



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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2022 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF
NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)

GENERAL DEBATE

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. President,

The NPT has been essential in preventing nuclear proliferation for over fifty years. It embodies a multilateral approach, in which international law provides the basis for the fundamental consensus towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. But its lack of implementation, of article VI in particular, constitutes a serious risk to the treaty's normative strength and its diligently and carefully crafted balance. Liechtenstein hopes for our discussions at this Review Conference to reflect the good faith shown in the NPT's key provision towards a world free of nuclear weapons – a goal that we have set ourselves in the first resolution ever passed by the UN General Assembly.

This Review Conference takes place against the backdrop of negative developments with respect to the NPT: The Security Council, an important guardian of the non-proliferation architecture, has departed from its unity on this agenda when a draft resolution addressing the violations of SC resolutions by the Security Council was vetoed by China and the Russian Federation on 26 May. In addition, the aggression committed against Ukraine has been accompanied by a level of the threat of use of nuclear weapons we have not witnessed in many years, and brought home in stark terms that the risk of the use of nuclear weapons is indeed real. We are also following

with great anxiety the risk to the nuclear safety of the Chernobyl nuclear facilities, which has also been subject of a debate in the Security Council.

Although the Treaty has brought important security gains in non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, each year that passes without meaningful progress on disarmament pushes its original purpose further into the distance and threatens its long-term relevance. Nuclear powers continue to modernize and enhance capabilities in the name of deterrence, escalating tensions and enhancing the momentum of nuclear proliferation, with dire consequences for global security and running directly counter to article VI obligations.

The NPT is clear: Disarmament and non-proliferation must be pursued simultaneously. This balance, envisioned by the treaty's drafters, must be restored. Nuclear powers must uphold their end of the deal and take active measures to rid themselves of nuclear stockpiles. The NPT cannot be interpreted as conferring the right to hold nuclear weapons indefinitely. In this context, we recall the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons - a fully valid decision of the highest legal authority in the world.

In this regard Liechtenstein urges the resumption of talks between parties to the JCPOA, and hopes that all parties will work in good faith to find a common way forward to its full implementation. Any agreement must be in line with the IAEA Additional Protocol, which is the only result compatible with the stated Iranian position that their nuclear program is entirely peaceful.

Liechtenstein attaches the highest importance to safeguarding the NPT's integrity, which can only involve building on the set of our joint commitments, not to backtrack on them. We look forward to a substantive outcome on the basis of the thirteen steps and the sixty-four-point action plan agreed to in 2010, and fully support your efforts in this regard.

Mr. President,

Every use of nuclear weapons constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law and of our basic human values. It inflicts immense suffering on human beings, and is a serious threat to human security. Tests of nuclear weapons still have severe consequences for the health and wellbeing of people today. The broad recognition – political, judicial and societal – of the grave humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons has led to the most significant development in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in recent years – the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which Liechtenstein strongly supports.

The TPNW strengthens the NPT framework in defining new and concrete perspectives for nuclear disarmament, thereby helping implement obligations contained in article VI of the NPT. The TPNW is itself a response to a lack of serious commitment by nuclear weapons States to comply with their disarmament obligations under article VI. Article VI calls on all Parties to the NPT, not only nuclear weapon States, to pursue genuine negotiations on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date, and to nuclear disarmament. The States who voted for the TPNW and ensured its early entry into force, who are also parties to the NPT, have concluded that the clear legal prohibition contained in the TPNW is such an effective measure - and that the open-ended nature of multilateral negotiations testify to their good faith nature. We were pleased to attend the first meeting of its States Parties earlier this year, and sincerely hope for significant further measures as a result, in particular from those who can directly contribute to nuclear disarmament.

I thank you.