



Statement by

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to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva

at the

2nd Preparatory Committee of 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Cluster I

Geneva, 26 April 2018

Mr Chair,

Important anniversaries are often used as a time of recommitment to the original event, or relationship, being commemorated. When they mark anniversaries of a *successful* event or relationship, they are an occasion for jubilation.

This year, in fact in a couple of weeks' time, it will be 50 years since the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was adopted. In 2020, it will be 50 years since its entry into force. Half a century since its creation, the Treaty is almost universally hailed as a success - the constitutive document of a regime, conceived on the basis of mutual benefit, which has successfully fended off the prospect of unconstrained nuclear weapon proliferation.

A central aspect of the benefit which at least many non-Nuclear Weapon States saw themselves as receiving from the Treaty's 'Grand Bargain' in 1968 was the disarmament undertaking - the obligation to achieve progressively full nuclear disarmament - assumed by Nuclear Weapon States in Article VI of the Treaty.

Article VI was not included in the first drafts of the Treaty but was inserted at a later point in the negotiations at the insistence of a number of *non*-Nuclear Weapon States. Its inclusion in the text proved a pivotal drawcard for many of the 95 states who voted in favour of the Treaty in the UN General Assembly in June 1968. The same is true, no doubt, for at least a number of the states casting positive votes in the UN Security Council at the time.

Equally, its inclusion facilitated ratification of the Treaty by the growing number of states who joined it over the following

decades. In terms of New Zealand's domestic contract law, then, we would describe Article VI as an essential part of the '*consideration*' - the *quid pro quo* - lying at the heart of the Treaty's contractual bargain.

Dissatisfaction with progress in meeting the terms of this mutual contract proved most recently to be the mainspring for the negotiation and adoption of a further treaty regulating nuclear weapons - last year's Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The obligations included in that Treaty supplement Article VI, and the object and purpose of the NPT, but do not at all dislodge those of the NPT.

New Zealand's commitment to the NPT continues unabated. Our confidence that the occasion of the Treaty's half-century is indeed cause for jubilation would be greatest, however, if we felt that all States Parties had an equivalent commitment to honouring *all* the terms of the Treaty - including, most notably, Article VI where implementation is plainly lacking, and re-interpretation sometimes apparent.

Over the period of our fiftieth anniversary, culminating in 2020, our NPT community must engage in renewed dialogue about how it is that we can significantly advance implementation of Article VI including in terms of the undertakings already given by all States Parties in the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conference outcomes.

A range of interim measures which the NPT membership could usefully focus on to advance the disarmament pillar during this review cycle have been presented in a number of Working Papers put to this and to last year's Prepcoms and also in group statements.

Those put forward by the cross-regional groups to which NZ belongs include calls from the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) to direct increased implementation efforts at the range of already agreed Review Conference outcomes from 1995, 2000 and 2010. The De-alerting Group's statement delivered by Malaysia today calls for Nuclear Weapon States to reduce alert levels in a concrete, measurable and timebound way and to report to States Parties on measures taken to this end.

In the context of group positions supported by New Zealand, I would wish to draw attention also to the Working Paper on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons (HINW) and to the related side event convened by the Austrian Government here today. We are grateful for the cautionary opportunity this event provides for us all to reflect again on the catastrophic risk, and consequences, of any nuclear weapon detonation.

It is these risks and these consequences which remain the true motivation for the international community's long-standing pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons and I take this opportunity to emphasise New Zealand's strong support for the ongoing work of our civil society partners in pressing for governments never to lose sight of these.

However we will need to make much better progress toward the elimination of nuclear weapons, and the fulfilment of Article VI, before we will have real cause for jubilation as we look back over the past 50 years to the vision and leadership – and the Grand Bargain – of the drafters of the NPT.