



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

**NPT Review Conference 2026: Main Committee 2 – Non-proliferation and  
Nuclear Weapon Free Zones  
04 May 2026**

Mr. Chair,

My delegation congratulates you on your assumption as Chair of Main Committee II. We assure you of our full 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 comments in our national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

The non-proliferation pillar of this Treaty is perhaps its greatest success; for over five decades, the NPT has helped prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. But the non-proliferation regime cannot stand on one pillar alone. The non-proliferation obligations of this Treaty must work in tandem with the disarmament and peaceful uses commitments that accompany them. All three pillars must be upheld with equal commitment for the non-proliferation regime to stand strong.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is one of the clearest examples of non-proliferation at work. The five existing zones, plus Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, represent tangible progress. They serve a dual purpose. They guarantee that nuclear weapons will not be produced, stored, transferred, or used in those regions. They also guarantee that nuclear energy will be used only for peaceful purposes. Sri Lanka supports the establishment of new zones where they do not yet exist. We also call on the nuclear-weapon States to ratify outstanding protocols and withdraw any reservations not in line with the purpose of these treaties.

We reiterate our longstanding support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, in accordance with the 1995 resolution. We recognize the efforts made by the Conference over the years in laying a solid foundation on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and encourage all concerned parties to participate constructively and in good faith. Given the region's recent geopolitical turmoil, this item should be considered at the top of our collective agenda.

Mr. Chair,

It has been the consistent position of my delegation that the prevention of horizontal proliferation and nuclear disarmament are both essential. Nuclear weapon sharing is fundamentally incompatible with spirit of this Treaty. This is a growing concern; we note that such arrangements are expanding, with new cooperation frameworks being pursued that risk normalizing the forward deployment of nuclear weapons.

We reaffirm the role of the IAEA as the sole competent authority for verification and safeguards under the Treaty. Its work must remain impartial and grounded in its statute and safeguards agreements. We call upon the nuclear-weapon States to accept full-scope safeguards for the purpose of verifying compliance with their obligations under the Treaty. This would strengthen confidence in the regime and make clear that Treaty obligations apply to all, not just to those who do not possess such weapons.

We also highlight that cooperation arrangements involving sensitive applications, including naval nuclear propulsion, must be conducted in line with the Treaty's non-proliferation obligations and must not set precedents that weaken the integrity of the safeguards system.

Mr. Chair,

Safeguards must not in any way restrict the legitimate right of States parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Safeguards exist to enable peaceful uses, not to block them. For developing countries like Sri Lanka, access to peaceful nuclear technology is directly linked to progress on health, agriculture, water management, and sustainable development.

Mr. Chair,

As we have maintained since Sri Lanka brought the proposal for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace to the General Assembly in 1971, small nations rely on the fact that the world is governed by rules. We did not create the nuclear threat. We certainly do not benefit from it. But we live with its consequences every day - in the transit of materials beyond our control, and in the knowledge that a conflict, near or far, could devastate our region.

The non-proliferation regime must be upheld without exception and without selective application. We owe it to future generations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.