

Strengthening the NPT Review Process

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to touch upon the issue of strengthening the NPT review process.

While the NPT recognizes only five States as possessing nuclear weapons, the review process was designed to mitigate such nature through transparency and accountability by nuclear-weapon States. While transparency and accountability in the implementation of non-proliferation obligations by non-nuclear-weapon States is ensured through reports to the IAEA Board of Governors based on the IAEA safeguards, there exists no specific transparency mechanism for nuclear disarmament obligations of nuclear-weapon States. As a result, even though the objective of the review process is to review the implementation by both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States of all provisions of the NPT, its primary objective should remain to review the implementation by the nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear disarmament obligations. As such, it plays the role of an accountability and transparency mechanism for nuclear-weapon States in the absence of such a mechanism as opposed to the case of non-nuclear-weapon States.

Since the NPT was extended indefinitely in 1995, the responsibility for accountability of nuclear-weapon States has become increasingly important. In fact, the decision to indefinitely extend the NPT was adopted as a package with a decision to strengthen the review process.

The fundamental objective of strengthening the review process should thus be transparency and accountability, rather than procedural issues such as reducing the length of meetings or discontinuing summary records.

It is therefore extremely important that transparency be enhanced and reporting be formalized or institutionalized as a concrete measure to ensure transparency and accountability in the context of strengthening the review process. The elaboration of a standard reporting form is also extremely important to institutionalize reporting. The NPDI working paper entitled “Increased transparency in nuclear disarmament” (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.10) also stressed the importance of transparency and reporting not only in nuclear disarmament but also in the context of strengthening the review process.

Japan welcomes the fact that five nuclear-weapon States submitted their reports in 2014, which indicate that they are based on a “common framework”. However, they do not refer to a “standard reporting form” that should have been agreed to by nuclear-weapon States based on the 2010 Action Plan. It is therefore unclear whether the nuclear-weapon States actually reached an agreement on a “standard reporting form” in accordance with the 2010 Action Plan.

Mr. Chairman,

From this perspective, Japan proposes that the following points be included in a final document of the 2015 Review Conference. The idea here is to establish a transparency and reporting mechanism within a specific timeline in the context of strengthening the review process.

- A) Prior to the first Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference to be held in 2017, the nuclear-weapon States, in consultation with non-nuclear-weapon States, will agree on a “standard reporting form” to report on the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations of nuclear-weapon States. The agreed “standard reporting form” will be continuously improved as needed.
- B) Based on the agreed “standard reporting form”, the nuclear-weapon States will report on the implementation of their nuclear disarmament obligations, commitments and undertakings as well as recent developments at the second Preparatory Committee meeting in 2018. To the extent possible, reports must be specific and include numerical information to provide a baseline against which their nuclear disarmament measures can be concretely reviewed. In this regard, the NPDI’s proposal (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/WP.12*) can be a useful point of reference (main items are reproduced below). The nuclear-weapon States are also encouraged to report on the implementation of obligations relating to nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In addition to their reports in 2018, the nuclear-weapon States are encouraged to submit annual reports.
- The number, types (strategic or non-strategic) and status (deployed or non-deployed) of nuclear warheads;
 - The number and, if possible, types of delivery vehicles;
 - The number and types of weapons and delivery systems dismantled and reduced as part of nuclear disarmament efforts;
 - The amount of fissile material produced for military purposes;
 - The measures taken to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.
- C) The non-nuclear-weapon States are also encouraged to report on the implementation of their NPT obligations, commitments and undertakings.
- D) A review session focusing on the nuclear disarmament reports submitted by the nuclear-weapon States will be held during the time allocated to the specific issue of nuclear disarmament at the third Preparatory Committee meeting in 2019. The Chair of the third Preparatory Committee will make an assessment report under his/her own responsibility and submit it to the 2020 Review Conference. Reports submitted by nuclear-weapon States on nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as well as reports by non-nuclear-weapon States can also be reviewed at the third Preparatory Committee at relevant time slots.
- E) The 2020 NPT Review Conference will review the progress made in implementing the reporting mechanism and decide on next steps in terms of development and elaboration.

Mr. Chairman,

Based on these recognitions and ideas, Japan has submitted the Working Paper (NPT/CONF.2015/WP.32) on this important issue and expects that it contributes to the discussions in this Subsidiary body.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.