

Statement by Ambassador John Freeman
Head of the UK Delegation to the Seventh Review Conference of the Nuclear
Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference
New York, 5 May 2005

Mr President,

1. I would like to say at the outset how pleased we are to see you presiding over this Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Your knowledge of the issues we must address, the preparations you have personally made over the past nine months, and your long-established diplomatic experience and skills will, I am sure, help us together to achieve an outcome to our work commensurate with the importance of the Treaty itself. I and my delegation wish you every success: you will have our full support and co-operation in the weeks ahead.
2. May I also take this opportunity to endorse the statement made by Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.
3. Mr President, the proliferation of nuclear weapons is an issue that concerns us all. It is an issue which threatens the security of us all. And the NPT is a Treaty for us all, it is a Treaty from which there can be no turning back, no evasion of our responsibilities - all of our responsibilities.
4. Mr President, nothing that has happened since 2000 has caused the UK to waver in its support for the NPT. On the contrary, changing threats, and challenges to the Treaty itself, have served only to underline its importance and therefore our support for it. We believe the NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the framework for nuclear disarmament. As such it retains our wholehearted and unequivocal support. The UK continues to implement the decisions of past review conferences, including those taken at the Review and Extension Conference in 1995, and at the last Review Conference in 2000. We abide by the undertakings we have given to non-proliferation, to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and, under Article VI of the Treaty, to those on disarmament.
5. Mr President, let me say at the outset: we recognise the need for balanced implementation of the Treaty and we support progress in all its areas, as our record demonstrates. However we believe that progress in non-proliferation is important in its own right. Non-proliferation and disarmament are inter-linked in achieving the Treaty's goals. But the relationship between the two processes is neither simple nor mechanistic. And, as the UN Secretary-General said in his recent paper, *In Larger Freedom*, "both disarmament and non proliferation are essential and neither should be held hostage to the other."
6. The UK's hope and objective is that this Review Conference will see the NPT, and the whole non-proliferation regime, strengthened by the discussions and decisions taken in this forum. We look forward to negotiation and agreement of a strong Final Document at the conclusion of this Conference. We believe the NPT has been an international success story. We want the Treaty's objectives to be sustained and their implementation strengthened for the security of all.

7. Mr President, this Review Conference is taking place at a critical time following recent challenges to the non-proliferation regime from states signatory to the Treaty. The great majority of States are able, as provided for in Article IV of the Treaty, to enjoy the benefits to be gained from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. They should continue to be able to do so and should receive full co-operation in this endeavour. But we must be frank, a few States have taken advantage of this provision under the Treaty to develop clandestine nuclear weapons programmes. In doing so they have set a challenge to all of us who cherish and value the NPT. The challenge is to acknowledge and to underscore by our actions that all of us have responsibilities as well as entitlements under the Treaty. We must together work to prevent future abuses of the Treaty so as to ensure that nuclear energy can continue to be available to all those states – the vast majority of states represented in this room – who seek it for peaceful uses only. We need concerted action to resolve existing cases of States Parties acting in violation of their nuclear non-proliferation and safeguards obligations. We support the suspension of nuclear fuel cycle co-operation with such states.
8. We need also to address the separate, but no less serious, issue of withdrawal from the Treaty. We are committed to ensuring that any State deciding to withdraw cannot subsequently benefit from nuclear technologies obtained while a State Party, or seek to use them in furtherance of an illegal nuclear weapons programme.
9. We note with concern the DPRK's claimed possession of nuclear weapons in violation of its commitments under the NPT and its IAEA safeguards agreement. We regret its recent announcements with respect to the reprocessing of further fuel from the Yongbyon reactor. We call on it to cease and declare all past nuclear activity and completely, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear programmes. We hope that it will return to the Six Party Talks at the earliest opportunity to bring about a negotiated settlement and a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons.
10. We continue to be concerned about the proliferation implications of Iran's nuclear programmes. We are working with Iran, in collaboration with France, Germany, and representatives of the European Union, to develop long-term arrangements which will contribute to rebuilding international confidence in its intentions. We urge Iran to fulfil its commitments under the 15 November "Paris Agreement" and in particular the suspension of all its enrichment related and reprocessing activities. Iran should continue to work actively with the IAEA Secretariat to resolve all outstanding questions surrounding its programme, and to comply with all Board of Governors' requests, including, in particular, reconsideration of its decision to construct a research reactor moderated by heavy water.
11. The possibility that non-state actors, terrorist groups, could attempt to obtain and to use WMD is a further worrying development that has been brought home to all of us since we last met in 2000. Discoveries in late 2003 brought to light a clandestine international supply and procurement network for sensitive technologies and weapons' designs. We must make every effort to continue to dismantle any remaining elements of the Khan network and to shut down other illegal nuclear suppliers and networks.
12. Mr President, these examples should cause us to examine the tools we have at our disposal to counter the challenges they pose. Here I must first mention the IAEA

whose work the UK supports in all areas. We believe its work underpins the NPT and stands in the front line against those who would evade or deny their international obligations. We therefore call on all Non-Nuclear Weapon States that have not yet done so to agree, bring into force and comply with, Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols to those agreements. We would like to see the combinations of a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol accepted as a future condition of supply for sensitive nuclear materials.

13. We share the concerns recently expressed by the Director General of the IAEA and others that the proliferation risks arising from the most sensitive parts of the civil nuclear fuel cycle need special attention. The IAEA Expert Group's report on Multilateral Nuclear Approaches makes a valuable contribution in this regard. We intend to continue our discussions bilaterally and multilaterally to find effective ways to control the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies while ensuring that the benefits from their legitimate civil use are not compromised. These ideas were set out in more detail by my Foreign Minister, Jack Straw, in his statement to the UK parliament on 25 February 2004.
14. But the work is not for the IAEA alone. We must all play our parts as well; national governments should employ a broad range of tools to counter proliferation and complement the provisions of the NPT and the excellent work of the IAEA. We believe that strong and comprehensive export controls are necessary to prevent the uncontrolled spread of nuclear supplies and technologies. In cases where illicit transport of such goods is already in progress we believe that interdiction under the Proliferation Security Initiative, through which increasing numbers of States are co-operating, has an important role to play.
15. Mr President, we can support and strengthen the non proliferation regime through other activities that complement the work of the IAEA. We are all increasingly conscious of the growing threat posed by nuclear terrorism and, for our part, have sought ways to counter it. For this reason we supported the adoption of UNSCR 1540 and continue to stand ready to meet the obligations contained within it, and to help others to do so. We welcome too the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Furthermore, prevention of the acquisition of fissile and radiological materials by terrorists remains fundamental to our safety and security. The UK will therefore take part in the Diplomatic Conference to amend and strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material scheduled to take place in Vienna from 4 to 8 July 2005. We encourage other States Parties to the Convention who are present here today also to send delegations to Vienna to support this change.
16. More widely, the United Kingdom welcomes the work of the High Level Panel set up by the Secretary General to examine threats, challenges and change. We welcome too the Secretary General's paper 'In Larger Freedom' which sets out his response to this work. We should all examine carefully the commitments he calls upon governments to make to revitalise our multilateral frameworks and, in particular, the recommendations he made for this Review Conference.
17. Mr President, I have spoken, at some length, about the current challenges to the Treaty regime and the various steps we have taken individually and collectively to address them. But, at the same time, we need to welcome recent positive

developments. Libya's decision to dismantle her illegal WMD programmes has been welcomed by us all. The work of the United States, the IAEA, the OPCW, ourselves and others has helped Libya to comply with her international obligations. We call on others engaged in such programmes in clear contravention of their undertakings to the NPT to follow Libya's example and renounce the pursuit of nuclear weapons.

18. As I said at the beginning, the UK is fully committed to all our obligations under the Treaty and we recognise that we have particular obligations, as a Nuclear Weapon State, under Article VI of the Treaty. We re-affirm our unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament. We continue to support the relevant disarmament measures contained in the 1995 Review Conference decisions and in the 2000 Final Document. We continue to believe that all reductions in nuclear weapons levels, whether achieved unilaterally, bilaterally or multilaterally, are a valuable contribution to the final goal of global nuclear disarmament. We continue to emphasise that our nuclear weapons are for deterrence only and have a political role – not a military one.
19. We continue to make progress on nuclear disarmament. Since the end of the Cold War the United Kingdom has reduced the explosive power of its nuclear forces by more than 70%. In particular, since the last Review Conference in 2000, we have completed the dismantling of our Chevaline warheads. We have also been undertaking studies on the verification of nuclear disarmament and will be making a presentation on this work next Tuesday.
20. The United Kingdom reiterates its commitment to abide by the moratorium on nuclear testing and will continue to play an active role in the establishment of the verification system for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. It looks forward to the entry into force of the CTBT as soon as possible and the early negotiation, without preconditions, in the Conference on Disarmament, of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.
21. The United Kingdom reaffirms its support for Nuclear Weapon Free Zones. The UK has signed and ratified the relevant Protocol to the Treaty of Pelindaba since the last Review Conference in 2000 and hopes to be able to ratify the Protocols to the Treaty of Bangkok and the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone once consultations by the respective States Parties to each Treaty are satisfactorily completed. We remain committed to the security assurances we gave to Non Nuclear Weapon States in 1995, as noted in UNSCR 984, and to the assurances we have given in the protocols to the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaties.
22. In conclusion, Mr President, I would like to reiterate that the United Kingdom is fully committed to the NPT and to meeting its own commitments under it. We will continue to work nationally, bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. We believe that the NPT offers the best hope of achieving a world free from nuclear weapons and helps to provide the security that all of us seek.

Thank you, Mr President.