

**STATEMENT BY MALAYSIA
ON BEHALF OF THE DE-ALERTING GROUP**

**CLUSTER 1: NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT
OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
2020 REVIEW CONFERENCE TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF
NUCLEAR WEAPONS
GENEVA, 26 APRIL 2018**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour of taking the floor on behalf of the De-alerting Group – Chile, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sweden, Switzerland, and my own country, Malaysia, on the issue of decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems.

2. Since its establishment in 2007, the De-alerting Group has collectively called for actions to be taken to lower the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems, with a view that all nuclear weapons are removed from high alert status. We welcome the Thirteen Practical Steps of 2000 for concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapon systems, and the 2010 NPT Action Plan to further recognize the legitimate interest on Non-Nuclear-Weapon States in this issue. In view of the 2020 Review Conference, we call upon Nuclear-Weapon States to take urgent action to minimize the risk of a nuclear weapon detonation, including by reducing alert levels.

3. Despite the recognition given to the role of de-alerting as a risk reduction measure, more needs to be done to address the high level alerts of many nuclear weapons. It is estimated that Russia and the United States continuously maintain a significant number of nuclear warheads on high alert, ready to be launched within only a few minutes. Such postures not only pose grave threat to continued human existence, but also undermined the international confidence and stability essential to achieving nuclear disarmament.

4. The De-alerting Group continues to believe that lowering alert levels is an integral element of nuclear disarmament process. This change of policy will greatly reduce the risk of an inadvertent, unauthorized or accidental launch of nuclear weapons. Our countries also believe that there are many possible ways to de-alert these launch-ready forces.

Mr. Chairman,

5. It remains our strong view that the NPT is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and that it is central to international peace and security. Lowering the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems would have positive effects both on international peace and security as well as human security.

6. Risk reduction measures, including de-alerting, should continue to be prominent on our agenda. This year's preparatory meeting for the NPT Review Conference represents a key milestone in the implementation of the commitments made in the NPT frameworks by the Nuclear-Weapon States, in particular regarding the de-alerting issue.

7. As part of the Conference's deliberations on specific measures needed during the next review cycle for the full implementation of Article VI of the NPT, the De-alerting Group recommends that the 2020 Review Conference should receive undertakings from the nuclear-weapon States on the following:

- To address de-alerting comprehensively within the context of their collective engagement concerning the implementation of Article VI of the NPT
- To reduce alert levels (unilaterally, bilaterally or otherwise) in a concrete and measureable way and within a specified time frame; and
- To report to the State Parties on measures taken regarding operational readiness/alert levels.

Mr. Chairman,

8. In concluding, De-alerting is not only a long-standing commitment, Concrete actions to reduce nuclear alert levels are long overdue. A lowered operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems would demonstrate a clear commitment to diminishing the role of nuclear weapons and represents a confidence-building measure. Please be assured that the Group will continue to engage constructively over the coming days to ensure this PrepCom's success and subsequently in the process leading up to the 2020 Review Conference. We remain fully committed to the NPT, and we look forward to effectively engage with all State Parties to reinforce and strengthen the Treaty, and ensure that progress in reducing operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems can be achieved.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.