

UK
STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOHN FREEMAN
TO THE SEVENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE TREATY ON THE NON-
PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, MAY 2005

MAIN COMMITTEE I

1. The UK has always been committed to the ultimate goal of verifiable global nuclear disarmament - and remains so. The UK played a full role in achieving consensus on the Final Document agreed at the 2000 Review Conference and we continue to support the relevant disarmament measures, contained both in that Document and in the 1995 Review Conference decisions.
2. Over the past twelve years the UK has made substantial progress with regard to our global nuclear disarmament obligations under Article VI of the NPT. This has included: the withdrawal and dismantling of our maritime tactical nuclear capability; the withdrawal and dismantling of the RAF's WE177 nuclear bomb; and the termination of the nuclear Lance missile and artillery roles that we undertook with US nuclear weapons held under dual-key arrangements. As a consequence, Polaris (later superseded by Trident) was left as the UK's only nuclear weapons system. Indeed we are the only Nuclear Weapon State to have reduced to a single system.
3. Furthermore, not only has the UK reduced its reliance on nuclear weapons to just one system, we have also announced that our nuclear forces patrol on reduced readiness. Only a single Trident submarine is now on deterrent patrol at any one time, and it is normally maintained at a reduced alert status. The missiles are not targeted at any country. In addition, today we hold a total of fewer than 200 operationally available warheads – the minimum level necessary for the UK's national security. Let me underline: this amounts to a total reduction of 70% in the explosive power of UK nuclear weapons since the end of the Cold War.
4. And since 2000, the UK has moved yet further on implementing its disarmament obligations, completing the dismantling of our Chevaline warheads in 2002. The dismantling of Chevaline built on the important disarmament, transparency and confidence building measures that the UK has previously undertaken in support of Article VI objectives.
5. As those of you who attended our presentation last week will be aware, since 2000, we have also been pursuing a programme to develop UK expertise in verifying the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons internationally. The overall aim of the studies, being carried out by the UK Atomic Weapons Establishment for the Ministry of Defence, has been to examine and trial potential methodologies which could be used in a future nuclear disarmament verification regime.
6. We have undertaken this work as part of our commitment to making progress towards meeting the requirements of the disarmament provisions of the NPT. This work

should be seen in the context of the 2000 NPT Review Conference Final Document, which called for ‘the further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreement.’ The research programme has covered three key topics:

- Authentication of nuclear warheads and components;
 - Dismantlement of warheads; and
 - Monitoring the nuclear weapons complex.
7. The results from each of the stages of this work on verification have been published as NPT Working Papers. This year we presented the final report on studies into the verification of nuclear warheads and their components, which covers Monitoring the Nuclear Weapons Complex and summarises the results of the five-year programme. The report is Working Paper 1 of the Conference. As I announced at our presentation last week, I am pleased to say that the UK will be continuing our programme of research. We also want to explore the possibility of exchanges with others and will be conducting consultations on this in the near future
 8. The UK is committed to the maximum degree of transparency about our nuclear and fissile material stockpiles compatible with the requirements of our national security. In 1995 we announced that we had stopped the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the fact that several other Nuclear Weapon States have taken the same step. We call upon others, including those states not party to the NPT, to follow this example.
 9. In 1998 we were the first Nuclear Weapon State to declare the total size of these stocks. We then voluntarily placed all our fissile material no longer required for defence purposes under international safeguards where they are liable to inspection by the IAEA. We remain committed to transparency of our fissile material stocks.
 10. The UK continues to support the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. We have been working actively in the Conference on Disarmament to find agreement on a programme of work, agreeable to all, which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT without preconditions.
 11. The UK has both signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and remains firmly committed to that treaty. We have not conducted a nuclear explosive test since 1991. Our commitment is demonstrated by our continued support for the CTBT Organisation and its activities, especially the development of the verification system.
 12. In September 2004 the UK Foreign Secretary was one of over 30 Foreign Ministers to sign the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT in New York. This committed us at the highest political level to take measures to facilitate the signature and ratification process of the CTBT, and dedicated the UK to realising the goal of the entry into force of the Treaty.

13. We note that some 175 States have now signed the CTBT, of which 121 have also ratified it. We welcome the increase in the number of States Party to this Treaty and urge all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify it as soon as possible.
14. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the United Kingdom's Positive and Negative Security Assurances given in 1995 and repeated in United Nations Security Council Resolution 984.
15. We remain committed to those Security Assurances. In addition we have given legally binding NSAs in Treaty form through the Protocols we have signed to the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaties. The UK fully supports the principle of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and plays an active and constructive role as a Nuclear Weapon State in their development. The UK has signed and ratified protocols to the zones which cover Latin America and the Caribbean – the Tlatelolco Treaty; Africa – the Pelindaba Treaty; and the South Pacific - the Rarotonga Treaty. We continue to work with the ASEAN States to produce an agreed protocol to the Treaty of Bangkok, and hope ASEAN will continue consultations with the Nuclear Weapon States so that the Protocol can be concluded. We support the proposed Central Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and wish to continue consultations on the proposed draft Treaty and Protocol with the five Central Asian states in question, together with the other Nuclear Weapon States, so that they may be completed before the Central Asian States sign the Treaty.
16. We therefore believe that our 1995 NSA and the Protocols we have signed offer Non-Nuclear Weapon States the assurance they seek regarding nuclear use. We believe the way forward is to make further progress with the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaties and Protocols, which will provide, on a credible, regional basis, the internationally binding legal instruments on NSAs that many are looking for.
17. The UK believes that we have made significant progress towards the goals of Article VI, but we also continue to encourage mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in the numbers of nuclear weapons world-wide. We would like to see a world free from the dangers of nuclear weapons and we have consistently stated that when we are satisfied that sufficient progress has been made – for example in further deep cuts in their nuclear forces by the US and Russia - to allow us to include the UK's nuclear weapons in any multilateral negotiations, without endangering our security interests, we will do so. In this context we warmly welcomed the entry into force on 1 June 2003 of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty – the Treaty of Moscow – between the US and the Russian Federation. Such disarmament measures contribute toward international stability and offer support for NPT Article VI objectives.
18. In brief, the UK's commitment to our nuclear disarmament obligation under Article VI remains as strong as ever.