

National Statement by H.E. Yeondoo Jeong
Vice Minister for Strategy and Intelligence of the Republic of Korea
The 11th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
On the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
April 27, 2026, New York

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

As Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, once noted, “If the situations we have built are defective, it is our responsibility to repair them,” we gather today at a critical juncture, when the NPT must respond to unprecedented and complex challenges.

Instability in today’s international security environment, including the ongoing situation in the Middle East, together with diverging views between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States on nuclear disarmament, are eroding confidence in the credibility and effectiveness of the NPT regime.

At a time of deepening divisions, all States Parties must return to the original spirit of the Treaty, the so-called “Grand Bargain,” and

reaffirm the commitment to the three mutually reinforcing pillars of the NPT: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

At this point, I need to remind the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States to pursue good faith negotiations on nuclear disarmament and the cessation of the nuclear arms race, in line with Article VI of the Treaty. We must remind all nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm the 2022 P5 commitment that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” In the context of continued dialogue among nuclear-weapon States, we welcome efforts to explore new frameworks including the United States’ proposal to pursue multilateral strategic stability dialogue.

The Republic of Korea also supports the entry into force of the CTBT and the early commencement of FMCT negotiations, and will continue to support initiatives such as the Stockholm Initiative and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification(IPNDV) to advance conditions conducive to nuclear disarmament.

Mr. President,

Recalling the obligation to comply with non-proliferation commitments as reaffirmed in the 2010 Action Plan, the Republic of Korea underscores that all compliance-related issues must be addressed in order to uphold the integrity of the NPT and the credibility of the safeguards system.

I must draw renewed attention to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The DPRK is the only case that benefitted from the NPT regime, announced its withdrawal and openly continued the development of nuclear weapons, thereby remaining the most pressing challenge to the non-proliferation regime.

Any State that seeks to uphold the NPT regime should duly align itself with this unified position of the international community to send a clear message that only a return to the Treaty can ensure security and prosperity. We also call upon the Russian Federation to cease its illegal military cooperation with the DPRK, which violates United Nations Security Council resolutions, and to fulfill

its responsibilities in safeguarding the global non-proliferation regime.

The Republic of Korea will continue to work closely with the international community toward the complete denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. While upholding this goal, we recognize that it will take time given the realities on the ground. We are therefore pursuing a phased approach that starts with stopping the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile programs through dialogue and negotiation, moves to reduction in the medium term, and ultimately proceeds to dismantlement in the long term. We call upon the DPRK to respond to our sincere efforts, to return to full compliance with the NPT and relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Mr. President,

We are now witnessing a renewed momentum that can be described as a "Nuclear Renaissance." Recognizing the mutually reinforcing nature of non-proliferation obligations and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we reaffirm the inalienable right of all States Parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in full

compliance with non-proliferation and safeguards obligations.

IAEA safeguards are indispensable in this regard, and we strongly support efforts to universalize Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements(CSA) and the Additional Protocol(AP).

Further strengthening the NPT review process remains a key priority, particularly to improve transparency and accountability in the implementation of the Treaty. In this regard, we support the adoption of a standardized format for national reports and the allocation of dedicated sessions during Review Conferences to examine them.

Mr. President,

For the Republic of Korea, the NPT is directly linked to peace, stability, and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula. Our commitment to non-proliferation is not just a legal constraint, but a strategic imperative. We remain firmly committed to working with all States Parties to safeguard the global non-proliferation regime, and will work constructively to ensure that this Review Conference marks the beginning of meaningful progress. Thank you. //END//