

2010 NPT Review Conference

The NPT Review Conference in 2010 presents an opportunity for world leaders to revive their commitment to the vision of a world free from nuclear weapons and revert to the fundamental bargain of the treaty. There is a need to restore credibility and confidence in the regime ...¹

Introduction

- 11.1 As provided for under Article VIII of the NPT, a conference of the parties has been held every five years since the Treaty entered into force to review its operation. These conferences have had varying degrees of success with the most recent conference in 2005 generally considered a failure after parties were unable to agree on a substantive outcome. A repeat of the outcomes of the 2005 Conference would be detrimental to the NPT and the broader non-proliferation regime. Many hopes therefore hinge upon the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Previous NPT Review Conferences

- 11.2 In his submission, Professor Joseph Camilleri provided a summary of some of the outcomes of previous conferences.
- 11.3 According to Professor Camilleri, the conferences held between 1975 and 1990 usually focussed on:

1 Dr Hans Blix, *Submission No. 78*, p. 2.

- progress in nuclear disarmament;
 - enhanced security assurances by the nuclear weapon states;
 - non-ratification by states such as South Africa and Israel;
 - the ongoing question of the efficacy of IAEA safeguards; and
 - export controls on nuclear materials.
- 11.4 The conferences in 1975 and 1985 succeeded in producing a Final Document, while those in 1980 and 1990 did not.²
- 11.5 Article X of the NPT provides for the Conference of Parties to decide on its indefinite extension 25 years after it enters into force. At the 1995 Review Conference, the majority of parties expressed support for indefinite continuation of the Treaty.
- 11.6 In 1995, States Parties also agreed that a set of *Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament* be drawn up and implemented, and that the review process should be strengthened. According to Professor Camilleri, the intent was to create a non-proliferation regime that was permanent and more accountable.
- 11.7 Professor Camilleri notes, however, that no consensus was reached on what, if anything, should be done in relation to possible non compliance by Iraq and North Korea.³
- 11.8 The 1995 Conference also saw the adoption of a resolution on the Middle East.⁴ The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom argued that the goal of a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone was:
- ... at the heart of the bargain to extend the Treaty indefinitely in 1995; it is bound to a related, identified goal of states parties - achieving the Treaty's universality; and it has implications for global security concerns, including the Middle East peace process.⁵
- 11.9 The 2000 NPT Review Conference saw agreement on a program of action for nuclear disarmament, generally known as the 13 practical steps, which included an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon states to total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Professor Camilleri argued that

2 Professor Joseph Camilleri, *Submission No. 66*, p. 6.

3 Professor Joseph Camilleri, *Submission No. 66*, p. 6.

4 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office, *Submission No. 29*, p. 4.

5 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *Submission No. 65*, p. 4.

these steps envisaged a less radical and more incremental approach to nuclear disarmament than had been previously envisaged.⁶

11.10 In summary, the 13 practical steps were:

- early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT);
- a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of the CTBT;
- negotiations for a non-discriminatory, multilateral and international and effectively verifiable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty;
- establishing a subsidiary body within the Conference on Disarmament with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament;
- the principle of irreversibility was to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures;
- an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals;
- early entry into force and full implementation of START II, conclusion of START III and preserving and strengthening the Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems;
- completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the US, Russian Federation and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);
- steps by all nuclear weapon states leading to nuclear disarmament, including:
 - ⇒ unilateral reductions of nuclear arsenals;
 - ⇒ increased transparency;
 - ⇒ reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons;
 - ⇒ agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapon systems;
 - ⇒ a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies; and
 - ⇒ engagement of all nuclear weapon states in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.

6 Professor Joseph Camilleri, *Submission No. 66*, p. 7.

- fissile material no longer required by the nuclear weapon states for military purposes to be placed under IAEA or other relevant international verification;
- reaffirmation that the ultimate objective is general and complete disarmament under effective international control;
- regular reports by all states on implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4(c) of the 1995 Decision on *Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament*; and
- further development of disarmament verification capabilities.⁷

11.11 The period leading up to the 2005 NPT Review Conference saw the breakdown of collaborative approaches, with an increasing focus by some countries, and particularly the United States, upon ‘counter-proliferation’, nuclear terrorism and rogue states.⁸ The 2005 Conference was unable to agree a substantive outcome, partly because of disagreements about progress made in implementing the 1995 and 2000 Review Conference outcomes.⁹ Accordingly:

... just 10 years after the NPT had been extended indefinitely, the 2005 Review Conference ended in pretty much abject failure.¹⁰

2010 NPT Review Conference

11.12 There have been three Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings in the lead up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference. These were held in Vienna (2007), Geneva (2008) and New York (2009).¹¹

11.13 The 2009 PrepCom meeting signalled a possible change in international attitudes compared with those displayed in recent years. Ms Caroline

7 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Final Document*, Volume I, NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II), New York, 2000, pp. 14-15.

8 Professor Joseph Camilleri, *Submission No. 66*, p. 7.

9 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office, *Submission No. 29*, p. 4.

10 Dr Ron Huisken, ‘Can we live without the nuclear abyss? The task ahead of the Australia-Japan nuclear commission’, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, p. 13, *Exhibit No. 92*.

11 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Final Report of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, NPT/CONF.2010/1, 20 May 2009, p. 2.

Millar, Australia's Ambassador for Disarmament and a member of the Australian delegation to the PrepCom, told the Committee that previous NPT meetings had been characterised by divisions over:

- real or perceived lack of progress on nuclear disarmament;
- the relative weight given to non-proliferation and compliance, including safeguards and export controls; and
- developing countries' concerns about access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.¹²

11.14 The reluctance of the nuclear weapon states to acknowledge their commitments in previous meetings had also been a significant obstacle.¹³

11.15 In contrast, Ms Miller informed the Committee that the 2009 PrepCom had 'exceeded expectations', with key procedural issues adopted smoothly; constructive and substantive debate on all aspects of the Treaty's operation; and consideration of substantive recommendations.¹⁴ Further:

... this PrepCom has been conducted in a spirit of cooperation and restraint. There seems to be increased recognition of the collective security benefits provided by the NPT. Moreover, the critical importance of nuclear disarmament has been reaffirmed, notably by the nuclear weapon states. Key nuclear weapon states have acknowledged commitments given during previous review cycles, including the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Previously divisive issues have been broached more constructively, notably serious non-compliance issues that threaten international security and constitute serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime: Iran, Syria and North Korea. We have seen some useful discussions on strengthening measures to deal with withdrawals from the NPT. At the same time, it is clear that many of the key underlying issues remain, including concerns by developing countries that strengthened non-proliferation measures do not impede their 'inalienable right', NPT article IV, to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.¹⁵

11.16 The Committee notes that the PrepCom considered three specific blocs of issues:

12 Ms Caroline Millar, *Transcript of Evidence*, 14 May 2009, p. 18.

13 Ms Caroline Millar, *Transcript of Evidence*, 14 May 2009, p. 18.

14 Ms Caroline Millar, *Transcript of Evidence*, 14 May 2009, p. 19.

15 Ms Caroline Millar, *Transcript of Evidence*, 14 May 2009, p. 19.

- nuclear disarmament and security assurances;
 - regional issues, including with respect to the Middle East and implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East; and
 - other provisions of the Treaty, including withdrawal.¹⁶
- 11.17 Significantly, the PrepCom agreed to a Provisional Agenda for the 2010 NPT Conference, which included:
- a review of the operation of the Treaty, taking into account the decisions and the resolutions adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference:
 - ⇒ implementation of the Treaty provisions relating to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, disarmament and international peace and security;
 - ⇒ security assurances;
 - ⇒ implementation of the Treaty provisions relating to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, safeguards and nuclear-weapon-free zones; and
 - ⇒ implementation of the Treaty provisions relating to the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
 - the role of the Treaty in promoting non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and of nuclear disarmament in strengthening international peace and security; and
 - measures aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Treaty and achieving its universality.¹⁷

Issues for the 2010 NPT Review Conference

- 11.18 In light of discussions throughout the inquiry, the Committee considers that one of the most important outcomes for the 2010 NPT Review
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16 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Final Report of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, NPT/CONF.2010/1, 20 May 2009, p. 6.

17 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Final Report of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, NPT/CONF.2010/1, 20 May 2009, pp. 49-50.

Conference must be a rebuilding of confidence in the non-proliferation regime and particularly the NPT. Parties to the Conference should reaffirm the value of the NPT and their pre-existing commitments to a world without nuclear weapons.

- 11.19 However, commitments need to be accompanied by concrete action. The Committee concurs with Ms Caroline Millar's statement that 'there needs to be some kind of blueprint, some kind of action plan'¹⁸.
- 11.20 The Committee understands that this is one of the key contributions that the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament hopes to achieve. The Committee was informed by the Hon Gareth Evans AO QC that the Commission intends to structure its report around an action plan of short, medium and long term objectives.¹⁹
- 11.21 The Conference should also attempt to strengthen the NPT by reaching agreement on measures to deal with identified challenges. This includes Iran's possible non-compliance with its NPT obligations, withdrawal of North Korea from the NPT, as well as emerging problems with countries such as Syria, which is currently under investigation by the IAEA. The Committee noted in chapter eight that the ongoing failure of the international community to adequately deal with these issues undermines the NPT and is a threat to international security.
- 11.22 The Committee was pleased to note that the Australian delegation to the 2009 PrepCom emphasised the need to increase disincentives to withdraw from the NPT and to strengthen and formalise international responses to any cases of withdrawal, including through automatic referral to the UN Security Council.²⁰
- 11.23 In evidence to the inquiry the Committee received many suggestions as to what the 2010 NPT Review Conference should achieve. For example, in his submission, Professor Camilleri argued that the 2010 Conference must:
- Re-examine the nuclear fuel cycle – especially in the event of a significant expansion of the nuclear industry – and consider how Parties can be prevented from using Article IV as a route to acquiring nuclear weapons;
 - Develop a universal and greatly strengthened system of safeguards;

18 Ms Caroline Millar, *Transcript of Evidence*, 14 May 2009, p. 20.

19 Hon Gareth Evans AO QC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 February 2009, p. 5.

20 Statement by Mr John Sullivan, Assistant Secretary, Arms Control and Counter Proliferation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 4 May 2009, Third Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, New York, p. 4, *Exhibit No. 91*.

- Reduce the likelihood that any Party would consider withdrawal from, or diminished support, for the NPT;
 - Create a powerful impetus for nuclear disarmament.²¹
- 11.24 Professor Camilleri also supported pushing for universal ratification of the Additional Protocol.²²
- 11.25 Dr Marianne Hanson argued that Australia should focus upon retaining the integrity of the NPT. The three key areas she identified were: encouraging the existing nuclear weapon states to fulfil their obligations under Article VI, strengthening Article X, and encouraging the United States to work more closely with India to secure closer monitoring of its facilities.²³
- 11.26 Ms Martine Letts considered that the Conference should focus upon the Treaty as a whole and mechanisms to improve it. She identified concrete action on specific steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and managing civil nuclear energy as well as a more up-to-date version of the 13 practical steps as possible objectives. Ms Letts also argued that the Conference should be very careful not to allow Iran to overtake deliberations on the remainder of the agenda.²⁴

Disarmament

- 11.27 As already noted, the nuclear weapons states gave an unequivocal undertaking at the 2000 NPT Review Conference to accomplish total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. In his submission, the High Commissioner for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio Duarte, commented that many states perceive there to be an 'implementation gap' between official words and deeds in the area of disarmament.²⁵
- 11.28 Dr Sue Wareham, President of the Medical Association for the Prevention on War (Australia), argued that the 2010 NPT Conference should hold nuclear weapon states accountable for their failure to comply with Article VI of the NPT and call for these states:
- ... to demonstrate time-bound plans for nuclear disarmament.²⁶

21 Professor Joseph Camilleri, *Submission No. 66*, p. 8.

22 Professor Joseph Camilleri, *Submission No. 66*, p. 10.

23 Dr Marianne Hanson, *Submission No. 79*, p. 2.

24 Ms Martine Letts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2009, p. 15.

25 Mr Sergio Duarte, *Submission No. 81*, p. 2.

26 Dr Sue Wareham, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 March 2009, p. 31.

- 11.29 The Committee has already discussed the impact that the perceived failure of the nuclear weapon states to realise their nuclear disarmament commitments is having upon attitudes towards non-proliferation. Countries that have foregone nuclear weapons are being asked to accept stronger non-proliferation measures, such as the Additional Protocol, while perceiving that these states have failed to live up to their end of the NPT bargain.
- 11.30 The Committee considers that the nuclear weapon states need to not only reinforce their commitment to disarmament, but to back it up with substantial and identifiable action to support that commitment. The recent agreement between the United States and Russia on a successor agreement to START is one step in that direction.
- 11.31 The Committee considers that the nuclear weapon states could also take more action on confidence-building measures, including:
- de-emphasising the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies;
 - progressing disarmament through de-alerting and removing weapons from deployment;
 - no first use commitments;
 - ceasing replacement and modernisation projects; and
 - providing greater transparency.
- 11.32 In this regard, the Committee is pleased to note that at the May 2009 PrepCom, the Australian delegation called on the states possessing nuclear weapons, consistent with their Article VI obligations and outcomes of previous NPT Review Conferences, to exercise:
- ...leadership in reaffirming their shared vision for a world without these terrible weapons; and leadership in taking concrete steps to disarm.²⁷
- 11.33 While noting that there have been real cuts in the numbers of nuclear weapons since the end of the Cold War, the Australian delegation also urged all nuclear weapon states to commit to 'faster, deeper and more irreversible reductions in all categories of nuclear weapons'.²⁸

27 Statement by Mr John Sullivan, Assistant Secretary, Arms Control and Counter Proliferation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 4 May 2009, Third Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, New York, p.1, *Exhibit No. 91*.

28 Statement by Mr John Sullivan, Assistant Secretary, Arms Control and Counter Proliferation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 4 May 2009, Third Preparatory Committee

- 11.34 Further, the Australia delegation advocated for the nuclear weapons states to reduce the role of weapons in security policies and reduce the operational status of such weapons.
- 11.35 The CTBT and a FMCT are widely considered to be amongst the next critical steps in progressing nuclear disarmament. The Committee considers that the 2010 NPT Conference also provides the opportunity to promote and advocate these treaties.

Recommendation 15

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government seeks to promote agreement to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Additional Protocol

- 11.36 The 'Vienna Group of Ten', which includes Australia, submitted a working paper to the PrepCom that called for the recognition of the Additional Protocol as an integral part of the IAEA safeguards system and the affirmation that a comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an Additional Protocol represent the verification standard required under Article III of the NPT.
- 11.37 The Vienna Group of Ten also proposed that the Review Conference:
- ... urge all states that have not yet done so to conclude and bring into force an Additional Protocol as soon as possible.²⁹
- 11.38 The Committee strongly supports the priority that the Australian government places upon universalisation of the Additional Protocol and agrees that this is an important issue for the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, New York, p. 3, *Exhibit No. 91*.

29 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Article III and preambular paragraphs 4 and 5, especially in their relationship to article IV and preambular paragraphs 6 and 7 (compliance and verification)*, Working paper submitted by Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden ('the Vienna Group of Ten'), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.14, 4 May 2009, p. 1.

Recommendation 16

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government seeks to promote universalisation of the Additional Protocol to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

13 Practical Steps

11.39 Few of the 13 practical steps agreed in 2000 have yet been implemented.³⁰

11.40 A recommitment to and implementation of the 13 practical steps is one of the key outcomes that participants in the inquiry advocated for 2010.³¹ United Justice Australia argued:

Australia should, at the 2010 Review Conference and in the international sphere in the time leading up to this meeting, voice its support for the implementation of the 13 point plan agreed on at the 2000 Review Conference. Our efforts in 2010 should be part of a plan to unequivocally support United Nations resolutions that promote disarmament and non-proliferation, and to condemn all nuclear weapons states which are failing to fulfil their disarmament obligations.³²

11.41 This view was also expressed by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), who considered that an agreed timetable for implementing the action plan should be included in the Final Report of the Conference.³³

11.42 The IPPNW saw the key steps as:

- bringing the CTBT into force;
- taking all existing nuclear weapons off alert;
- negotiating and completing a treaty banning the production of fissile materials;

30 *Reinforcing the Global Nuclear Order for Peace and Prosperity: the Role of the IAEA to 2020 and Beyond*, Report prepared by an independent Commission at the request of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, May 2008, p. 4; International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, *Submission No. 70*, p. 8.

31 Anti-Nuclear Alliance of WA, *Submission No. 75*, p. 15; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *Submission No. 65*, p. 4.

32 United Justice Australia, *Submission No. 27*, p. 3.

33 International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, *Submission No. 42*, p. 5.

- instituting key confidence-building measures, including no-first-use declarations and negative security assurances; and
- stopping all programs to build new nuclear weapons and the infrastructure with which to build them.³⁴

Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

- 11.43 The Committee understands that one of the key issues for a number of countries at the 2010 Conference will be progress on a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. Agreement on the establishment of a zone was one of the outcomes of the 1995 NPT Review Conference. Some states have argued that there has been little serious attempt to implement the resolution since then.³⁵
- 11.44 At the 2009 PrepCom, a number of papers on this issue were submitted, including by Australia.³⁶ Several states called for progress on a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and sought the agreement of the Conference for specific action, including an international conference to initiate negotiations and a subsidiary body or standing committee to the Conference to follow up on implementation.³⁷
- 11.45 In its paper, Australia emphasised the need to work towards an outcome for the 2010 NPT Review Conference that would assist in progressing a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, including:
- universality of the NPT with accession by Israel as a non nuclear weapon state;
 - adoption of the Additional Protocol by all Middle East States;

34 International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, *Submission No. 42*, p. 5.

35 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Arab working paper submitted by the United Arab Emirates on behalf of the Group of Arab States, which are States members of the League of Arab States to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, New York, 4-15 May 2009*, NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.23, p. 1.

36 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/3 (Australia), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/5 (Canada), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/7 (Iran), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.1 (Iran), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.20 (Egypt), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.20 (Palestine), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.23 (Group of Arab States), viewed 1 September 2009, <<http://www.un.org>>.

37 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/7 (Iran), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.20 (Egypt), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.21 (Palestine), NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.23 (Group of Arab States), viewed 1 September 2009, <<http://www.un.org>>.

- cooperation by Iran and Syria with the IAEA;
 - membership of and adherence to other existing treaties; and
 - efforts by all Member States to work for a secure regional political environment.³⁸
- 11.46 The Committee understands that there is a general belief that progress on this issue will be essential to the overall success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and supports efforts to achieve a substantive outcome in 2010.

The involvement of parliamentarians in the 2010 NPT Review Conference

- 11.47 The Committee considers there is an opportunity for parliamentarians to participate in the 2010 NPT Conference through a side event hosted jointly by Australia and Indonesia. This idea was discussed by the Committee delegation with Indonesia's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. The Committee considers that given the importance of the Asian region to non-proliferation and disarmament concerns and the likely growth of peaceful nuclear programs in the region, this idea should be pursued. Indonesia is also the Chair of the Non-aligned Movement, so represents a large number of countries with some very specific views concerning the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.
- 11.48 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government raise this idea with the Indonesian Government. Such an event would not only encourage greater parliamentary involvement in these issues, it could also be an important confidence building measure.

38 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Steps to promote the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East*, NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/3, 6 May 2009. Canada made a number of similar points in its paper.

Recommendation 17

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government pursue, in conjunction with the Indonesian Government, an event for parliamentarians at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2010 NPT Review Conference) designed to encourage more active parliamentary involvement in these issues.

Conclusion

11.49 While the ultimate goal of abolishing all nuclear weapons is not going to be achieved in the short term, the Committee considers there is no reason why a number of non-proliferation and disarmament objectives cannot be realised quickly. These have been identified throughout this report. In evidence to the Committee, Professor John Langmore argued:

The point of these incremental steps is that they all build up confidence that movement towards disarmament might be a possibility...³⁹

11.50 The 2010 NPT Review Conference is the ideal place to commit, or in many cases, recommit to these steps. The Committee would support the efforts of the Australian delegation to the Conference to achieve progress on these issues, all of which are important mechanisms to reaffirm the world's commitment to the obligations laid down in the NPT and other nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament treaties. As Dr Hans Blix has argued:

We do not need a new roadmap or a groundbreaking political formula. The blueprints for progress are on the table. But concerted action is needed and a new international consensus needs to be formed. Alliances across borders and continents – in the form of NGO-networks, International Commissions of Experts, and inter-Parliamentary groups – are indispensable in shaping a common agenda for the 2010 NPT Review Conference and beyond.⁴⁰

39 Professor John Langmore, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 March 2009, p. 30.

40 Dr Hans Blix, *Submission No. 78*, p. 4.