Statement of the Netherlands
delivered by
Anke ter Hoeve-van Heek, Deputy Permanent Representative to the
UN Organisations in Vienna

at
Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020
Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

on
Cluster III, Peaceful Uses

Geneva, 1 May 2018
Thank you Mr. Chairman,

The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU, and would like to make additional remarks in its national capacity.

Article IV of the NPT assures the access of States Parties to the exchange of equipment, materials, and information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this context, too, it is important to emphasize the links between the NPT pillars: the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must be exercised in conformity with our obligations in Articles I, II and III of the Treaty.

Article IV furthermore requires States Parties to facilitate this exchange to the fullest extent possible, and calls for contributions to the further development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Netherlands fully recognizes this inalienable right of all States Parties. The third pillar, which seems to be overlooked all too often, should be further strengthened during this review cycle.

Mr Chair,

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is crucial to ensuring the success of the peaceful uses pillar by assisting in the development and delivery of expertise, equipment exchange and transfer of technology. This is especially important in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals, and to mitigate climate change. We also encourage capacity-building activities of the IAEA in the Small Island and Developing States, including those parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in the field of radiation safety, food security and cancer treatment.

In order to be able to exchange equipment and knowledge, we need to assure that the highest levels of nuclear safety and security are in place. Safety and security measures contribute to building public trust and confidence, which is needed to broaden the use of nuclear energy applications worldwide. Apart from nuclear safety and security, effective export controls are essential for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

As regards nuclear safety we encourage all States that have not yet done so to become party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Furthermore we call on all States to implement the principles of the Vienna Declaration. We are strong supporters of the central role of the IAEA in enhancing the global nuclear safety regime.

Mr Chair,

Taking into account the evolving threats and challenges, it is necessary to accelerate our efforts to develop and implement an effective and comprehensive global nuclear security framework based on prevention, detection and response.

We encourage states who have not yet done so to become party to the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We furthermore invite states to sign on to the initiative to ‘strengthen nuclear security implementation,’ otherwise known as INFCIRC/869. This initiative strengthens domestic security regimes by implementing the IAEA Nuclear Security Fundamentals and Nuclear Security Series recommendations in national rules and regulations.

We fully support the central role the IAEA has in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and in coordinating international nuclear security activities. The Netherlands further participates actively in international fora dedicated to strengthening nuclear security, including the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Contact Group in order to secure further progress.

The Netherlands also continues to support multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle as they may offer ‘assurance of non-proliferation’ as well as ‘assurance of supply and services’. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the Low Enriched Uranium Bank in Kazakhstan under the control of the IAEA.
We underline the need to continue strengthening regional and interregional cooperation by identifying, utilizing and strengthening established regional capacities and call upon the IAEA to enhance regional collaboration.

Mr Chair,

On this occasion, I would also like to elaborate on an important step that was recently taken in the Netherlands in the interest of strengthening nuclear security and serving non-proliferation objectives. Earlier this year, the molybdenum production facility of NRG (Nuclear Research & consultancy Group) in the village of Petten, stopped using High-Enriched Uranium in the production of medical isotopes. It will now only use Low-Enriched Uranium. It is the first facility in Europe that finalised this step.

The High Flux reactor is the world’s largest producer of medical isotopes. Every day, 30.000 cancer patients benefit from medical isotopes from Petten.

In this light, I would like to welcome you at our side-event on Thursday at lunch time in Room XI on HEU minimization as a permanent threat reduction.

Mr Chair,

Let me conclude by encouraging all NPT States Parties to be united in recommending concrete measures to the 2020 Review Conference for ensuring a responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the best safety, security, and non-proliferation conditions.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.