



Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES ET EUROPÉENNES

30/4/08
pm

**Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the
2010 NPT Review Conference
(Geneva, 28 April – 9 May 2008)**

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Jean-François Dobelle,
Permanent Representative of France to the Conference on Disarmament
Head of the French delegation**

“Cluster 1”

(Geneva, 30th April 2008)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I wish to address at this point the Cluster 1 issues relating to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, disarmament and international peace and security.

The President of the French Republic, Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy expressed his views on these issues on 21 March last in Cherbourg in France. During my statement I shall therefore recall the points contained in his declaration that are of direct relevance to the NPT review process, and in particular the various proposals put forward by the Head of State in the area of nuclear disarmament.

2. The NPT is an invaluable instrument for collective security, and at its heart are Articles I and II. The idea underpinning these two articles is both simple and strong: the proliferation of nuclear weapons would substantially increase the risk of nuclear war and endanger the security of all of us.

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 which had the capability of becoming nuclear-weapon States have renounced that option, basing their decision on the fact that the other States Parties would comply with their undertakings under Articles I and II. In such circumstances, if doubts arise as to the capacity of the international community to ensure

compliance with international non-proliferation norms and dissuade those wishing to conduct nuclear development for other than peaceful purposes, we risk leading some countries to consider that their security would be better assured by developing similar capabilities rather than by complying with international non-proliferation norms.

3. Over the last two decades, my country, along with other nuclear-weapon States, has engaged, in good faith and in accordance with the goals defined by Article VI of the Treaty, in negotiations on nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament which have led to the adoption of a number of ambitious instruments (the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Complete Test Ban Treaty, to cite only those instruments that relate to weapons of mass destruction). At the same time, the number of nuclear weapons worldwide has been substantially reduced since the end of the Cold War. Nevertheless, over that same period, other States have developed clandestine proliferation activities in violation of the Treaty, activities which compromise the integrity of the Treaty and are a danger for all.
4. Certain States have indeed conducted clandestine nuclear programmes for military purposes or whose exclusively peaceful purposes the IAEA has not been able to establish. North Korea has announced that it has conducted a nuclear test. Iran is pursuing enrichment activities in violation of Security Council resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747 and 1803. In addition, the development by these States of ballistic missile programmes is gravely prejudicial to regional and global stability.
5. Efforts to prevent proliferation must enable a more secure international context to be restored.

Since 2005, the international community, expressing itself through the Council of IAEA Governors and subsequently the United Nations Security Council, has clearly and firmly condemned these breaches, which threaten the integrity of the Treaty and endanger international stability. We salute the intervention of the UN Security Council, which has shown very great firmness in the face of this behaviour. We call upon North Korea and Iran to comply with the obligations respectively laid down, firstly by Security Council resolutions 1695 and 1718, and secondly in resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747 and 1803.

6. Alongside these proven cases of nuclear proliferation and Treaty violations, we are currently witnessing the rise of other threats: certain nuclear arsenals are still expanding, biological proliferation and chemical proliferation are continuing, as is the proliferation of ballistic and cruise missiles.

As President Sarkozy emphasised on 21 March, in the face of proliferation, the international community must remain united and resolute. Because we want peace, we must show no weakness to those who violate international norms.

7. In addition to the present approach based on the commitment of each State Party to the NPT to refrain from transferring sensitive technologies without safeguards and the goal of universalisation of additional protocols with the IAEA, we must promote a collective approach under which the international community cooperates to prevent proliferation transfers and proliferation networks. Security Council resolution 1540 has developed this approach by providing both for a strengthening of controls in all States and cooperation to that end.

With the above in mind, several actions should be highlighted:

- The first task must be to formulate references shared by the whole of the international community in order to define the nature of proliferation activities: the work done by the supplier groups, resolution 1540 and the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on proliferation will be of assistance to us in defining this standard.
- Instruments to combat proliferation have also been developed: for instance, the cooperation under the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) or reflection and current measures concerning efforts to eliminate the financing of proliferation, through the FATF for example.

Other actions must be conducted effectively:

- We require a framework (I shall return to this point in my statement on regarding Cluster III) to allow responsible development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and international cooperation in this field, while at the same time limiting the risk of proliferation and assisting the States concerned to put in place the norms that are essential to safety and security.
- We must pursue our reflection upon the consequences entailed by announcement of withdrawal from the NPT: I say this because it is neither acceptable nor in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty for a State to continue, after having withdrawn from the Treaty, to benefit from the results of the international cooperation it has enjoyed as a State Party to the NPT, especially if that State has violated the Treaty's provisions. Several contributions on this issue were submitted in the first session of our Preparatory Committee last year and the discussion must be pursued in the interests of all, bearing in mind that there is no intention of re-interpreting Article X of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

8. I now come to the question of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

The President of the French Republic, Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, made on 21 March a major statement on our defence and disarmament policy, and I should like to recall here its principal innovative points regarding disarmament.

France complies fully with its commitments under Article VI of the NPT and wishes to address this matter responsibly and concretely during the present review cycle. France has an exemplary record on nuclear disarmament, a record which has no equal anywhere in the world, as the President of the Republic emphasised in his speech in Cherbourg.

For example, France was, along with the United Kingdom, the *first nuclear-weapon State* to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) ten years ago, in 1998; the *first State* to decide to shut down and dismantle its facilities for production of fissile materials for explosive purposes; the *only State* to have transparently dismantled its nuclear testing site, in the Pacific; the *only State* to have dismantled its ground-to-ground nuclear missiles; the *only State* to have voluntarily reduced by a third the number of its nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.

France has never engaged in the arms race and applies a principle of *strict sufficiency*, which means that France maintains its arsenal at the lowest possible level compatible with the strategic context.

9. President Sarkozy has demonstrated his wish that France should continue to contribute actively and concretely to disarmament.

The Head of State has thus announced a reduction of one third in the number of nuclear weapons, missiles and aircraft in the airborne component of our forces.

The President of the Republic has also decided that France could and should be transparent with regard to its nuclear arsenal, as no State has been hitherto:

- The Head of State has indeed made clear that following the aforementioned reduction, *France's arsenal will contain less than 300 nuclear warheads*, which is less than half the highest number of warheads possessed by my country during the Cold War.
- In addition, the President of the Republic declared that *France has no other weapons besides those in its operational stockpile*, which distinguishes it from the other nuclear powers, for which the size of their stockpiles is treated as a confidential matter.

- He recalled that *none of France's nuclear weapons are targeted* against anyone.
- And lastly, the President of the Republic *invited international experts* to come and witness for themselves the dismantling of our production facilities for fissile military materials in Pierrelatte and Marcoule. [to be updated if applicable]

These declarations are unprecedented on the part of any nuclear-weapon State and their full importance is there for all to see.

10. To conclude, the President of the Republic underlined the fact that reciprocity is the very foundation of collective security and disarmament. The President noted that eight States have declared that they have carried out nuclear tests. And he put forward to the international community an action plan to which he called upon the nuclear powers to give a firm commitment between now and the 2010 NPT Review Conference. This plan is defined by *eight points*:

- universal ratification of the CTBT to permit its entry into force, beginning with the two nuclear-weapon States recognised by the NPT that have signed but not yet ratified it;
- dismantlement of all nuclear testing sites in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community;
- the opening without delay in the Conference on Disarmament of negotiations for a Treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons ("Cut-off Treaty");
- establishment of an immediate moratorium on the production of such materials;
- definition of transparency measures by the five nuclear weapon States recognised by the NPT;
- opening of negotiations for a treaty banning short and intermediate range ground-to-ground missiles;
- accession to and implementation by all of the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOG);
- and, parallel to this, mobilisation on all other areas of disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

France adopts a clear approach with regard to disarmament as well as to security. It plays by the rules of transparency to enhance confidence and suggests that others should join it in doing so. France's commitment to disarmament is expressed in concrete actions and is not limited to speeches and promises. It is contributing in this way to the enhancement of security and stability.

That commitment and the proposed action plan are the contribution my country is pleased to be able to bring to the NPT review process.

However, we can continue to move forward in this direction only if the will to move forward is unanimously shared.

To that end, it must be a priority for us to endeavour during this review cycle to re-establish a more secure international context by uniting in resolute efforts to eliminate proliferation. I must emphasise this once again: if we do not surmount this challenge, we risk leading some countries to consider that their security would be better assured by developing similar capabilities rather than by complying with international non-proliferation norms.

Alongside this, we hope that all the nuclear powers will join with us in promoting and implementing the action plan put forward by the President of the Republic. It is an ambitious programme which we consider to be genuinely capable of taking us forward on the path to both nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

It is because confidence, transparency and reciprocity form the very foundation of collective security and disarmament that we invite the international community, in particular within the forum of the NPT, to tackle the work of achieving the goals thus formulated.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.