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Statement delivered by

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On behalf of the
Member states of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)

at the Thematic Discussions of the First Committee
18 October 2018
General Assembly Hall, United Nations Headquarters, New York

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 73rd session. You can be assured of the NPDI's strong support for your leadership.

We, the members of the NPDI, reaffirm, in the 50th year since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) opened for signature, 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 NPDI remains intent on contributing to a successful outcome of the current NPT 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 the Netherlands and Poland chaired the 2017 and 2018 NPT PrepComs. We urge all States Parties to fully comply with their obligations and commitments under the NPT, particularly with the full and prompt implementation of 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, especially regarding transparency and further strengthening the NPT review process.

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.

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.

In this context, the NPDI would like to reiterate the need for trust and confidence-building measures to contribute to improve the deteriorated security environment.

Mr. Chairman

Notwithstanding our hope that ongoing dialogue will yield meaningful progress on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, North Korea's WMD and ballistic missile programs are in clear violation of international law and must be dismantled completely, verifiably, and irreversibly.

Increasing the transparency of all States Parties on the implementation of NPT commitments remains a signature NPDI initiative. The NPDI calls on the nuclear-weapon states to use a standard reporting form to provide regular reports to NPT states parties on implementation of their obligations and commitments under the NPT, especially on disarmament efforts. Following useful consultations with other states parties at the 2018 NPT PrepCom, the NPDI will continue to advocate for improvements to all States parties' national reporting practice on NPT implementation, whilst ensuring reporting obligations are not unduly onerous relative to the extent of states' engagement in nuclear fuel cycle activities.

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. We therefore urge all states that have yet to sign and ratify the CTBT to do so without delay – especially the remaining Annex 2 states, whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force.

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 report of the High-level FMCT expert preparatory group on this issue. The NPDI endorses that report's recommendation that the Conference on Disarmament launch negotiations on such a treaty without delay.

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.