

Joint Statement on behalf of a Group of States
NPT Transparency & Accountability
2 August 2024

I deliver this statement on behalf of 46 States.

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of), Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, Vanuatu and my own country New Zealand.

I refer to the Joint Statement delivered by New Zealand on behalf of 28 States at the 1st Preparatory Committee session.

Our governments are fully committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

We consider the NPT to be a vital instrument in the pursuit of international peace and security and reaffirm the need for its full implementation. It is vitally important that we are able to achieve concrete progress on proposals relating to transparency, particularly with respect to implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments by nuclear-weapon States. Enhancing transparency and accountability, and being able to better track and understand efforts to achieve the full implementation of the Treaty, should be prioritised without delay.

Our desire to see the obligations and commitments under the Treaty implemented in full and the total elimination of nuclear weapons realized, has motivated our governments to progress efforts in the NPT review cycle to explore improvements to transparency and accountability, particularly as it relates to implementation of Article VI and its related commitments. Reporting by nuclear-weapon States plays a particularly important role in this area.

Transparency is a fundamental principle that underpins the full implementation of the NPT. Alongside verification and irreversibility, it enables accountability, and functions as a critical component of States' confidence in the Treaty and the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments.

Every decision taken by NPT States Parties since, and including, the Review and Extension Conference in 1995 recognised the centrality of transparency and accountability to our collective endeavour. This was elaborated in the 13 Practical Steps in 2000 and the 2010 Action Plan. Recommendations to improve accountability of implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments were included in the Draft Outcome Document of the 2022 Review Conference. The Chair of the working group on further

strengthening the review process of the NPT included related recommendations (Recommendations 16-20) in his Working Paper tabled on 3 August 2023 (Working Paper 34).

We wish to see the progress already achieved embedded and built upon during this Review Cycle. Our focus should now be on the intersessional period up to, and including, the 3rd Preparatory Committee session in April 2025. This will be an important phase during which we should lay the foundations for a successful outcome of the Review Conference.

Accordingly, we propose an initial trial interactive dialogue, to take place at the 3rd session of the Preparatory Committee. On this occasion, States Parties would dedicate sufficient time during the Preparatory Committee to consider reports by the nuclear-weapon States, including in particular as they relate to implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments.

Nuclear-weapon States would be encouraged to circulate their reports submitted to this review cycle, or their draft reports, ahead of these meetings, present them on this occasion and engage in interactive discussion on them, in a voluntary manner and taking into account national security considerations.

The purpose would be to learn lessons and refine the parameters of an enhanced transparency and reporting process under the NPT, that would then inform any decision to be considered at the Review Conference. This should be conducted without prejudice to any future decisions in the NPT, and with the aim to build confidence in an enhanced transparency and accountability mechanism.

We have been encouraged by forward progress at this Preparatory Committee, including indications of willingness by nuclear-weapon States that suggest they are preparing to respond positively to the calls for enhanced transparency and reporting, including through interactive dialogue.

We encourage the Chair of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee to give priority to this issue in his intersessional consultations, and we look forward to engaging with the Chair and all interested States, well in advance of that session, in order to design the details of the implementation of this interactive dialogue and to reach agreement on our proposal.

I thank you.