

**First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the
2010 NPT Review Conference
(Vienna, 30 April - 11 May 2007)**

Statement by the Head of the French delegation

Cluster 1 Issues

Mr. Chairman,

1. I wish to address here the issues relating to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, disarmament and international peace and security.
2. Articles I and II of the Treaty define two obligations that are at the very core of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: firstly, the obligation for Nuclear Weapons States to avoid transferring nuclear weapons to any other party and to avoid assisting any Non Nuclear Weapons State to acquire such weapons; and secondly, the obligation for Non Nuclear Weapons States to avoid accepting any transfer of nuclear weapons and not to produce, acquire or seek to acquire such weapons.
3. The fundamental concept underlying these two Articles is both simple and strong: the proliferation of nuclear weapons would considerably increase the risk of nuclear war and threaten the security of all.
4. Today we must address the question of compliance with these two fundamental Articles in the Treaty. Compliance with these provisions is essential if the NPT is to play to the full its role as an instrument for international stability. By adhering to the NPT, several States capable of equipping themselves with nuclear weapons waived that possibility, basing their decision on the fact that the other States Party would stand by the undertakings they had given under Articles I and II.

5. Other States Party have set out to compromise the integrity of the Treaty by developing, in conjunction with networks based in non-NPT States, clandestine nuclear programmes directed at military ends or whose exclusively peaceful purpose the IAEA has not been able to establish. Furthermore, the development of military ballistic missile programmes by those States is gravely prejudicial to regional and world stability.
6. Since 2005, the international community, speaking through the IAEA Board of Governors, and subsequently the United Nations Security Council, has clearly and firmly condemned such breaches, which threaten the integrity of the Treaty and endanger international stability. As I emphasised in my statement in the general debate, we welcome the intervention of the UN Security Council, which has shown great firmness in the face of such behaviour. We call on North Korea and Iran to comply with the obligations contained in UNSC resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747, 1695 and 1718.
7. The cases of North Korea and Iran also demonstrate that alongside the present approach, based on undertakings given by each of the States Party to the NPT to refrain from transferring sensitive technology without safeguards (and the goal of universalisation of the Additional Protocols with the IAEA), we must foster a **collective** approach whereby the international community cooperates in order to prevent proliferation transfers and proliferation networks. Security Council resolution 1540 developed such an approach by providing both for a strengthening of the controls in all States and cooperation directed at achieving this.
8. With this in mind, implementation is now beginning for a number of actions:
 - The first relates to the formulation of references common to the whole of the international community in order to define the precise nature of proliferation activities: the work done by the supplier groups, resolution 1540 and all the resolutions on proliferation adopted by the Security Council will help us define this standard.

- Instruments to combat proliferation have also been developed recently: for example, cooperation under the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the current reflection and measures on combating the financing of proliferation.
 - We also need a framework allowing cooperation on civilian nuclear applications while at the same time limiting the risk of proliferation and helping States put programmes in place despite the technical difficulties (security and environmental standards) and the investment required.
 - And lastly, we must pursue our reflections upon the consequences of withdrawal from the NPT, because it is not reasonable for State to be able to continue, after withdrawing from the NPT, to benefit from the international cooperation of which it was the recipient as a party to the NPT.
9. It is therefore vital that in beginning this new review cycle, the States Party to the NPT should be fully aware of their responsibilities and call on the States concerned to comply with their international obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

10. I now come to the issue of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.
11. As you know, since the end of the Cold War, France has made a major contribution to global efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament, and it has taken major decisions in connection with the implementation of Article VI of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty. France wishes to reaffirm here its undertakings on disarmament under the NPT, with which it is determined to comply in good faith.
12. With regard to the practical implementation of those undertakings, my country is guided by the programme of action defined at the NPT Review and Extension Conference of 1995. I remind you that this programme can be summed up in three points:
- The agreement and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty;

- Negotiation of the Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons;
- Determined pursuit of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally and to work towards general and complete disarmament.

13. In this spirit, France abandoned the testing of nuclear weapons and was, along with the United Kingdom, the first Nuclear Weapons State to ratify the CTBT. France has also dismantled its nuclear test facility in the Pacific and now no longer possesses any facilities enabling it to conduct nuclear explosions. My country is alone among the nuclear powers to have done so. We regret that more than ten years on from its opening for signature the CTBT has still not entered into force. This must be a priority for us.

14. Secondly, after having announced a halt to the production of plutonium and highly enriched uranium for use in nuclear weapons, France took the decision in February 1996 to close down its facilities for the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons in Pierrelatte and Marcoule and to dismantle them. Their dismantling is still continuing at the present time. It is a long, complex and costly task that will take several years. Moreover, my country is alone among the nuclear powers in undertaking it.

15. We repeat that it is our wish to begin, at the earliest date and without preconditions, the negotiations for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons at the Conference on Disarmament. While awaiting agreement of a FMCT, France calls on all the States concerned to declare a moratorium on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

16. And lastly, France has made a major contribution to the overall reduction of nuclear weapons. As the President of the French Republic declared on 19 January 2006 in his Ile Longue speech, France abides and has always abided by a principle of strict sufficiency in determining the format for its nuclear deterrent. My country has cut the number of its delivery vehicles by more than half since 1985. The number of French nuclear weapons systems has been

reduced from 6 to 2. The share of nuclear weapons in the French defence effort has fallen from 17% in 1990 to under 10% in 2006. France has abandoned all its ground-to-ground missiles, withdrawing and dismantling the Pluton, Hades and S3D systems. It also abandoned gravity bombs, withdrawing the AN-52 bomb from service. It has reduced from six to four the number of nuclear submarines carrying ballistic missiles (SNLE / SSBN), and it has stood down its Mirage IV aircraft from nuclear missions.

17. All these efforts are ambitious in scope and testify to the good faith of my country in complying with its undertakings.

Mr. Chairman,

18. I should like to make clear my country's view of future progress on the implementation of its obligations under Article VI of the Treaty within the framework of general and complete disarmament.

19. First of all, having made clear the efforts undertaken by France in the context of the implementation of Article VI, it seems to me to be essential to recall here that those obligations, under the terms of that Article, are not incumbent upon Nuclear Weapons States alone. In this respect, the text of the Treaty is unequivocal: nuclear disarmament is part of a wider context of general and complete disarmament, towards which all States Party to the NPT must work. My country has met and continues to meet its commitments in this regard: France is Party to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines, as well as a number of other agreements in the domain of conventional weapons, including the CCW Convention of 1980 and its protocols. France has also subscribed to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC).

20. Secondly, observation of the events of the last fifteen years leads us to note that over the period in which my country, along with other Nuclear Weapons States, in accordance with the objectives laid down by Article VI of the NPT, has been

engaging in good faith and in a spirit of openness in negotiations on nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament, other States have been conducting proliferation activities that represent a danger for all. The purpose of the combat against proliferation is to create a safer international context.

21. Further, our view of the implementation of Article VI accords with the decisions taken in 1995 at the NPT Review and Extension Conference: the first task is to freeze nuclear arsenals, this being an imperative prerequisite for the pursuit of their staged reduction. This is so because it is difficult to imagine how one can effectively eliminate nuclear weapons if the size of nuclear arsenals is not stabilised. That is precisely the common purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the future treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons, whose entry into force is intended to apply the freeze, both qualitative and quantitative, that is a condition for all future progress. This explains why we attach such central importance to these two Treaties in the context of nuclear disarmament and why we consider them to be inseparable.

22. With regard to the overall reduction of nuclear arsenals, France supports the continuation of the efforts now under way. Those efforts are marked at the present time, as a matter of priority, by the process undertaken by the United States and Russia, which possess incomparably greater numbers of nuclear weapons than the other Nuclear Weapons States.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.