STATEMENT BY

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Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons

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Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the statement by the EU, I would like to make the following remarks.

70 years ago Niels Bohr, the scientist who discovered the basic structure of the atom, wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt that "we need to agree some agreement about control of the use of new active materials in order to prevent a perpetual menace to human society".

The **Non-Proliferation Treaty** does exactly that. The NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament structure and deserves our full support. It has served us well, but we agree with those that say that more results and progress is needed. The 2010 Action Plan remains our roadmap.

The Netherlands is looking forward to the **2015 NPT Review Conference**. With our partners of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative or NPDI we are strongly committed to work constructively towards a successful outcome of this conference. To contribute to this goal NPDI has submitted 12 working papers with suggestions for discussion and follow-up of the 2010 NPT Action Plan.

A **successful conference** means for us a conference where we take stock of the progress made, and where we decide how to move forward. We need evaluation as a basis for follow-up, particularly on those actions that are only partially implemented. A successful conference must evidently address all three pillars of the NPT, including non-proliferation and peaceful uses. Today I will speak mostly about disarmament.

The Netherlands remains fully committed to the **goal of a world without nuclear weapons**. Nuclear disarmament is a longstanding priority for the Netherlands — and will remain so.

We do not agree that the **international strategic situation** is a reason to stop nuclear disarmament. Indeed, the contrary may be the case. Especially in these troubling times we should intensify our efforts to find common ground and try to make further progress in the field of disarmament.

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Attention for the **humanitarian consequences** of a nuclear weapon's explosion is of great importance and can have a positive influence on the NPT process if it contributes to speeding up disarmament. Together with the security dimension, concern for the humanitarian consequences underpins our practical and sustained efforts aimed at achieving the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. To underline the importance of this topic, the Netherlands has joined the statement on this issue which will be presented by Australia. The security dimension cannot be ignored in this discussion. While we realize that views on this issue differ, we hope this will not divide us and that we will be united in realizing the goals of the NPT. We will take part in the Vienna Conference on the humanitarian dimension in December this year and hope others will as well. We hope that this conference will contribute to a successful outcome of the NPT Review Conference.

In our view the best path towards a world without nuclear weapons is through a **step by step process** and by taking practical and concrete measures while pairing ambition with realism. Realism does not imply leaning back; in our view it means working harder.

**All States with nuclear weapons**, inside or outside the NPT, can take **immediate concrete disarmament measures**. They include: creating greater transparency of their nuclear arsenals; further diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in their military and security doctrines; de-alerting...
their nuclear forces to help lower the risk of inadvertent use; and they can start reducing and ultimately eliminating all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner.

With regard to dealerting, I am pleased to announce that the Netherlands will be voting, this year for the first time, in favor of the resolution on ‘Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems’.

Mr. Chairman,

During the Open Ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations it was widely agreed that regardless of the path one prefers to follow, it is necessary to identify the various elements or ‘building blocks’ that are needed to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The Netherlands believes that this discussion is valuable and should be continued in the broader context of the NPT. On 22nd October, the Netherlands has joined Japan in organizing a side event on the issue of ‘building blocks’ that will take place at 13.00h in CR6.

Building blocks can be of a unilateral, a bilateral, a regional or multilateral nature.

The entry into force of the CTBT and a Treaty that stops the production of Fissile Material for military purposes are essential elements of a multilateral nature.

While we underline the importance to start negotiations on an FMCT, we welcome the work of the Group of Governmental Experts in which the Netherlands also participates. We hope this group will produce a substantial consensus report that will bring us closer to the start of real negotiations. We would prefer negotiations on an FMCT to take place in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament remains an important element in the disarmament machinery. We deplore that the CD is not able to start negotiations, although we saw some encouraging developments in the last year. The Informal Working Group has done some good work and the Schedule of Activities has enabled us to have an extensive informal discussion on Nuclear Disarmament, an FMCT, Negative Security Assurances and PAROS. That surely is not enough, but we hope those discussions will bring us further to the essential goal of negotiating disarmament proposals. We will work towards that goal.

Let me underline that we have made progress: there are tens of thousands of nuclear weapons less than two decades ago -and we commend the US and Russia on this issue-, much military fissile material has been converted for civil use and the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines has been reduced. But progress has not been enough: more needs to be done, particularly on disarmament. In this regard we call upon all states possessing nuclear weapons to reduce their fissile material for military purposes.

The five nuclear weapons States have committed to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament. We welcome the reports submitted by the P5 countries to the last Prepcom and are keen to see further reporting on new developments at the Review Conference. In our view reporting on progress on the implementation of all actions should become a regular part of the NPT Review Cycle and could include feedback on work done in the P5 on confidence-building, verification and transparency measures. We hope the P5 co-operation will contribute to this process.

We welcome the ongoing implementation of the New START Treaty by the United States and the Russian Federation and we call upon them to implement further reductions as to realize the 2018 target. In our view, future negotiations should also include non-strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons. Mutual reductions that take the different starting positions into account are a logical next step. We urge the United States and the Russian Federation to start talking about further reductions. Since these two countries have by far the largest nuclear arsenals, they have a special responsibility in this respect.

The situation in the DPRK also remains of grave concern. We are concerned about the uranium enrichment program and ongoing construction at the Light Water Reactor at Yongbyon, where new
activity has been reported. The Netherlands emphasizes the essential role the Agency has in verifying the application of safeguards also in the DPRK. We urge the DPRK government to allow the unconditional and swift return of IAEA inspectors.

The Netherlands firmly supports the negotiations between the E3+3 and Iran about Iran's nuclear programme and welcomes that some progress has been made in these negotiations. Iran should reassure the international community that its nuclear program is of an exclusively peaceful nature. We urge Iran to address the concerns of the international community, based on international obligations including several United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding its nuclear programme and to reach a comprehensive agreement with the E3+3 before the 24th of November and to fully cooperate with the IAEA. This is Iran's chance to make good on its intentions.

A last remark on nuclear security. The Netherlands was honored to host the Nuclear Security Summit in March of this year and to contribute to making the world somewhat safer. Progress was made in improving international cooperation, in reducing the amount of nuclear material and in improving the security of that material. However, much work still remains to be done in strengthening the security of all civil and military nuclear materials. We look forward to the final Summit in the United States.

Mr. Chairman,

The Netherlands stands ready to engage with all other states to jointly reach the final goal of a world without nuclear weapons. With the NPT Review Conference only a few months away we call on all States to work constructively towards a successful Review Conference as it will set the framework for further actions in this field.

Thank you.