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Conference report

Towards the 2015 NPT Review Conference

Monday 16 – Friday 20 December 2013 | WP1265

In association with:





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Convening only 18 months before the 2015 NPT Review Conference, this meeting assessed the prospects for and challenges to success there. Outstanding themes included the pressure points and make-or-break issues as the Review approaches and how they can be navigated; the recent deal with Iran on its nuclear programme; the status of summits and processes such as the Middle East WMD-Free Zone Conference, the Oslo Conference, and the P5 process; efforts to strengthen global proliferation resistance; the prospects for creative and productive work towards reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons; and the future for nuclear safeguards.

Key points

- Sustained effort through the NPT Review process is needed to avoid a slow and continuing breakdown of the Treaty. The 2014 PrepCom should focus on laying the foundation for smooth procedure at the 2015 Review Conference, but it will also grapple with some open questions regarding the nature of its own substantive output.
- The NPT faces a number of ongoing problems, particularly the troubling inter- and intra-group dynamics; partial implementation of the three pillars; and regional challenges. There is significant mistrust between NWS and NNWS, especially the NAM. There are also dangerously divergent perspectives between some NWS on the future of the nuclear order. New avenues of dialogue and trust-building are necessary in order to strengthen the regime as a whole.
- There are small but encouraging signs of progress in efforts to convene a conference on a Middle East WMD-Free Zone, and this issue will be crucial to the current Review cycle. A balance should be struck between regional priorities and those of the NPT as a whole.
- The initiative on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons has grown in support, but a clear division is emerging on its relationship to the NPT process and the way in which it might be translated into concrete measures of disarmament.
- The Nuclear Security Summit process has been successful in bringing forward new initiatives, but a global security architecture based on mutual accountability is still lacking.
- The key ingredients to Review Conference success, outside resolution of the substantive issues, may be conference leadership and atmospherics. There is also an ongoing debate, however, about whether it will be acceptable for a final document to separate a non-consensus Review from a consensus action plan, as was the case in 2010.

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Introduction

1. The description of the NPT as the ‘cornerstone’ of the non-proliferation regime may by now be approaching cliché, but its familiarity speaks to an underlying truth: that the Treaty, by anchoring the global fight against the spread of nuclear weapons, has richly served both the individual and collective interests of its members. States’ recognition of this fact has kept the NPT afloat through past storms, and will be the necessary ingredient in navigating towards the 2015 Review Conference. The NPT has done more to preserve international security than a great deal of defence spending, and while a sudden breakdown in the Treaty seems implausible, a slow and continuing breakdown is by no means out of the question, and would be extremely dangerous.
2. With this in mind, the NPT landscape is entirely predictable in some ways, but experiencing significant upheaval in others. Since the last Review Conference, long-standing problems have persisted, and new ones have emerged; yet on a number of fronts some progress has been made. New processes have shaken up some existing divisions and consolidated others, and have brought both the promise of unconventional solutions and the danger of unsustainable tensions. There is no shortage of policy proposals on offer for states parties to explore, but the polarisation of NPT debates, and the scarcity of political capital, may stand in the way. Lastly, there is the ongoing task of identifying priorities both for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and, within that category, specific tasks for the 2014 Preparatory Committee meeting.

The NPT today: problems and progress

3. Observations about the NPT’s health fall into three broad categories: the state of inter- and intra-group dynamics; implementation of the three pillars; and regional challenges. Regarding inter-group dynamics, frustration and mistrust continue in the relations between nuclear- and non-nuclear weapon states (NWS and NNWS), especially but not exclusively between NWS and the non-aligned movement (NAM). NAM states have a general lack of trust in the intentions of the NWS, particularly as regards their enthusiasm for disarmament. This is neither new nor surprising, although the propensity of some ‘Northern’ NNWS to join the NAM in such critiques is perhaps more unusual. Some NWS, for their part, see the NAM as being driven by a small clique of intransigent members at the expense of a more moderate approach.
4. However, it is worth remembering that the NPT’s groupings are not homogenous, either in composition or like-mindedness. This does have the advantage of providing a broader range of negotiating partners, and some room for manoeuvre on the substance. However, some intra-group differences can be dangerous. For example, the United States, China, and Russia seem to have serious disagreements about the future of the nuclear order. The United States’ reliance on conventional superiority as a condition for nuclear disarmament poses problems for China and Russia; Chinese territorial claims help maintain an ongoing bilateral defence dilemma, as does Russia’s pressure on its neighbours; and China and Russia share, in various ways, an aversion to transparency. The world’s most immediate and pressing nuclear dangers may, it can be granted, come from outside the NPT’s five NWS. However, at the centenary of the start of the First World War it should be remembered that that conflict started in part because the great powers thought it impossible – a reason to avoid complacency today.

Treaty implementation

5. The picture on Treaty implementation is mixed, and judgments of progress on the three pillars seem often to be conditioned by the group dynamics described above. In the field of disarmament, it is generally recognised that the prospects for immediate further reductions or formal measures of arms control are low. In one sense this is a natural lull after a wave of measures inspired by President Obama’s Prague agenda, and not a matter for panic, given the considerable reductions in nuclear forces compared to Cold

War levels – the US arsenal, for example, is at its lowest level for sixty years. However, an apparent stall can also be seen as evidence that the incremental approach to disarmament is not working, and that alternative routes, perhaps more radical ones, should be sought. The Prague agenda raised hopes which for some states are now being dashed. This bears relevance to the emergence of new processes, particularly the P5 consultations and the dialogue on humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, which are discussed in detail below. However, underlying these debates is a divergence in assessments of what exactly constitutes progress in disarmament – a matter ripe for further study.

6. In the field of non-proliferation, the NPT is beset by compliance problems, including those related to North Korea and Iran, which are addressed in detail below. However, there are also complex challenges in more technocratic areas. Firstly, there are a number of factors which may affect IAEA safeguards in the years to come. The IAEA will be asked to play a crucial role in verifying the interim agreement on Iran, including fraught tasks of translating political intent into technical reality, such as setting a baseline for progress in centrifuge work. The international community will be asking more of safeguards than ever before. Yet these increasing expectations come at a time of fiscal austerity, in which efficiency will be essential: greater amounts of nuclear material will need to be safeguarded, at a lower unit cost. Other trends include an apparent move away from bilateral non-proliferation obligations towards a greater reliance on the IAEA; and a potentially helpful evening of the burden of safeguards implementation between NWS and NNWS, if a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) were to come into being.
7. All of this is taking place, however, when the role of the IAEA is increasingly politicised, and at a time when it appears that there is a rear-guard action taking place to undo the progress made over the last twenty years: namely, the post-Gulf War I reforms to the safeguards system, the 93+2 process, the birth of the Additional Protocol, and the affirmation of the IAEA's role in verifying both the correctness and completeness of a state's declaration. The tone of current IAEA debates is worrying, including the opposition to the State Level Concept, discussed in detail below.
8. Secondly, on the border between non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, there are grounds for satisfaction but also the need for further action, in the field of preventing illicit trafficking of sensitive nuclear materials and equipment. There is in place currently a 'system of systems', including measures against originating parties, export licensing and control; customs controls and inspections; private sector internal compliance mechanisms; financial measures, international outreach and capacity building, and transportation/interdiction measures. Illicit procurement continues to take place, but at an increasing cost, which forces potential proliferators to take evasive actions. Other observable trends include the integration of proliferation-specific measures and those against illicit international activities generally, such as money laundering; and an increasing emphasis in enforcement on sanctions, rather than export controls per se.

North Korea

9. North Korea continues to challenge the NPT regime. Since 31 March 2013, it has embarked on a new strategic course that involves the simultaneous development of its economy and military programme. The military programme is focused on four areas: miniaturisation, delivery, precision and yield. This will mean that more tests are likely. The exact impact of North Korea's ongoing nuclear activities on the NPT regime is difficult to accurately assess, although it is clearly negative. Departure from the NPT set a bad precedent, and the continued pursuit of nuclear weapons is destabilising for the region. North Korea remains driven by security concerns and a fear of US attack. To complicate matters, nuclear weapons for the Kim regime serve political rather than technical or security rationales. In addition, military generals from North Korea recently told Canadians that the country has a declining and limited military capability, which,

coupled with food shortages, will mean the Kim regime will depend even more on nuclear weapons in the future.

10. Looking forward, a fourth test may not happen soon. This is because more material and time is needed to prepare for a further test. In terms of negotiations, the Six Party Talks is favoured by some but the North wants direct talks with United States. China's influence is also limited in this area. While the 'world expects China to do more', China's relationship with Pyongyang is fragile and 'uncertain. Track II dialogues should be pursued since these have proved useful in drawing-out the North on contentious issues such as centrifuges.

The Middle East

11. Failed attempts to convene the conference on the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone, one of the Action Points from 2010, represent another on-going challenge to the NPT. The problem lies in competing conceptions of security in the region, as well as a different set of priorities in the process. For some Arab states, the Zone should precede steps towards normalisation, where Israel signs the NPT and follows the South African model of disarmament. For its part, Israel supports in principle the idea of a Zone, but sees it as coming at the end of a process addressing regional security, including normalization. The US position is that further conditions need to be in place for a zone to emerge. The recent talks in Glion represent a serious attempt to make progress on this issue but it is perhaps unrealistic to have a conference on a Zone before the PrepCom in 2014. Questions remain over the minimum conditions needed to secure Arab state participation; as well as whether the NPT is up to the task in dealing with the zone, as well as whether the involvement of the OPCW, for example, would be useful. However, most agree that the NPT is set-up to deal with regional issues, and the idea of a Zone ultimately emerges from the NPT.
12. Turning to Iran, the Geneva interim deal was an unexpected but positive development in 2013. The change in Iranian attitude, political leadership and a stated policy of no nuclear weapons made the Geneva deal possible. The deal is not perfect but it has 'teeth'. In implementing the deal, it is up to the United States and its allies to remove sanctions, but the P5 +1 are in a strong position to extract concessions from Iran. If Iran doesn't satisfy the IAEA, then a further deal is unlikely. At the level of domestic politics, the use of public diplomacy raised expectations of securing a deal. However, the Iranian president faces a declining economy and a weak powerbase (behind Rouhani, Mohammad Khatami and Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani are driving Iranian policy).
13. The deal has been interpreted differently across the world. Turkey labelled it 'historic', while Israel quickly rejected it. Both were, arguably, over-reactions to the deal. In general, Israel has different red lines on this issue (no nuclear *capabilities*) to the United States (no nuclear *weapons*). The Gulf voiced concern over Iran's growing regional role and hegemony. The impact on proliferation, both regionally and globally, is mixed. Saudi Arabian nuclear ambitions remain unaffected, but the deal allows for some enrichment, and therefore bolsters claims for reprocessing in Vietnam, Jordan and South Korea.
14. Overall, the Geneva interim deal leaves open a number of issues that need to be tackled in any final settlement. For example, should the region figure more prominently in a deal with Iran? What of the fatwa, and of the Additional Protocol? Will the IAEA get access to Parchin, and other sites? If Iran builds a third centrifuge plant, what will that mean? A final deal, perhaps achievable within 2-3 years (though Iran might want this sooner), will have to address tighter controls over Uranium production and the overseas procurement of uranium, as well as enrichment and break-out times. The latter is especially important given that Iran's practical needs for enrichment might change in the future.

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New processes: their value and their relationship to the NPT

The P5 process

15. The P5 process (though ‘NWS process’ might be a more appropriate term) is potentially an important mechanism working alongside the NPT. Although its members share a particular status and responsibility within the NPT, differing security interests mean that it is not a like-minded group. Similarly, the P5 process is not yet a ‘pre-process’ for multilateral arms control. Instead, the process is best viewed as a tool to build and maintain consensus, and make new proposals among the NWS. It has focused so far on a number of issues, from Iran and North Korea, to the 2010 Action Plan and technical terminology, the latter important in laying the bricks towards disarmament. Unity among the NWS will help to form a common basis for when multilateral nuclear arms control starts. Through this process, the NWS also keep on-track with public statements reaffirming the road-map, and wider commitments to the CTBT and FMCT (the next logical step for disarmament).
16. An important result of the P5 process, then, has been greater unity and transparency among the NWS. Unity, for instance, has resulted in increased Chinese engagement on discussions of on-site inspections, cooperative verification challenges and the glossary of terms. However, there exist concerns, particularly among the NNWS, that P5 unity might not necessarily always work in the interests of the NPT, and there is also concern that P5 discussions are too private. To address these concerns, the NWS might consider greater procedural transparency and clearer explanation of the utility of their undertakings, as well as transparency regarding the aspirations of the P5 process.
17. Lastly, the significance to the NPT of the P5 glossary of terms is unclear. On the one hand it might be useful in capturing new agreement on certain terms, and in forcing a detailed exchange of views. On the other hand it could turn out to be useless, and even unhelpful, if terms are not related to arms control and the glossary is padded out with terms that might engender dispute. The first stage of the glossary will be presented at the 2015 Review Conference. Terms (of which there are 328 at present) have so far focused on testing, fissile material, nuclear security, and non-proliferation. They can be roughly divided into three categories: existing definitions in legal documents such as SORT, START, the CTBT and IAEA; non-existing terms where the P5 provide their own definition; and non-existing terms on which unified definition is reached through discussion. Terms that remain undefined will be followed-up after the Review Conference in 2015. The glossary’s greatest danger, however, is that it will simply be seen as lightweight, or as distraction from the task of ‘real’ disarmament.

The Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons initiative

18. This initiative has gained significant international traction, especially among NNWS, largely because of frustration at a lack of progress on the broader disarmament agenda. However, the initiative’s own agenda and motivations are often viewed with suspicion, especially by the NWS. It can appear linked to efforts to pursue a nuclear weapons convention, partly because of the unclear role of civil society groups. However, its convenors and participants view it as a fact-based exercise, with discussions focused on the effects of detonation and response capabilities. The initiative also does not yet represent a clear coalition, given the diversity of goals among participants. Some participants, for example, seek a ban on nuclear weapons while others focus solely on the effects of nuclear use and may have room for ‘reluctant deterrents’.
19. An enduring feature of the initiative is a lack of an overall ‘grand plan’, which has both advantages and disadvantages. As a process, it has potential value to the NPT because it offers an alternative forum for discussion that satisfies the NNWS and can include the NPT ‘outliers’. However, a key question is how exactly the initiative can feed into the NPT. The Treaty’s preamble, and the reference to international humanitarian law in the 2010 Final Document, suggests grounds for considering the

humanitarian initiative as falling within the NPT process. However, it is viewed by the NWS as a distraction from the core tasks of disarmament, and suspected of having the ulterior motive of replacing the step-by-step process with a push for a nuclear weapons convention.

The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process

20. Crucially, the NSS has internationalised the challenge posed by nuclear security, and the regular high-level summits have provided structured deadlines for actions. Yet it is difficult to precisely measure how successful the NSS has been, given the operational secrecy that shrouds nuclear infrastructures. However, a significant amount of nuclear material has been removed from vulnerable locations and has been placed under better protection, leading to greater international peer review. The summits have thus raised the level of international involvement and countries working on this issue. Bureaucracies work faster, and decisions are made at a higher political level. At the upcoming NSS in The Hague in 2014, the focus will be on giving the IAEA a boost as the long-term architecture for nuclear security. Other goals in 2014 will include developing a new language for protecting HEU and plutonium; outlining the responsibilities of the nuclear industry, and more attention will be paid to the issue of radioactive sources. However, only one more NSS is likely to take place after 2014, as the NSS seems to offer declining returns as it continues.

Policies: strengthening the NPT regime

21. There are three broad categories into which policy proposals for the NPT can be arranged: trust and dialogue; capacity building; and new tools.

Trust and dialogue

22. Trust is often a difficult concept to define precisely, but it is nevertheless true that success in previous Review cycles has nearly always involved trust and cooperation both between and within groups. There is a need, for instance, for cross-bloc groups to bridge traditional divides: this role was played most notably by the New Agenda Coalition in 2000, and today might be taken on by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). Another example is the potential for increased trust among the NWS through the P5 process, which could lay the foundation for greater efforts on disarmament. It should be recognised, however, that the trust of many external observers in the P5 group was undermined by the boycotting of the humanitarian impacts conferences and the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG).
23. One way to address these issues is through the pursuit of joint projects between NWS and NNWS, such as the UK-Norway Initiative. The work of the Initiative could be expanded to other countries, and its substantive scope could be widened, as after all it has thus far left unresolved some of the hardest problems in verifying warhead dismantlement without spreading proliferation-sensitive information. In a broader sense, dialogue between NWS and NNWS is crucial. This could address a number of questions: for example, what disarmament measures, precisely, are necessary to encourage progress on non-proliferation? What measures constitute progress in disarmament? How is nuclear 'modernization' defined? What do NWS see as necessary conditions for disarmament?
24. Lastly, trust is in part a product of atmospherics. Many initiatives in the NPT arena are launched without attention to 'roll-out' – that is to say, without regard to their likely reception within an existing circle of trust. Roll-out must become an explicit part of all states' and groups' activities: for example, the P5 glossary of terms should involve considerable attention paid to disarmament. The NWS can also seek to move from 'telling' to 'showing' in their communications; where progress is not possible, they can do a better job of explaining why; and they can ensure that, if the substance of discussions needs to remain secret, the process should still be transparent. In a general sense, there is a need for groupings to avoid a lowest-common-denominator

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approach, and to better understand each other's' motivations – for example, NNWS pressure on disarmament should leave room for a path which takes NWS' concerns about security seriously.

Capacity-building

25. The second policy theme concerns capacity-building. Capacity building creates opportunities to interact and there is a clear need to build technical frameworks to support the wider political process for a WMDFZ in the Middle East. There are also some positive developments in this regard. For instance, Jordan is planning a joint integrated field exercise. Although Jordan is not involved in the fuel cycle it can take part as a host country, developing skills for verification. A number of other measures can be adopted, including programmes on verification, increasing international outreach, identifying 'regional champions' for verification, engaging in training activities with NNWS and developing forensic procedures.
26. Capacity building is also required for initiating negotiations towards an FMCT. Moreover, it should be remembered that the NWS themselves have capacity-building needs: for example, there is work to be done on the question of what would be involved in allowing one NWS into another's warhead dismantlement facilities. The humanitarian impact movement is also driven in part by a capacity issue: how well equipped is the world to deal with the use of nuclear weapons?
27. NGOs will play a crucial role in both improving dialogue and pursuing capacity-building. Priorities for NGOs might include: support for the negotiations with Iran (in which it may be a mistake to insist on the immediate unravelling of the sanctions regime); continued track-II efforts with North Korea; facilitating debate on the MIDDLE EAST WMD-FREE ZONE, especially in Israel; and avoiding polarization of the discourse on the humanitarian initiative.

New tools

28. Finally, there are a range of new tools and measures to be considered. In the area of disarmament, the humanitarian initiative could try to direct its energy into concrete proposals: for example, pursuing a ban on the use of nuclear weapons; requiring NWS to report on reductions in the role of nuclear weapons, and to explain their doctrines, war plans, and the effects of nuclear use. Under this agenda, interim steps in this Review cycle could include an acceleration of US-Russian reductions, a pledge from the other NWS not to increase their stockpiles, and a UNSC resolution providing that a nuclear test by any state would be a threat to international peace and security.
29. Alternatively, there are a range of informal, ad hoc measures that the NWS could pursue in the absence of progress on more ambitious treaties. These might include unilateral reductions, reciprocal unilateral reductions, moratoria (for example on nuclear testing or fissile material production), cooperative threat reduction, and transparency measures (which might include monitoring non-strategic nuclear weapon storage and deployments). Of these, initiatives on transparency have attracted the most interest and may be the most feasible, given the current political situation. Other proposals on disarmament include a ban on nuclear-armed cruise missiles, and a moratorium on nuclear weapon modernization. The modernization issue is clearly of significant interest to NNWS; however, it is complicated by the modalities of modernizing nuclear infrastructure versus sustaining weapons capabilities.
30. The tool of IAEA safeguards is self-evidently vital to the NPT, but the evolution of this tool is not without its challenges. In particular, the introduction of the State-Level Concept provoked a rancorous, politicised debate – albeit one whose difficulties were widely attributed to factors external to the SLC itself. The SLC has its roots in the IAEA's post-1990s move to looking at a state's nuclear activities as a whole, taking a holistic approach: it involves collection of information from a wide range of sources, identifying anomalies and requesting follow-up, analysing state-specific factors, and developing the SLC in consultation with the states concerned. Its aim is to allow smart

safeguards without affecting the principle of differentiation without discrimination: in this respect it is not new, although its name and description is. The SLC is not well-understood, however, and states have a number of concerns about it. Those concerns include its exclusion of INFCIRC/66 states, possible discrimination in application, potential subjectivity, and the role of intelligence. One part of resolving these concerns will be better communication on the part of the IAEA – beginning with the preparation of a supplementary report on the SLC, following requests for clarification on the earlier report mandated by the 2012 safeguards resolution at the IAEA General Conference. However, it may be that even perfect communication may not be enough to resolve these concerns, if in fact they stem from a politically-motivated attempt to narrow the IAEA's mandate.

31. Another contested tool is the Additional Protocol (AP). For political reasons it appears unlikely that universalization of the AP will happen in the near future – it is therefore necessary to explore middle-ground options to help strengthen support for safeguards. An open question, too, is whether it will be possible to make the AP a condition of nuclear supply.
32. Elsewhere, there are several tools which could be used to improve efforts against illicit nuclear trade. Project Alpha at King's College London, for example, has been pursuing a 'partnership' approach with the private sector, encouraging companies to conduct due diligence as part of trade control compliance when exporting sensitive items, take responsibility for their supply chains in this respect, and encourage competitors to do the same. This work has involved an emphasis on outreach to China, and on the full exploitation of open-source information. A range of other measures against illicit trade have been suggested, including: a declaration by the UNSC that no state may pursue a nuclear programme relying on illicitly-procured technology; incentive structures for private companies to institute compliance measures; increased outreach and capacity-building; and greater attention to the development of export control legislation.
33. Lastly, the impending nuclear security summit has brought forward a number of policy proposals which, although not directly part of NPT discussions, bear some relevance. The key challenge in strengthening nuclear security is overcoming the 'sovereignty paradox' – namely, that exclusive nuclear sovereignty increases nuclear risk, because secrecy and state primacy mean that there is no culture of mutual accountability. There is arguably a need, therefore, for a global nuclear security system to measure performance and to hold states accountable: such a system would need to be comprehensive, apply international standards consistently, involve national internal assurance mechanisms, provide international assurances, reduce risks, and eliminate stocks. This is not uncontroversial: there is a debate over whether the key task is to create new tools or to implement existing tools more effectively; and there is a debate about whether the nuclear security process should be concerned not only with rationalizing and securing fissile stocks, but with disarmament. An open question, too, is to what extent the IAEA should be the implementing agency.

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The 2014 Preparatory Committee meeting, and the 2015 Review Conference: priorities and practicalities

34. The 2014 Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meeting, as the last in the cycle before the 2015 Review Conference, has a number of practical tasks to accomplish – in fact its primary task, arguably is to provide smooth procedure. It should agree an agenda for the 2015 Review Conference, which should be a straightforward task of taking the 2010 agenda and adding conclusions and recommendations from that conference. The PrepCom can also recommend the establishment of subsidiary bodies under the Review Conference main committee: the question is whether these should be the same as in 2010, and whether the PrepCom is too early a stage to take this decision.
35. The output of the PrepCom is a more difficult question. One of the objectives of the three PrepComs, per the decision on the strengthened review process, is to provide

substantive recommendations for the Review Conference. This has not been achieved in practice, and there is a great deal of hesitancy about pushing for substantive recommendations for fear of forcing unnecessary divisions. One proposal in this regard is for the Chair of the 2014 PrepCom to produce a rolling text reflecting the spread of views of states parties, which could then be taken into the Review Conference, albeit not as a consensus document. A related question is the proper treatment of the Chairs' summaries from the 2012 and 2013 PrepComs: should they be fed into the 2014 meeting in some way?

36. The substantive battlegrounds for the 2014 PrepCom are not difficult to identify. The implementation of the Geneva deal on Iran's nuclear programme will be important: recent developments have been encouraging, and if there is no dramatic change by the time of the PrepCom the overall effect will be positive. The Middle East WMD-Free Zone process will attract a great deal of attention. It would help to have a date set for the Helsinki conference; if a date is not set, but the process is ongoing, the PrepCom may be able to ride out any rancour. As things stand, it appears that Arab states' attitude to this PrepCom is 'business as usual', dependent on events. Thirdly, the humanitarian impacts initiative is likely to be discussed at length, and much may depend on the output of the Mexico meeting. As discussed above, the key questions may be the extent to which the humanitarian initiative is considered to be a process within, or outside, the NPT; and whether the initiative's undoubted energy can be translated into realistic, concrete actions. Lastly, the NWS reporting requirement on disarmament contained in Action 5 of the 2010 Final Document will attract scrutiny – however, efforts are already underway to lower expectations about what the NWS will produce, at least before 2015.
37. Expectations for the 2015 Review are understandably still forming, and will depend in part on the outcome in 2014, but certain commonalities can be identified. Firstly, there appears to be a working definition of 'success': namely, a final document that enjoys either consensus, or consensus minus one or two outliers. The conference will need to reaffirm the continued importance of the NPT, and reflect agreement on the need for balanced implementation of all three pillars.
38. It would appear that the key areas of debate in 2015 will be disarmament (a perennial concern), and more specifically the role of the humanitarian initiative; compliance, particularly in its regional aspects; the process towards a MIDDLE EAST WMD-FREE ZONE (where it would appear that a failure to hold the Helsinki Conference would pose serious risks to the outcome of the 2015 Review Conference); and a range of more specific issues familiar from past Review conferences. There is some debate, however, over whether or not reform of the NPT's withdrawal clause should be made a priority. Advocates of a debate on Article X view its flaws as a threat to the integrity of the Treaty, concerning all states, but insist that the debate does not involve an effort to renegotiate the right to withdraw.
39. Some of the problems facing the 2015 Review Conference are, in fact, a product of the way in which 'success' was achieved in 2010. In the first place, the consensus action items were in places rather cautious – in 2015, for example, one priority will be to move beyond the 2010 language on disarmament. Elsewhere, the 2010 'action items' were not, in fact, phrased as actions, particularly in non-proliferation and peaceful uses – this too should be addressed in 2015. It is clear, moreover, that an attempt to separate the Review, on the one hand, and the forward-looking actions, on the other, in the 2015 document will meet with some resistance. In other words, the diplomatic tool that was used to produce consensus in 2010 may not be available this time around.
40. As a closing note, beyond the specifics of this Review cycle, there are a number of factors which have helped build consensus in the past, and which might prove useful again. Conference leadership is important: Review Conference presidents have their own styles, and should be assisted in pursuing innovative diplomacy. Both track 1.5 dialogues and bridge-building groupings, such as an enlarged NPDI, could be crucial in

arranging the building blocks of consensus. Typically, also, joint statements from the P5 have been useful in setting the tone. Ultimately, however, Review Conference successes have been the product of the sheer collective will of states to sustain the Treaty – and this will be no different in 2015.

Matthew Harries and Nicola Horsburgh

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