



**Statement by H.E. Jayantha Jayasuriya, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations
NPT Review Conference 2026: General Debate - 27 April 2026**

Mr. Chair,

My delegation congratulates you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Eleventh Review Conference. Sri Lanka assures you of our fullest support and cooperation.

Sri Lanka aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chair,

The importance of this Treaty has never been felt as of now. Two consecutive Review Conferences have failed to produce a consensus outcome, which is unprecedented since the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995. **The expiry of the New START Treaty in February this year has left us without any bilateral strategic arms control instrument between the two largest nuclear-armed States.** Nuclear arsenals are being modernized, doctrines expanded, and the dangerous possibility of resumed nuclear testing has entered the public discourse. We are living through a dangerous moment for humanity.

Mr. Chair,

As an island nation at the crossroads of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is acutely aware of the risks posed by the growing nuclearization of our maritime neighborhood. For small States that contribute nothing to the nuclear threat yet bear its consequences disproportionately, the case for disarmament is of utmost importance.

Sri Lanka's commitment to nuclear disarmament is longstanding. In 1964, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike championed denuclearized zones at the Non-Aligned Summit in Cairo. In 1971, Sri Lanka brought the proposal for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace to the General Assembly. Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala, as President of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, secured the Treaty's indefinite extension on the understanding that it would accelerate the path to elimination **of nuclear weapons.**

It is with this national outlook that Sri Lanka acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2023, becoming the sixty-ninth State party, following our ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty earlier that year. These were tangible acts of policy, based on our belief that the TPNW complements the NPT. We encourage all States to consider joining this important instrument.

Mr. Chair,

Sri Lanka is deeply alarmed by recent suggestions of the possible resumption of nuclear weapon testing. Any such step would undermine the CTBT and risk igniting an arms race. We call on all States to uphold the testing moratorium and bring the CTBT into force without further delay.

We are equally concerned by the integration of artificial intelligence into nuclear command, control, and communication systems. Meaningful human control over nuclear weapons must be maintained at all times. We reiterate that nuclear risk reduction measures, while important, must not become a substitute for Article VI. Until all nuclear weapons are eliminated, we call for the early conclusion of a universal, legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

Mr. Chair,

Sri Lanka has long championed nuclear-weapon-free zones, including bringing the proposal for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace to the General Assembly in 1971. We reaffirm our strong support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. **Sri Lanka firmly believes that IAEA-safeguarded nuclear facilities must never be subject to armed attack. Any attack on such facilities undermines the credibility of both the NPT and the safeguards regime. At a time of such acute regional strife, the case for this Zone has never been more urgent.**

Sri Lanka reaffirms the inalienable right of all States parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy without discrimination. We call on States with advanced capabilities to strengthen technical cooperation through the IAEA, ensuring that developing countries can utilize these technologies for health, agriculture, and sustainable development.

Mr. Chair,

The NPT is an agreement built on the assurance of complete disarmament. We remain convinced that this promise must be fulfilled.

Sri Lanka stands ready to engage constructively towards an outcome that advances the cause of a world free of nuclear weapons - for this generation and for those that will follow.

Thank you.