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2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)**

New York, May 2010

Mr. President,

First and foremost, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We are confident that with your ability, experience, and professionalism, you will lead the works of this Conference to a successful conclusion. In that endeavor, you can count on the total and constructive support of the Cuban delegation.

My delegation fully associates itself with the positions stated by the Group of Non-Aligned States parties to the NPT, mainly when considering nuclear disarmament our highest priority in the field of disarmament.

We meet in a moment which presents an excellent opportunity to achieve significant progress in nuclear disarmament. The announcement of agreement among major nuclear powers to reduce their strategic armaments, though insufficient, is a positive sign that must promote concrete steps towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in an irreversible, verifiable, and transparent manner.

We all must make our best to create an environment conducive to making progress in our purpose of strengthening the NPT system, in order to avoid the same disappointment we suffered with the failure of the last Review Conference.

The Review Conference must be successful for the NPT regime to remain credible and effective. The Non-Aligned Movement has submitted a set of proposals to attain this end.

Mr. President,

Cuba has proved, through concrete facts, its political will to strictly comply with each and every obligation it undertook when acceding to the NPT. My country has submitted to this Conference a national report reflecting our full and transparent compliance with the commitments undertaken by becoming party to the Treaty and other instruments regulating this matter.

The satisfactory outcomes of the IAEA safeguard inspections, welcomed in recent years in a transparent atmosphere, have shown our strong attachment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Cuba is party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and to the rest of the international treaties on the subject. Cuba is also part of the group of countries participating in the

IAEA database on illicit trafficking in nuclear material, and no incident of that sort has been reported so far.

Nonetheless, Mr. President, we share the deep concern expressed by other delegations and NAM about the slow advance towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress among nuclear-weapon States in the total elimination of their arsenals. Humankind cannot live in peace when, over 40 years after the adoption of the NPT, there is still an estimate of 32,300 nuclear weapons, more than 12 thousand of which are ready for immediate use. This is enough to annihilate several times all life on Earth and the entire work of civilization.

This situation is even more alarming when the plans to deploy new antimissile defense systems are known; when all kinds of armaments continue to be improved; and when military alliances continue to be strengthened. In relation to the concern that weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, can be used in terrorist acts, Cuba reiterates the best way to fight nuclear terrorism is precisely by eliminating all nuclear-weapon arsenals without further delay or unacceptable pretexts.

Until that goal is achieved, work shall be done, as a matter of priority, to obtain universal, unconditional, and legally-binding security assurances for non nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons. In this context, there is a need for a clear undertaking of no first use of nuclear weapons by all nuclear-weapon States. Beyond doubts, this will strengthen the NPT and will be a demonstration of political will.

It remains very important the full application of the 13 practical steps adopted in the 2000 NPT Review Conference for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement the disarmament obligations of the Treaty, particularly the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

The NPT does not differentiate horizontal from vertical proliferation. Cuba is greatly concerned that nuclear deterrence continues to be essential in defense and security doctrines of some powers and, on that basis, multi-million dollar funds are allocated for the development of new types of nuclear weapons. It is unacceptable that current global military expenditures are considerably higher than those in the period of the so-called Cold War; and it is of great concern that only one nuclear power is responsible for nearly half of those expenditures.

How could such situation be accepted when well into the 21st Century there are 2.5 billion human beings living in poverty; 1.1 billion with no access to drinking water; 2.6 billion with no sanitation services; when there are over 800 million illiterates and 115 million children without primary schools, just to mention some of the most alarming figures of our so-called civilization? The close relation between disarmament and development remains a priority for our poor, underdeveloped countries that suffer the unjust international economic order imposed to them; that have neither nuclear weapons nor the interest to possess them; and that are deprived of the commencement of serious and objective multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Cuba agrees that, as a transcendental outcome of this Conference, it will be required the adoption of a clear plan of action to comply with the implementation of all the provisions of the Treaty, mainly with the nuclear disarmament obligations. The Plan shall establish a concrete schedule for the gradual reduction of nuclear weapons in a transparent, irreversible, verifiable and legally-binding manner. We must ratify this Plan until the complete elimination of these weapons by 2025.

Mr. President,

A balanced and non-discriminatory implementation of the three pillars of the NPT is essential to achieve the objectives of the Treaty effectively. It is immoral that some nuclear States condemn

Third World countries for alleged violations of their commitments when, at the same time, they continue improving their nuclear arsenals.

Last month, the new draft of the Nuclear Posture Review, to which we have been accustomed by one of the nuclear powers, was made public. It seems to include significant changes in relation to the draft published in 2002, mainly in terms of negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States.

However, we agree with those considering that they are cosmetic changes and that conditionalities on the non-use of nuclear weapons remain. It is an insufficient approach that merely focuses on the promotion of non-proliferation and the fight against nuclear terrorism, but does not include a strong commitment to nuclear disarmament or to the beginning of concrete multilateral negotiations on the matter.

Contrary to the philosophy it claims to uphold, the document stresses again the modernization of nuclear weapons, the preservation of nuclear deterrence, and antimissile defense, which has been broadly rejected due to the dangers it entails.

Mr. President,

We observe with concern the imposition of unilateral recipes and interference by other organs, as the Security Council, in the decisions in which the NPT recognizes the IAEA as the sole competent authority to verify the fulfillment of the obligations undertaken under the respective safeguards agreements of Member States.

Cuba considers this sort of concerns must be addressed in the framework of the existing legally binding international instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as in the relevant international organizations, in which the vast majority of the countries participates. In this regard, Cuba is willing to continue to cooperate and implement concrete actions in the area of such treaties and international organizations, particularly the NPT and the IAEA.

The imposition of non-transparent and discriminatory mechanisms of selective composition, acting on the fringes of the United Nations and international treaties, is in no way the proper response to face phenomena as nuclear physical security or international terrorism. We reaffirm multilateralism as an essential approach to face nuclear proliferation-related matters, by adopting universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory mechanisms that are transparent and open to the participation of all States.

Mr. President,

Cuba considers that the creation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones is an important contribution of States to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation efforts. This has been evidenced by the recently held second conference on NWFZs, and we hope to see the creation of new NWFZs worldwide, including areas of higher nuclear weapons concentration, until the planet is turned into a big NWFZ.

We reaffirm the imperative of the prompt creation of a Zone in the Middle East, for no serious effort has been made to implement the resolution in this respect, adopted 15 years ago, since the 1995 Review Conference; not to mention the numerous resolutions of the Security Council, UNGA, IAEA, and other fora, which include the same request.

The Review Conference must adopt a mechanism for the concrete implementation of this resolution, which is of vital importance for the security and stability in the Middle East. That is why Cuba supports the idea of convening, next year, an international conference to commence the negotiations on the creation of a NWFZ in that region.

Making that dream come true, necessarily implies that Israel, the only country in the region that is not party to the NPT and that has not declared its willingness to do so, accede to the Treaty without further delay and place its nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards and perform its related nuclear activities in accordance with the non-proliferation regime. It also implies to stop the transfer to Israel of nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources, and devices. Assistance to that country in nuclear-related scientific and technological areas must also cease.

Mr. President,

The non-discriminatory observance of the three pillars of the NPT reaffirms the inalienable right of States Parties to the peaceful research, production and use of nuclear technology, under the necessary international verification. Free peaceful nuclear technology transfer must be ensured, without politically-motivated obstacles or exclusions.

In Cuba, the application of nuclear technologies in key sectors of the economy is highly appreciated. Therefore, we attach great value to the activities of the IAEA Technical Cooperation. Nevertheless, we are deeply concerned about the persistence by some State in imposing excessive restrictions on the export of nuclear-related material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries, which are detrimental to the normal performance of this cooperation.

We favor the respect for each State Party's options and decisions in the peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as the technical cooperation as a just and respected mechanism, in order to guarantee assistance to those needing it. We must ensure pressure or improper interference in their activities is prevented so that no restrictions are imposed on the peaceful access to materials, equipment, and technology required by less economically, scientifically, and technologically developed countries.

Mr. President,

The 2010 NPT Review Conference will be propitious for the idea of a multilateral action to prevail, with a view to establishing a real commitment to nuclear disarmament, development and world peace. We are all committed to attaining its success, and it still would not be enough to solve the many and complex problems that should be addressed. However, we are confident that, with the necessary political will of all, it will be an important contribution in the road to a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Thank you