



Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: 2026 Review Conference Main Committee II

**New Zealand Statement delivered by Deborah Geels,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United
Nations Office at Geneva, 5 May 2026**

Thank you, Chair,

For decades the success of the NPT has in large part been built on the long-term commitment of non-nuclear weapon States to the non-proliferation pillar as part of the Treaty's 'grand bargain'. For the NPT to have stemmed the spread of nuclear weapons for as long as it has, is a remarkable achievement.

As New Zealand observed in the general debate, non-nuclear weapon States have long seen nuclear weapons as too costly to possess, in all senses. Yet in a world marked by a worsened strategic environment, growing nuclear arsenals, explicit threats of use, and suggestions of resumed nuclear testing, some non-nuclear weapon States may now be revisiting their commitments not to acquire nuclear weapons. This would be profoundly dangerous and undermine the very objectives of our Treaty.

Chair,

Central to ensuring nuclear non-proliferation is the IAEA, which plays an indispensable role. New Zealand continues to have full confidence in the Agency's professionalism, independence, and technical expertise in carrying out its safeguards responsibilities. At the core of this is the Comprehensive

Safeguards Agreement, which together with an Additional Protocol, represents the global verification standard.

Chair,

The international norm against nuclear testing, exemplified by the CTBT, is another remarkable non-proliferation and disarmament achievement. Moreover, the Treaty's International Monitoring System is a tangible demonstration of the CTBT's value, providing credible, independent data that enhances transparency and builds confidence.

New Zealand reaffirms the critical importance of the CTBT and strongly supports the continued strengthening, maintenance, and resourcing of the IMS. We urge all States to uphold their moratoria on nuclear test explosions and to refrain from any actions that would undermine the Treaty or weaken the global norm against nuclear testing. To this end, New Zealand joined the joint statement on this issue delivered by Austria during the General Debate.

New Zealand also reaffirms the importance of effective national export controls as a critical component of effective non-proliferation efforts. Claims that such controls undermine development or peaceful cooperation are unfounded.

Chair,

We have effective non-proliferation architecture in place. New Zealand is committed to upholding it and others must do so too.

New Zealand, alongside much of the international community, has for years expressed concern about Iran's nuclear activities. Iran accumulated highly enriched uranium to a level that has no credible peaceful use. Its actions have significantly stressed the non-proliferation regime, and Iran's lack of cooperation with the IAEA to resolve long-standing issues related to its nuclear programme remains unacceptable.

We call once again on Iran to meet its legal obligations under the NPT, and underline that these remain in effect. New Zealand also urges Iran to cooperate fully and transparently with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding safeguards issues. Doing so would help give the international community confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear activities. We call on all parties to create the conditions to facilitate a return to dialogue and good faith diplomacy. That is the only sustainable way to resolve these issues.

Chair,

We are deeply concerned about the impacts of recent and ongoing armed conflict on nuclear facilities in Ukraine and the Middle East. We reiterate the IAEA Director General's message that a nuclear facility and surrounding areas should never be struck and support his call for the full respect of the seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during a conflict. Such attacks can pose a nuclear safety risk, including to civilians and the environment. Any comprehensive outcome of the Review Conference should reaffirm the prohibition of armed attacks against peaceful nuclear facilities.

Chair,

At this review conference we have joined statements condemning Russia's illegal and invasion of Ukraine, including its occupation of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia [Zah-poor-reesh-ya] Nuclear Power Plant, and the DPRK's ongoing advancement of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes. These actions undermine the NPT and pose a serious threat to regional and international security. New Zealand calls Russia to end its illegal occupation of ZNPP and immediately and withdraw fully from Ukrainian territory. And we call on the DPRK to take concrete steps toward the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

Finally Chair,

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing pillars of the NPT.

We reiterate our strong and unwavering support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and for its continued integrity, effectiveness, and universality. During this Review Conference, we must recommit to strengthening our non-proliferation and disarmament obligations and advancing the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.