NPT Review Process 2010

PrepCom II

Specific issue: Regional issues

STATEMENT BY NORWAY

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Check against delivery
Mr. Chair,

There has for several years been a general consensus on the desirability to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Yet, the IAEA General Conference demonstrated last year that this consensus is fragile. We have clearly not made progress towards reaching our common objective.

There are a number of steps to be taken to reach a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. These steps could be mutually supportive.

Firstly, we encourage all countries in the region, including Israel, to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states without preconditions.

Secondly, full-scope safeguards with the Additional Protocol must be applied by all states in the region. There has been some progress with respect to the conclusion and implementation of comprehensive safeguards as well as the Additional Protocol. But, the pace is too slow.

We urge all countries in the region to conclude and implement safeguards, including the Additional Protocol without delay. Such safeguards would go a long way to promote confidence in the region.

Thirdly, dialogue and confidence building measures (CBMs) must go hand in hand with the process of developing a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East. We regret that this has not been the case so far. Likewise, it is essential that all parties make full use of CBMs and refrain from actions which may undermine the purpose of the NPT.

Fourthly, it is imperative to resolve in a political manner outstanding proliferation challenges in the region, such as the one posed by Iran. We urge Iran to meet the demands set by the international community, as reiterated by the recent UN Security Resolution, in order to facilitate a political solution.

Norway is fully committed to the 1995 NPT Resolution on the Middle East. We are ready to contribute to reaching the aim of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the region. We encourage timely
consultations with a view to restoring consensus in the IAEA General Conference.

Norway has contributed financially to analytical studies and workshops on how we may move this process forward. We will continue to do so.

Mr. Chair,

Let me now turn to some other regional issues.

Norway urges India and Pakistan to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states. That remains our goal. In the meantime we should continue a constructive dialogue with these two countries with a view to moving them closer to the NPT regime. It is essential to prevent a new arms race in region.

We have taken note of the negotiations between the US and India on civil nuclear co-operation. We fully recognise India’s energy needs. This agreement poses both opportunities as well as challenges. From our perspective it is important that it will not undermine our collective benefits deriving from the NPT and global non-proliferation efforts. India could on its part contribute in this respect, by unilaterally declaring a moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and by ratifying the CTBT.

Mr. Chair,

Norway supports the Six Party Talks in Beijing on reaching a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. In this respect it is essential that the DPRK provides a full and complete report on its past nuclear activities. We also call for a full dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programme. In our view this should preferably be carried out under IAEA supervision.

We reiterate that the DPRK has much to gain from fully co-operating with the international community.

Mr. Chair,

To conclude - if we are to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons we must strive for a full universalisation of the NPT. It may still take some time, but we must not lose sight of this goal.