



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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## **2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

4 May 2010

### **General Debate**

#### **Statement by Mr Stephen Smith Foreign Minister of Australia on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum**

(Check against delivery)

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Mr President

As the current chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, I have the honour to speak on behalf of Forum members with Permanent Missions in New York, namely Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Pacific Islands Forum members view nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament with a particular perspective. We have faced, first-hand, the devastating short-term and long-term adverse effects of nuclear testing.

Out of this harsh experience we were proud to establish the South Pacific Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in 1985, the second such zone to be established in a populated region. The Parties to the Treaty of Rarotonga are proud to be part of a network of nuclear weapon-free zones across the Southern Hemisphere – the treaties of Tlatelolco, Bangkok and Pelindaba, supported by the Antarctic Treaty and the Seabed Treaty.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Members of the Pacific Islands Forum will be working hard over the next four weeks to ensure our discussions at this Review Conference bear fruit and that the NPT's core principles are strongly reaffirmed. We cannot accept a repeat of 2005. We have a shared responsibility to affirm and reinforce the regime which for forty years has provided clear global security benefits.

This will require commitment and effort from all of us. We must work together. We must achieve balanced progress on all three of the treaty's pillars – disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use.

The members of Pacific Islands Forum are grateful to the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and the Co-Chairs Yoriko Kawaguchi and Gareth Evans in particular, for the comprehensive report, "Eliminating Nuclear Threats", released in December 2009. The Commission's substantive and concrete proposals deserve the serious consideration of this Review Conference.

Mr President

In 2000, the Pacific Islands Forum leaders called for active pursuit by the nuclear-weapons-states of the steps leading to disarmament agreed at the 2000 Review Conference. They welcomed the Conference's identification of measures to maintain and further strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. In 2005, Forum members encouraged nuclear-weapons states to provide updates on their practical, systematic and progressive steps towards nuclear disarmament.

We are pleased by the efforts made by some nuclear-weapons states to make real progress on their Article VI obligations and those commitments given at previous Review Conferences. We encourage them all to make further progress in order to achieve our ultimate aim of a world free of nuclear weapons.

In our own region we welcome the long-standing ratification of the United Kingdom, France, China and the former USSR of those protocols to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty which are relevant to them. We warmly welcome the announcement made by Secretary Clinton yesterday that the United States intends to proceed with ratification of the Treaty's Protocols.

Given the history of nuclear testing, Forum members attach great importance to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Since the last NPT Review Conference several additional Forum members the Cook Islands, Vanuatu, the Marshall Islands and Palau have all ratified the Treaty.

We encourage ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, particularly by Annex 2 states, to enable entry into force as soon as possible. And we welcome the commitment by some states to do so, including our good friend and neighbour Indonesia.

Every ratification is a step towards universalisation and further strengthens the international norm against nuclear testing.

Mr President

The safe and secure shipment of radioactive material is of concern to our region. We continue to give priority to nuclear safety issues, including the application of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safety requirements and guidelines; cooperation to ensure effective and coherent national and global nuclear liability mechanisms; adherence to relevant international liability instruments; and measures to improve communication between shipping and coastal states regarding transport safety, security and emergency preparedness.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference underlined the importance of effective national and international regulations and standards for the protection of States concerned from the risks of transportation of radioactive materials. The Conference also took note of the concerns of Small Island Developing States and other coastal States with regard to the transportation of radioactive material by sea. The Conference called on States parties to continue to work bilaterally and through the relevant international organisations to examine and further improve measures and international regulations to this end. We

welcome the progress that has been made over the past decade in these areas, and encourage further efforts to improve communication between shipping and coastal states on transport safety, security and emergency preparedness. We urge all relevant parties to maintain vigilance and ensure that the current excellent safety record of such shipments is preserved.

Mr President

Forum members fully support the rights of non-nuclear-weapon states to enjoy the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy within a framework that reduces proliferation risk and adheres to the highest international standards of safeguards, security and safety.

We endorse the principles set out in the objectives of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme and commend this programme to states.

Strengthened non-proliferation measures, including safeguards and compliance, help foster an environment conducive to sharing and enhancing the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy. These measures thereby facilitate rather than inhibit the development of peaceful nuclear energy.

Mr President

Forum members stand ready to assist you, and to provide our own regional experience, in order to contribute to a successful Review Conference. We are committed to achieving real and practical outcomes across the entire non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. We are committed to a world free of nuclear weapons. We are committed to strong measures to ensure non-proliferation. And we are committed to the inalienable right of all Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with all treaty obligations.

What we need, Mr President, is the political will and the spirit of cooperation to work towards these noble aims.

For its own part the Pacific Islands Forum stands ready to do so.