long period of progress, the two countries with the largest arsenals are now backtracking on their previous commitments.

To Russia, which is pursuing a revisionist, imperialist, and colonial policy. Which distorts the original defensive nature of nuclear weapons by resorting to nuclear rhetoric against Ukraine, I want to say that it is causing disgrace upon itself, discrediting itself, and now is the time to drastically change its position.

To China, which is engaged in a race to catch up with the United States at a fast pace, I want to say that our collective responsibility is to reduce strategic risks and to adhere to transparency which it lacks today.

France, for its part, has an unparalleled track record on disarmament:

- Complete dismantlement of the land-based component of its deterrent,
- Reduction by one third of its submarine and airborne components,
- Irreversible dismantlement of its fissile material production facilities,
- Definitive end of nuclear testing, followed by the irreversible dismantlement of its Pacific nuclear test site and the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Yes, France reaffirms its commitment to nuclear deterrence. And in light of the deteriorating strategic environment, the President of the French Republic announced on March 2, 2026, two major developments for France and for Europe:

- First, a strengthening of France's nuclear arsenal, with a strict defensive character and in strict accordance with the operational effectiveness of our deterrence.
- Second, the practical implementation of the European dimension of our vital interests, with the announcement of forward deterrence, which is fully compliant with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

These developments were necessary so that French deterrence could contribute, as it has done for decades, to peace and security of the European continent.

Nevertheless, our ambition remains to move forward on the path toward complete nuclear disarmament.

That is why, as we will assume the presidency of the P5 process this summer, we will support:

- measures to reduce strategic risks,
- a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons,
- the entry into force of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty,
- the launch of discussions on strategic stability with a view to establishing a new security framework in the future, including with consideration of nuclear capabilities – but on condition that these discussions take place on an equitable basis, given that countries such as France and the United Kingdom are in a radically different situation than other nuclear-weapon states with disproportionate arsenals,

- and the strengthening of transparency regarding the national reports submitted by the States Parties to this treaty.

Second pillar: non-proliferation.

The risk of nuclear proliferation has never been so high. And the threat posed by the programs of Iran and North Korea must not be tolerated by any State Party to this treaty.

Iran has crossed all red lines that were set 10 years ago. It must permanently renounce the possession of nuclear weapons, comply with its comprehensive safeguards agreement, and demonstrate the exclusively peaceful character of its program. No military solution will provide a lasting guarantee. Iran will therefore need to comply to a strict oversight and a comprehensive, intrusive verification regime.

North Korea, for its part, continues to pursue illegal programs that threaten international security. It must abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, in accordance with Security Council resolutions.

France supports and will continue to support the IAEA, which plays an essential role in preventing proliferation and helping us respond to it. It calls on all States Parties to the Treaty to strengthen the Agency's capabilities, to renew their political, technical, and financial support, and to provide the necessary means for the Agency to carry out its indispensable verification activities.

Third pillar : peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Admittedly, these uses have developed for the benefit of the vast majority. To fight cancer. To provide access to abundant and carbon-free energy that serves us all.

But now, right under our eyes, civil nuclear safety and security are at stake on the battlefield.

As we commemorate the tragic anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster forty years ago, let us remember that last year, a drone loaded with explosives launched by Russia pierced the plant's containment arch.

Elsewhere in the world, civilian nuclear infrastructures are targeted. In defiance of international law and the spirit of this treaty. In defiance of the human and radiological consequences.

All of this is deplorable, and no signatory state to this treaty can tolerate it. And it is with the conviction that civil nuclear energy remains a powerful tool for resilience and sovereignty that France, in cooperation with the IAEA, gathered more than 60 countries in Paris on March 10 for the Nuclear Energy Summit. With the unwavering ambition of using this technology to serve us all.

Mr. President

Since its entry into force 56 years ago, the NPT has withstood all crises and global upheavals. It remains the cornerstone of our security architecture.

Bearing the primary responsibility incumbent upon a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council,

A nuclear-weapon state under the terms of this treaty,

France will not allow this edifice to falter.

It will not allow the legacy of the visionary generations who entrusted us with this treaty to be challenged.

The fact that I am standing before you today is proof of that. It testifies the strength of our commitment to global peace and security.

A commitment that will not waver./.