



**Statement by Mr. Chatura Perera, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to
the United Nations**

**NPT Review Conference 2026: Main Committee 1 - Disarmament
30 April 2026**

Mr. Chair,

My delegation congratulates you on your assumption as Chair of the Main Committee I. We assure you of our fullest support and cooperation.

Sri Lanka aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We wish to make the following observations in our national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

Four years ago, at the Tenth Review Conference, our delegation spoke of a tipping point, warning that a Treaty built on three pillars risked standing on only two. We regret to say that the situation has become more dangerous.

The New START Treaty expired in February of this year without a successor agreement. For the first time in over half a century, there is no bilateral instrument constraining the strategic arsenals of the two largest nuclear-armed States. Nuclear arsenals are being modernized and expanded. New types of warheads, including low-yield weapons, are being developed, which lowers the threshold for actual use. Doctrines are being revised to increase the prominence of nuclear weapons in military planning. The continued and evolving nuclear weapons sharing arrangements and extended deterrence policies run directly counter to the whole point of this Treaty. And the resumed nuclear testing will further escalate the geopolitical tensions.

Mr. Chair,

Article VI of this Treaty is a legal obligation, binding on all States parties, at all times, and in all circumstances. Regrettably, though, more than fifty years after the Treaty's entry into force, over twelve thousand nuclear weapons remain in the world. At the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the nuclear weapon States party to this Treaty, gave the world an unequivocal promise to eliminate their arsenals. Twenty-six years later, we are still waiting. The thirteen practical steps have been largely set aside.

The 2010 Action Plan has yielded no measurable progress. Similarly, the last two Review Conferences failed to produce consensus outcomes.

We are also alarmed by the integration of artificial intelligence into nuclear command, control, and communication systems. The compression of decision-making timelines increases the risk of catastrophic miscalculation. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, human control must be maintained over all decisions relating to their use.

Mr. Chair,

Sri Lanka's commitment to nuclear disarmament is unwavering. That commitment rests on the conviction that small nations have a right and responsibility to shape the disarmament agenda.

It is in this spirit that Sri Lanka acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in September 2023 and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty earlier that year. We believe the TPNW complements the NPT by closing the legal gap that has persisted. We encourage all States to consider joining this instrument.

As a small island nation at the crossroads of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka bears no responsibility for the nuclear threat, yet it is disproportionately exposed to its consequences. We think of the communities across the Pacific who still live with the effects of nuclear testing decades later. The costs of nuclear weapons are not felt equally. For small States like ours, the case for disarmament is of fundamental importance.

Mr. Chair,

We reaffirm the urgent need for a universal, unconditional, irrevocable, and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties. We call upon the nuclear-weapon States to commit to a moratorium on the first use of nuclear weapons until we reach the goal of total elimination. We also call on the nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate concrete, irreversible, and verifiable progress on disarmament, and for the resumption of meaningful negotiations toward that end.

Finally, we reiterate the importance of disarmament education. Regaining momentum depends on investing in the next generation. We must equip our youth with the political, legal, and technical expertise to carry forward the campaign for complete elimination.

We must meet this moment with the seriousness it demands. The credibility of this Treaty rests on the fulfillment of the disarmament obligation. We owe it to those who have already suffered the consequences of nuclear weapons.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.