

Is the NPT in Trouble? Setting the Stage for the 2015 Review Conference

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The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) regime once again faces a serious challenge in the run-up to the NPT Review Conference scheduled for April 27 to May 22, 2015. This can be attributed to the perceived delay in implementation of commitments made by the states parties at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Although the 2015 Review Conference is still half a year away, shaky U.S.–Russia relations, the armed conflict directly involving the Israelis and Palestinians, and the outcome of the U.S. mid-term elections will not be conducive to the review process. Both the nuclear-weapon states and the non-nuclear-weapon states should redouble their efforts to narrow their differences on key issues.

Keywords NPT, nuclear disarmament, Middle East, nuclear nonproliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy

Introduction

The current Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) review cycle that began in 2012 will culminate in the 2015 Review Conference in New York which will review the operation of the entire Treaty. Now is the time to revisit the NPT. Since its entry into force in 1970, the NPT has been, and still remains, the only available international legal instrument that aims to achieve the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. Following the use of atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, humankind realized that the proliferation of this horrific weapon represented the most dangerous peril to international peace and security, threatening the total annihilation of human life on the planet. The idea of creating an international treaty to regulate the proliferation of nuclear weapons was first put forward in the 1950s, when the UN General Assembly initiated the discourse based on the individual proposals presented by Ireland, Poland, and Sweden. After France and China joined the nuclear club with their successful nuclear tests in 1960 and 1964 respectively, the

pace of the debate accelerated. Following negotiations on the draft treaty for close to 10 years, the United States and the Soviet Union submitted, in 1968, a joint draft to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva. It was finally adopted at the UN General Assembly in June of that year, and came into effect on March 5, 1970 (UNODA 2014).

Although it is a short text, the scope of the Treaty is so broad that all the major issues pertaining to the nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament discourse today are legally connected to its following 11 articles:

- Article I (nonproliferation obligations of the nuclear-weapon states);
- Article II (nonproliferation obligations of the non-nuclear-weapon states);
- Article III (IAEA safeguards and export controls);
- Article IV (peaceful uses of nuclear energy);
- Article V (peaceful nuclear explosions);
- Article VI (nuclear disarmament);
- Article VII (security assurances and nuclear-weapon-free zones);
- Article VIII (review conference);
- Article IX (universality);
- Article X (withdrawal and extension); and
- Article XI (deposit of instrument of ratification).

As such, for more than forty years, the Treaty has provided a conceptual framework essential for understanding and properly addressing a wide range of issues that relate to nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

Delicate Balance and Intrinsic Flaws of the Treaty

Since its inception the NPT has been a cornerstone of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, limiting the number of countries in possession of nuclear weapons to a minimum. Despite its title, it includes another very important element which obligates the nuclear-weapon states to pursue nuclear disarmament. What made this deal possible was a grand bargain between the nonproliferation obligations assumed by the non-nuclear-weapon states and the disarmament obligations imposed upon the nuclear-weapon states, plus the latter's sharing of nuclear technology for peaceful uses to compensate the former for not acquiring nuclear weapons. The Treaty therefore rests upon a delicate balance among the three intertwined pillars of nuclear disarmament (Article VI), nuclear nonproliferation (Articles I, II, and III), and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy (Article IV). If one pillar is not implemented, this can have a negative impact on the other pillars (Goldblat 1990; Thayer 1995).

The Treaty, however, exhibits intrinsic flaws emanating from the dual nature

of nuclear technology. Peaceful nuclear activities may ultimately be diverted for military purposes, depending on the intent of the users. In the real world, a state party to the NPT would be free to pursue the most sensitive parts of the nuclear fuel cycle (enrichment and reprocessing) under the pretext of the peaceful use of nuclear technology guaranteed in Article IV, as long as the activities remained under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. The party could then acquire nuclear material and technology necessary to manufacture a nuclear device, decide to withdraw from the Treaty in conformity with Article X, and finally break out. And nothing in this process would be illegal. In view of this, a group of fuel-cycle countries have been taking the lead in closing the loopholes in and outside of the IAEA (Sauer 2006; Preez 2006).

Article VI on nuclear disarmament is another crucial area which has been the subject of different interpretations and disputes. This provision mandates that “each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” No clear disarmament timeline was set for the nuclear-weapon states, and no monitoring institutions or mechanisms were put in place. This ambiguity has been the source of an imbalance in the obligations between the nuclear haves and have-nots, and exposes the fundamental difference between the two sides in their interpretation of, and positions on, Article VI (Kwon 2005).

Modus Operandi of the Review Cycle

The NPT stood at a crossroads at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference when the states parties had to decide whether to extend the Treaty indefinitely or only for an additional fixed period(s) pursuant to Article X (2). A final compromise was reached whereby the indefinite extension of the Treaty was agreed on a *quid pro quo* basis: The nuclear-weapon states committed to the full implementation of their disarmament obligations and of the Middle East Resolution that was adopted at the same conference while the non-nuclear weapon states agreed to extend the Treaty. In a separate decision on “Strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty,” it was agreed that a preparatory meeting would be held every year for the three years leading up to each Review Conference.

The discussions in the preparatory meetings and the Review Conferences are conducted on the basis of the three pillars of the NPT—nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The various subjects relating to each of the three pillars are assigned to three Main Committees to be established under the authority of each Chairperson. Traditionally nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation issues are addressed

in Main Committee I, safeguards and other nonproliferation issues in Main Committee II, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Main Committee III. As the Review Conference seeks to assess the operation of the entire Treaty, every provision is allocated among the Main Committees for their review. The specific mandates of each respective Committee are allocated as follows (UN 2005a):

- Main Committee I: nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, security assurances
- Main Committee II: safeguards, export controls, nuclear-weapon-free zones, regional issues
- Main Committee III: peaceful uses of nuclear energy, withdrawal, institutionalization

To deepen the discussions on certain issues of interest to the majority of the parties, three subsidiary bodies have been formed under each Main Committee and the outcome of debates at each of these bodies is reported to the parent Main Committee. Subsidiary Body I discusses and identifies new, practical measures relating to nuclear disarmament. Subsidiary Body II covers regional issues, including the Middle East. Subsidiary Body III deals with the withdrawal from, and the institutionalization of, the NPT. This practice has been firmly established over the past decade (*ibid.*).

These are the issues that, if not properly addressed, could hinder progress in the full implementation of the Treaty and possibly even derail the Review Conference. In fact, all of these issues have been and will remain, for a considerable time, the fault lines that crisscross the interests of various parties or groups of parties in the NPT process. Of the specific issues that remain contentious between the nuclear-weapon states and the non-nuclear-weapon states, the most important obstacles continue to be nuclear disarmament and the Middle East (Collina, Garrison, and Horner 2014).

Taking Stock of the 2010 Final Document

For over a decade intermittent progress has been made in the review process. It produced as a major achievement the 13 practical steps toward nuclear disarmament adopted at the 2000 Review Conference. After a failure to reach an agreement in 2005 (Kittrie 2007), at the 2010 Review Conference the Final Document was adopted by consensus; it included 64 action plans across the three pillars of the Treaty and several practical steps leading to the full implementation of the 1995 Middle East Resolution (UN 2010). The 2010 Review Conference met in the midst of a much changed environment in which the new Obama Administration had adopted a moderate nuclear weapons policy and the U.S.-

Russian reset of relations had culminated in the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) just prior to the Review Conference, thus contributing to the success of the meeting (Johnson 2009).

The Final Document consists of both the substantive part (Part I) and the procedural part (Part II), and its key elements lie in Part I. The parties at the Review Conference have reviewed and assessed the operation and the status of implementation of each provision of the Treaty (“review part”), and explored possible future steps (“forward-looking part”). These were captured in Part I.

As in previous meetings, the nuclear-weapon states and the non-nuclear-weapon states encountered difficulties coming to terms with each other and voiced different views in reviewing the implementation of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation obligations. As a result, they could only reach a solution by adding a footnote in the first page of the document, stating: “The present review is the responsibility of the President and reflects to the best of his knowledge what transpired at the Review Conference with regard to matters under review” (UN 2010, 2).

In the forward-looking part, both sides agreed upon the proposed 64 actions and other measures relating to the Middle East, which made possible the adoption of the Final Document by including the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Arab states. In addition, the nuclear-weapon states were to “promptly engage with” the various practical disarmament measures and submit reports to the preparatory meeting in 2014. They further agreed that “the 2015 Review Conference will take stock and consider the next steps for the full implementation of Article VI” (*ibid.*, 19-31). Although the disarmament language was watered down to include merely “having consultations” on disarmament among the nuclear-weapon states, the document may be considered a success as it secured a real commitment to actions by these states.

The nuclear-weapon states—the United States in particular—made concessions on the Middle East issue, but were able to soften into general and vague terms the disarmament demands from the non-nuclear-weapon states. Furthermore, they succeeded in obtaining the agreement of the non-nuclear-weapon states to incorporate reference to the issues that were their highest priorities, such as the recognition of the significance of the Additional Protocol, multilateral nuclear export controls, and continuing the discussions on the assurances of nuclear fuel supply (*ibid.*, 25-26, 28).

Major Points of Contention

The nuclear-weapon states have every reason to preserve the NPT in its current form as it provides them with unique leverage. As it is, the Treaty recognizes the possession of nuclear weapons by the five nuclear-weapon states and encourages

their nuclear disarmament within only an unspecified time frame, and at the same time it halts the proliferation of nuclear weapons among the vast majority of non-nuclear-weapon states. As long as it remains in effect, the Treaty could help prevent all the non-nuclear-weapon states from developing nuclear weapons. Within the NPT process, the nuclear-weapon states have shown a rare instance of close coordination and collaboration in defense of their common position (Mukhatzhanova 2014).

The non-nuclear-weapon states gave up the option of terminating the Treaty in 1995, which they had criticized as unfair and unbalanced in the rights and obligations between the nuclear haves and the nuclear have-nots. They determined that, unfair as it was, the Treaty had been able to stop the further spread of the horrific weapons among the nations of the world. As such, the Treaty was broadly in their own interest. With this stance, however, they lost the leverage to put pressure on the nuclear-weapon states for the immediate implementation of their nuclear disarmament obligations in Article VI. When they are truly frustrated with the slow pace of the disarmament process, or the implementation of the Middle East Resolution, the non-nuclear-weapon states can now only threaten to withdraw from the Treaty in the individual exercise of their right under Article X. On balance, then, the nuclear-weapon states have a stronger interest in terms of security benefits to conserve the Treaty than the non-nuclear-weapon states.

Not all of the previous eight Review Conferences have adopted a final outcome document. Although the document was often seen as a measure of the success or failure of the Review Conference, the absence of a final document has not seriously undermined the fate of the Treaty. If the discussions, albeit acrimonious, have been rich and in-depth on the main issues, the Review Conference has been considered successful. Against this backdrop, let us now turn to the two major debates in the NPT review process that will continue to be the most contentious at the next Review Conference in 2015.

Nuclear Disarmament

Positions of Fundamental Difference

In the discourse on nuclear disarmament, the five nuclear-weapon states comprise a minority compared to the majority of non-nuclear-weapon states. As the nuclear-dependent (but non-nuclear-weapon) states—those in The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the bilateral alliance systems—may take an ambivalent approach to the issue, the nuclear-weapon states are under heavy pressure from the Non-Aligned Movement, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), and other groups and individual states that are strongly committed to nuclear disarmament. The non-nuclear-weapon states have voiced the criticism

that the nuclear-weapon states have not fully implemented the disarmament obligations set forth in Article VI. They point out that many decades after the NPT came into force more than enough nuclear weapons to annihilate humanity several times over still remain in the hands of nuclear-weapon states. They have strongly demanded the setting of a nuclear disarmament timeline, the start of the negotiations on the elimination of nuclear weapons, and the establishment of a verification mechanism for nuclear disarmament (UN 2005a; 2005b; Sagan and Waltz 1995).

In response, the nuclear-weapon states have reaffirmed their commitment to implementing Article VI. However, they have stated that as long as the prevailing international security environment remains volatile and precarious, with diverse security threats, nuclear weapons are for the time being indispensable. Instead, they have expressed concerns about nuclear proliferation activities by non-nuclear-weapon states such as Iran and North Korea, maintaining that they represent a hindrance to disarmament progress. They have highlighted the importance of strengthening nonproliferation measures and have insisted that the non-nuclear-weapon states should abide by their nonproliferation obligations under Articles II and III (Muller 2006; Pfaltzgraff 2006; Granoff 2007). These states share collective responsibility that prevents any of them from breaking rank. Thus, they hold that nuclear disarmament and elimination cannot be achieved overnight, and should proceed in a gradual, incremental, step-by-step and phased manner, in tandem with improvements in the international security situation. Likewise, no country can set an artificial timeline for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Rather, the non-nuclear-weapon states should propose practical, realistic steps instead of ones that cannot be implemented (Kwon 2010a; 2010b; Thakur, Boulden, and Weiss 2008).

Considering the substance of these conflicting arguments from the two sides, the difference is real and fundamental. It fosters mutual distrust and does not contribute to the amicable atmosphere in the Review Conference necessary for producing a consensus document. The discourse on this subject has recently been replayed at the third preparatory meeting for the 2015 Review Conference, held in New York from April 28 to May 9, 2014. The session that was mandated to make every effort to produce a consensus report containing recommendations to the Review Conference failed to do so. The nuclear-weapon states complained that the text on nuclear disarmament had drifted away from the 2010 wording they had agreed to, while the non-nuclear-weapon states called for the strengthening of the disarmament language. The Chair, Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey of Peru, decided to convey the recommendations to the Review Conference in the form of a working paper under his own authority, which, unfortunately, has been an established practice in previous preparatory meetings (UN 2014a; 2014b).

The progress made in implementing disarmament actions contained in the 2010 Final Document lags behind expectations. According to the NPT Action

Plan Monitoring Report circulated by a dedicated NGO (Reaching Critical Will 2014), as of March 2014, out of the 22 actions agreed to in the Final Document, no progress was made on 11, limited progress was achieved on six, and forward movement was seen in only five. Given the positions of the nuclear-weapon states at the recent preparatory meeting and the limited time remaining before the Review Conference next year, there are weak grounds for expecting much further progress in the implementation of disarmament actions.

Meanwhile, the five NPT nuclear-weapon states, as required by the 2010 document, have submitted to the third preparatory meeting their reports on implementation of Actions 5, 20 and 21 of the action plan.¹ Despite their declaratory policies and some tangible steps on nuclear disarmament as detailed in these reports, it seems that they have placed primary emphasis on nonproliferation and verification as well as the promotion of transparency through reporting, which could tend to divert attention from their urgent obligation of nuclear disarmament (Collina 2014).

Humanitarian Imperative

At the 2010 Review Conference participants shared their profound concern regarding the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons. This issue has had the potential to upset the dynamics of the disarmament discourse in the NPT process. The non-nuclear-weapon states, having long witnessed the slow pace of nuclear disarmament undertaken by the nuclear-weapon states, began to see the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapon use as an imperative to move forward towards a world free of nuclear weapons. By emphasizing the horrendous human suffering inflicted by nuclear weapons, they wished to galvanize the human conscience and mobilize the political will for negotiations on a treaty outlawing and banning nuclear weapons (Helfand 2013).

To that end, two meetings were held among like-minded countries outside of the NPT process. The Government of Norway hosted a conference in Oslo, in March 2013, on the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons. And Mexico hosted the second meeting in Nayarit in February 2014 (Kimball 2014). The Austrian Government has announced that the third meeting of this kind will be held in Vienna in December 2014. These conferences have served as a reminder to government officials and the public of the horrific destruction which can be caused by the use of nuclear weapons and sought to reveal the insanity of continuing to possess and modernize nuclear weapons. In line with this, 16 governments issued a joint statement at the 2012 preparatory meeting highlighting the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapon use and calling on all states to intensify their efforts to outlaw and eliminate these weapons (UN 2012). This call was echoed by 35 governments at the subsequent UN General Assembly First Committee session, held on October 22, 2012.

Moreover, 80 countries at the 2013 preparatory meeting expressed “deep

concern” at the unacceptable harm caused by and the indiscriminate nature of these weapons (UN 2013). At the subsequent meeting of the UN General Assembly First Committee, 125 states signed a statement that expressed their deep concern about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Also, the First Committee adopted a resolution with the support of 129 countries calling for the urgent start of multilateral negotiations for the elimination of nuclear weapons. At the 2014 preparatory meeting, almost all speakers emphasized their concerns with the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon states are keeping their distance from these meetings, suspicious that the discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons may lead to negotiations for a treaty outside the NPT framework banning nuclear weapons. Fresh in their minds are previous instances in which like-minded countries, frustrated at the lack of progress in the moribund disarmament negotiations, have come together outside of the multilateral bodies to separately negotiate and conclude a treaty banning landmines, cluster munitions, and other such scourges.

International Security Environment

Long a subject of intense debate, the Iranian nuclear issue has been on the negotiating table for many years (Kwon 2003) and momentum is currently building to address this. If this matter is successfully concluded at the ongoing nuclear negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran well before the extended deadline of July 1, 2015, the longstanding issue of noncompliance with nonproliferation obligations by Iran will be effectively resolved. This will give some breathing space to the nuclear-weapon states, and have a positive effect on the Review Conference. On the other hand, the evolving Ukrainian crisis will lead to the even greater widening of the already yawning divide between the United States and Russia. It would be very difficult to expect any serious nuclear reduction negotiations between the two sides within the remaining timeframe before the 2015 Review Conference. Domestically in the United States, the November 4 mid-term elections have resulted in a Republican-dominated Senate and House of Representatives that seriously weakens the position of the United States for playing a proactive role on disarmament issues. Overall, the international security environment faced at the time of the 2015 Review Conference may not be as favorable as in 2010, when President Obama had already reengaged with multilateral disarmament efforts and had delivered the 2009 Prague speech on his vision for achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

Middle East WMD-Free Zone

At the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, the non-nuclear-weapon states agreed to the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the premise that the

nuclear-weapon states would pursue nuclear disarmament and implement the Middle East resolution adopted at the same Conference. The overarching purpose of the resolution was to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. As time went on, the concept evolved to encompass all types of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. The failure to implement the terms of the resolution would therefore be a recipe for the demise of the Treaty, at least in the eyes of the Arab states and their supporters in NAM (Feldman 1997).

The 22 Arab states are the hardcore subgroup of NAM. Their unique solidarity is unparalleled in any other group, as demonstrated not only in the NPT process but also in other forums such as the IAEA, the Conference on Disarmament, the Human Rights Council, and the UN General Assembly and its First Committee. The group garners broad support from NAM and others that place great importance on the Arab cause for Palestinian liberation and their own security in the Middle East.

The member states of the Arab League have been relentless in their pursuit of the objective of constraining the Israeli capabilities to possess nuclear weapons. Toward that end, they have long demanded the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. In such a scenario, Israel, an NPT holdout, would be required to renounce any nuclear weapons in its possession and all of its nuclear materials and technology would be placed under IAEA scrutiny. In response to this Israel has contended that, in the absence of peace and stability in the region, it will not agree to a Middle East WMD-free zone, and any discussion of the subject should encompass the regional security and confidence-building issues facing Israel. But this approach has been rejected by the Arab countries.

After much delay in implementing the Middle East resolution, a breakthrough was made at the 2010 Review Conference which adopted concrete steps in the Final Document for implementation of the 1995 resolution. The document reaffirmed that "the resolution remains valid until the goals and objectives are achieved," and endorsed several practical steps for the full implementation of the resolution to be undertaken by the UN Secretary-General and the co-sponsors of the resolution (Russia, the UK, and the United States) (UN 2010; Kwon 2010b). These steps were, *inter alia*: (1) convening a conference in 2012, to be attended by all states of the Middle East, on the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East; (2) appointing a facilitator with a mandate to support the implementation of the 1995 resolution by conducting consultations with the regional states and undertaking preparations for the convening of the 2012 conference; and (3) designating a host government for the 2012 conference.

Although in 2011 Mr. Jaakko Laajava, Undersecretary of State for Foreign and Security Policy of Finland, was appointed as the Facilitator and Finland was designated as the host government, the conference on the establishment of a Middle East WMD-free zone has yet to be held, and no date has been fixed, leading to growing pessimism among the parties to the NPT with regard to the

prospects for the 2015 Review Conference (UN 2014b).

The failure to hold the Middle East conference in 2012 led to a fiasco at the subsequent preparatory meeting held in April 2013. The Egyptian delegation walked out in protest at the failure to achieve the timely holding of the conference. Since this incident has overshadowed the current review cycle, major efforts have been exerted to rescue the process for convening of the conference. With the facilitator's intervention, the key players in the Middle East, including Israel, finally met face-to-face in Glion, Switzerland, in three rounds of meetings, in October and November 2013, and February 2014, with a view to finding a way forward, but to no avail. These efforts will continue in the run-up to the 2015 Review Conference. However, given that the armed conflict flared up again during the summer of 2014 between the Israelis and Palestinians and tensions remain high, the prospects for the convening of the conference remain dim. The issue of holding a conference on a WMD-free zone in the Middle East poses a serious challenge to all the parties to the NPT. Failure to convene a conference would provide justification for the Arab group and the broader NAM member states to reconsider their compliance with the NPT.

Conclusion

Since its inception 45 years ago, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has functioned as a conceptual framework by which the international community framed a broad range of issues pertaining to nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. In the absence of the NPT, many more countries today would have developed or possessed nuclear weapons. However, the delicate balance among the three main pillars of the NPT (nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy) and its intrinsic flaws, causing different interpretations and disagreements on nuclear disarmament, mean that vigilance and constant care on the part of all the states parties to the Treaty are required.

In that sense, the success of the NPT review process is critical to the health of the NPT regime. For instance, the successful holding of the 2010 Review Conference contributed to the galvanization of the political will to address nuclear nonproliferation issues in the IAEA Board of Governors and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).² Various proposals to provide assurances of nuclear fuel supply were adopted by the Board in the following years, and the newly strengthened criteria for supply of enrichment and reprocessing technology was also agreed upon at the NSG Plenary meeting in the Netherlands in 2011. Another success at the 2015 Review Conference would serve to foster a more amicable and cooperative atmosphere between the nuclear-weapon states and the non-nuclear-weapon states across the board on nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation issues.

Yet, if the current impasse over the implementation of disarmament obligations and the convening of a conference on the Middle East WMD-free zone continues, it is likely that the Review Conference will face great difficulties in adopting a consensus document, as was the case in 2010. Furthermore, although the holding of the Review Conference is still half a year away, shaky U.S.–Russian relations, the armed conflict directly involving the Israelis and Palestinians, and the outcome of the November U.S. mid-term elections may not be conducive to the review process. Both the nuclear-weapon states and the non-nuclear-weapon states should therefore redouble their efforts to narrow their differences on key issues.

Notes

The views in this paper do not represent the policies and positions of the Government of the Republic of Korea, but are entirely the author's own.

1. Action 5 of the 2010 Final Document provides that several steps be taken by the nuclear-weapon states that would lead to nuclear disarmament, while Actions 20 and 21 require the submission of regular reports and a standard reporting format.
2. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is a group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of guidelines for nuclear and nuclear-related exports. The guidelines are implemented by each Participating Government in accordance with its own national laws and practices. Decisions on export applications are taken at the national level in accordance with national export licensing requirements. Currently 48 countries are participating in the NSG.

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