



**Statement of the Holy See
at the Main Committee II
of the Eleventh Review Conference of the of the Parties to the Treaty on
the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
*New York, 5 May 2026***

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, the Holy See Delegation congratulates you on assuming the Chair of Main Committee II and assures you of its full cooperation. This Delegation would also like to thank the Secretariat for its continued support throughout this Conference.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Its credibility depends on the consistent implementation of all its provisions by all States Parties.

In this regard, the Holy See emphasizes the importance of the universalization of the Treaty and of enhancing common efforts and commitments to ensure the non-proliferation and the progressive elimination of nuclear weapons. This is particularly important at a time when confidence building among States is under increasing strain. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons requires a shared sense of responsibility that is sustained through dialogue, cooperation, and mutual trust. As Pope Leo XIV reminds us, “While war is content with destruction, peace requires continuous and patient efforts of construction as well as constant vigilance. Such efforts are required of everyone, starting with the countries that possess nuclear arsenals.”¹ Non-

¹ POPE LEO XIV, *Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See*, 9 January 2026.

proliferation cannot be taken for granted; it requires continuous effort, based on coherence, transparency, and accountability.

In this context, the Holy See places particular importance on strengthening verification, transparency, and confidence-building measures. The safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency remains an essential pillar of the non-proliferation regime and must be preserved and reinforced, including through the universal adoption of the Additional Protocol. In an era of growing skepticism surrounding verification arrangements, reinforcing these mechanisms is paramount.

At the same time, remaining gaps within the safeguards framework must be addressed, including through the revision or phasing out of outdated Small Quantities Protocols.

Mr. Chair,

The Holy See further reaffirms the value of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones as important regional instruments for advancing non-proliferation and strengthening international peace and security. The establishment of additional zones, particularly in regions of persistent tension, especially the Middle East, remains a priority. Such zones help to build trust among States and contribute to regional stability and to the global non-proliferation regime in a concrete manner. It is equally important that nuclear-weapon States ratify these protocols in order to provide credible and legally binding assurances to States within such zones.

In this context, negative security assurances also serve to reinforce the confidence of non-nuclear-weapon States in the non-proliferation regime. Consistent and credible implementation of these assurances helps to foster a more stable and cooperative international environment.

Non-proliferation cannot be sustained by technical measures or legal instruments alone. It requires States to be willing to engage in sincere

dialogue, to build trust and act in a spirit of shared responsibility. In this sense, non-proliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy are all essential and mutually reinforcing aspects of a common commitment to peace.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.