



**United Nations Office
for Disarmament Affairs**

**Opening Remarks for Regional Consultations for States Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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As delivered



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Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you here in Hanoi for these regional consultations for States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Viet Nam for hosting us, and to the European Union for its generous support in making these regional dialogues possible.

I also want to warmly congratulate His Excellency Mr. Do Hung Viet on his election as President-designate of the 2026 Review Conference. I have no doubt that his leadership will guide us through this crucial juncture of the Treaty's history.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are at a crossroads. The architecture of multilateral cooperation is buckling, as geopolitical tensions intensify and, in parallel, cooperation and dialogue among nuclear-weapon States stagnate. Decades of hard-won progress in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, which has significantly contributed to international stability, could be reversed. We are in the middle of a qualitative nuclear arms race already and, potentially now, on the cusp of a quantitative one. The instruments that make up the regime therefore are all under threat, and the NPT is no exception.

The NPT, long the foundation of this stability, is under pressure from deepening division and mistrust among States parties. Preserving the regime and, indeed, international peace, must begin with a renewal of States Parties' collective commitment to the Treaty. A third consecutive Review Conference without a consensus outcome may not immediately doom the Treaty.

However, it could lead to a “hollowing out” of the Treaty as States lose faith in its ability to deliver benefits across all three pillars.

It is worth highlighting that cracks in one pillar of the NPT will have a ripple effect across the other two. The Treaty is, after all, based on a the mutually reinforcing nature of those three pillars. Post the 1995 indefinite extension, it rests on a bargain that is very much rooted in balance.

This is why the upcoming Review Conference is so important. It is an occasion to recommit to the NPT’s objectives and purpose and chart a path forward for its continued success.

The purpose of this meeting is both straightforward and also ambitious: to prepare the ground for a successful Review Conference through frank and regionally-focused discussions on how to achieve success in 2026 – not only in terms of agreed text, but renewed political commitment, strengthened cooperation and concrete progress across all three pillars of the Treaty.

So, we are here to listen, to exchange, and to build common ground. At the informal consultations for all NPT States Parties earlier this month in New York, the President-designate underscored his intention to be available, inclusive and to listen to all points of view. Our work over the next two days is intended to demonstrate that commitment.

These are consultations, not negotiations. They are therefore an opportunity for the President-designate, in particular, to understand regional perspectives and priorities – and to identify the practical pathways that can bring us closer together and closer to success.

And while there are some differences of opinion on what success should look like, we do know that it will require flexibility, creative thinking, and above all, a sense of shared purpose.

Let me now turn briefly to some of the substantive areas that could inform our deliberations, by looking at the Treaty's three pillars.

Firstly, **disarmament** lies at the heart of the Treaty's grand bargain, yet it is also the area where frustrations with the lack of progress are most acute. For many in this region – including communities directly affected by the use and testing of nuclear weapons – disarmament is not an abstract goal but a deeply human necessity. The voices from those affected communities remind us that the humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons transcend borders and also generations.

Asia and the Pacific have a proud record of leadership in this domain. From the Treaties of Bangkok and Rarotonga to active engagement in global nuclear disarmament initiatives, the region has demonstrated that security without nuclear weapons is both possible and also beneficial.

Looking ahead to 2026, a key question will be how States can strengthen the implementation of the NPT through the long overdue fulfilment of their disarmament commitments. The fulfilment of the commitments agreed to in 2010, for example, would go a long way to the collective goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The NPT's preamble is very clear about the dangers posed by nuclear war and the need to take every measure to avert such a conflict. I would argue that, given the catastrophic consequences that would result, there is a need for immediate measures to prevent any use of nuclear weapons. This could include enhanced dialogue, crisis communication, and restraint in nuclear doctrines – to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used under any circumstances.

The second pillar, **non-proliferation**, remains indispensable for maintaining international peace and security.

The Asia-Pacific region reflects the full diversity of nuclear experience – from States possessing nuclear weapons to advanced nuclear industries to emerging users of nuclear technology.

This diversity makes regional cooperation not only desirable but essential. Strengthening safeguards and export control frameworks, enhancing transparency, and addressing the implications of new technological developments — including naval nuclear propulsion and the convergence of nuclear and emerging technologies — can help reinforce confidence in the regime.

The nuclear industry is also seemingly at a tipping point, with multiple new reactor designs likely to enter the market in the coming years. Innovations will obviously need to be safeguarded, and I think the Review Conference could play a role in ensuring that new designs are proliferation-resistant and maintain the highest standards of safety and security.

At the same time, the universality of the Treaty remains incomplete. Asia and the Pacific have an important role to play in promoting adherence to the NPT and upholding the norms against the spread of nuclear weapons.

The third pillar, **peaceful uses**, represents the tangible benefits of the Treaty for sustainable development. Across this region, nuclear science and technology are contributing to health care, agriculture, climate adaptation and clean energy.

The 2026 Review Conference should reaffirm the importance of ensuring that all States Parties – particularly developing countries – have equitable access to these benefits, while maintaining the highest standards of safety, security and non-proliferation.

I encourage you to explore how the Review Conference can strengthen the nexus between sustainable development and peaceful uses, build capacity across the region and promote partnerships that leave no one behind.

I would like to underscore that **regional organizations and arrangements** in the Asia-Pacific region, from the South-East Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone to export control and safety cooperation, play an indispensable role in achieving NPT implementation and offer valuable lessons for others.

Dear Colleagues,

The next Review Conference offers an opportunity not only to reaffirm commitments, but also to renew faith – faith in the Treaty, faith in diplomacy and faith in multilateralism itself.

There is no fixed template for what a Review Conference outcome looks like. We should, therefore, think creatively about what success can mean to best ensure that the 2026 Review Conference strengthens the Treaty and the trust that underpins it.

Every State Party has a stake in this effort, and every region – including Asia and the Pacific – must contribute ideas, energy and political will. The NPT has endured for more than five decades by adapting to change. We must do so again, with realism and also with hope.

Let us therefore use these two days in Hanoi to listen to one another, to challenge each other in a constructive manner, and to imagine together what a successful outcome in 2026 should look like.

I wish you productive deliberations and look forward to the insights and recommendations that will emerge from your discussions.

I thank you very much for your attention. Let us get to work.