

UNITED KINGDOM STATEMENT

THE FIRST PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE EIGHTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, 30 APRIL – 11 MAY 2007.

CLUSTER III – PEACEFUL USES

Mr Chairman,

1. My delegation naturally supports the comprehensive statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Germany on behalf of the European Union. In light of the reduced time available to us I am intending only to highlight three or four issues of particular importance to the UK on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Our full views will be tabled separately as a working paper of the meeting.

MULTILATERAL NUCLEAR FUEL ASSURANCES

Mr Chairman,

2. As part of the successful implementation of Article IV, and in conformity with the objectives of the rest of the Treaty, work on robust multilateral fuel assurance mechanisms will bring three main benefits. It will:
 - a) Facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear power for energy production by those States that wish to pursue a civil nuclear energy programme (e.g. for example for climate change reasons) by providing assured access to nuclear reactors and their fuel;
 - b) Reduce proliferation risks because many States, in the light of these guarantees, will not choose to develop enrichment and reprocessing capabilities;
 - c) Adopt strong international controls (e.g. IAEA safeguards) over technologies that could be used to produce nuclear-weapons-usable material.
3. How can this be achieved? The UK does not envisage a prescriptive “one-size-fits-all” solution. Every country must be free to make its own choices based on its own needs and circumstances and in line with its international obligations.
4. We envisage that the IAEA will play a key role – both in guaranteeing the supply and in providing assurance to the international community through its safeguards system that all nuclear material in such States remains in peaceful use
5. The development of fuel assurance schemes is at an early stage, but significant progress has been made since 2005. A number of states have put forward their ideas. The IAEA is currently working on a paper for its Board of Governors. The UK has contributed to the 6-Nation proposal for reliable access to nuclear fuel (with France, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia and the US) and has developed this further with Germany and the Netherlands, in the Enrichment Bond proposal. We look forward to seeing the IAEA paper and to working with others to continue to develop these ideas.

NUCLEAR SAFETY AND SECURITY

6. The UK continues to be an active contributor to the development of international safety standards, and looks forward to being involved in the forthcoming review meeting of the

Convention on Nuclear Safety. We continue to urge all States to become party to the Convention.

7. The United Kingdom was the third IAEA Member State to introduce export controls based on the key elements of the framework outlined in the Import/Export Guidance to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.
8. The UK is also a major contributor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund. Our most recent support was for physical protection upgrades at several key sites across the Former Soviet Union. The UK urges other States involved in collaborative threat reduction programmes to provide assistance to the IAEA for this important work.

CONCLUSION

9. Many commentators believe there will be a significant growth in nuclear power generation. There has already been, and continues to be, rapid advances in nuclear-based medical and industrial applications. The NPT provides the framework for the exploitation of nuclear energy. In the IAEA we have a body that can not only support this, but also detect and deter those who would breach their obligations under the Treaty. We need to continue to support both the Treaty and the Agency in this aim.