

Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative
First Committee of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly
Statement for Delivery

Mr Chairman

On behalf of the member states of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) – Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates – I congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Committee during its 72nd session. You can be assured of the NPDI's strong support for your leadership.

We, the members of the NPDI, reaffirm the critical importance of concerted action to achieve our shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We are deeply committed to our core mandate, as declared in the First NPDI Ministerial Statement in September 2010 and reaffirmed in the recent NPDI Ministerial statement of 21 September 2017, to strengthen the NPT based on the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan. The current geopolitical situation underlines the need to strengthen and uphold the NPT and we highlight the need for further bold steps in this respect, including in the 2020 NPT Review Cycle.

Mr Chairman

The rapid development of North Korea's illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programs challenge the established disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, and pose an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat to peace and security of both the region and the broader international community. These activities are clear violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and present a direct challenge to the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime, centered on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The NPDI condemns in the strongest terms the repeated nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches conducted by North Korea. The NPDI strongly urges North Korea to immediately cease its illegal nuclear and ballistic missile related activities, to refrain from conducting further destabilizing and provocative actions, and to abandon all nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

The NPDI calls on the international community to fulfill its obligations to rigorously and fully implement all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in order to maximize pressure on North Korea.

Mr Chairman

The NPDI is intent on contributing to a successful outcome of the current Review Cycle, based on the need to comprehensively address all three pillars of the NPT (peaceful uses, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament). The NPDI's engagement is further reflected in the fact that Netherlands and Poland chair the PrepComs of 2017 and 2018. In this respect, we urge all States Parties to fully comply with their obligations and commitments under the NPT, particularly with the full and prompt implementation of all the actions in the 2010 Action Plan. The NPDI will continue to build on the agreed 2010 NPT Action Plan by developing new ideas

and initiatives that can help build bridges between NPT member states. We reiterate our commitment to continuing our constructive dialogue with the five NPT nuclear weapon states to make progress on strengthening the NPT.

We remain united and focused on the NPT's objective to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. In this vein, the NPDI strongly endorses the reflections of the PrepCom 2017 chair as common ground for NPT member states and their discussions during the remainder of this Review Cycle.

The NPDI resolves to actively work towards further progress and concrete results on nuclear disarmament. Sustained, high-level political leadership as well as unwavering commitment to the NPT are needed to make concrete progress towards achieving deeper reductions in nuclear arsenals worldwide and towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The NPDI remains committed to the further successful implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran, which concretely demonstrates that diplomacy can successfully advance NPT objectives when supported by a broad international consensus. Continued strict implementation of the JCPOA by all sides, based on full respect for the NPT, will help to build the confidence of the international community that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful in nature. We welcome the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) continued activities to monitor and verify Iran's implementation of its JCPOA commitments.

Increasing the transparency of all States Parties on the implementation of NPT commitments remains one of the signature initiatives of the NPDI. The NPDI continues to underscore the need for improved transparency by the nuclear-weapon states on their disarmament undertakings, including information on the quantity, type and status of their nuclear arsenal and delivery systems, quantity of fissile material produced for military purposes, and the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines.

NPDI members are supportive of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), and supportive of the Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification established pursuant to UNGA Resolution A/RES/71/67. We welcome the participation of nuclear weapon states in these processes and continue to press for the inclusion of measures of disarmament verification into the NPT.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another essential component for achieving nuclear disarmament. The NPDI regrets that the Treaty, 21 years after its opening for signature, is yet to come into force. We therefore urge all states that have yet to ratify the CTBT to do so without delay.

For its part, the NPDI is actively working towards the early commencement of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). We welcome the work of the High-level FMCT expert preparatory group on this issue. The NPDI commits its full support to this process and urges the Conference on Disarmament to launch negotiations on such a treaty as soon as possible.

The recent NPDI Ministerial meeting affirmed that, as a diverse cross-regional group of non-nuclear-weapon States, the NPDI will continue to play a constructive and proactive role in facilitating discussions on these and other challenging issues and bridging diverse positions to help reinvigorate the NPT Review Cycle process. Noting that the 2020 Review Conference will mark the 50th anniversary of the NPT's entry into force, the NPDI remains committed to supporting a productive outcome to mark this important occasion by progressing global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation goals.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.