

2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Implementation of the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Report submitted by Ireland

Introduction

1. Pursuant to action 20 of the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Ireland submits the present summary update of its report to the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2015/9) on the national implementation of the 2010 action plan. The present report is submitted within the framework of the strengthened review process for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and relates to the implementation of the 2010 action plan, as well as to article VI, paragraph 4 (c), of the 1995 decision entitled “Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament”. It also relates to the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, recalling the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996 in this regard.

2. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to pursue nuclear disarmament with a view to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Once again in this review cycle, Ireland’s active engagement to promote the Treaty’s goal demonstrates Ireland’s long-standing and high-level commitment to the Treaty since the beginning, with the Treaty’s origins in the series of “Irish resolutions” of the General Assembly in the 1950s and 1960s.

3. In 2020, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Ireland’s close association with the Treaty, Ireland hosted events at the United Nations and in our national parliament to mark the Treaty’s entry into force. In April 2020, Ireland co-hosted a virtual event with Costa Rica entitled “The Non-Proliferation Treaty at fifty: maintaining momentum towards the Review Conference”. In December 2020, Ireland’s parliament, Dáil Éireann, debated the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty. In addition, Ireland, together with a group of 16 cross-regional



States, issued a communiqué to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In celebrating the Treaty, the communiqué highlighted the value of international cooperation and the need for multilateral diplomacy during challenging times.

Nuclear disarmament (actions 1–22)

4. As we marked the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2020, Ireland reaffirmed its deep commitment to the principles and objectives of the Treaty, including the action plan on nuclear disarmament agreed to by the 2010 Review Conference. Ireland consistently pursues policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and its acquis with a view to the total elimination of nuclear weapons as rapidly as possible.

5. Ireland welcomes the Secretary General’s disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, and is pleased to champion action 1 to facilitate dialogue for nuclear disarmament. Ireland continues to participate actively at a high level in dialogue across disarmament forums and in other initiatives.

6. Ireland is a founding member of the New Agenda Coalition,¹ which was established in Dublin in 1998 to push for further progress on the implementation of article VI. The Coalition tables an annual General Assembly resolution entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”, which enjoys the broad support of the majority of Member States. The resolution highlights the central role of the Treaty in international security and its binding nature at all times and in all circumstances. It also recalls the enduring relevance of the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, as well as the consensus outcomes from the 2000 Review Conference and the 2010 action plan. Looking forward, the Coalition resolution at the seventy-sixth session of the First Committee called for the tenth Review Conference to give due prominence to humanitarian imperatives in its decisions and follow-on actions and to agree on an additional set of measures that builds on commitments made and actions already agreed.

7. In addition to the First Committee resolutions, the New Agenda Coalition has been active throughout the present review cycle, having submitted five working papers and contributed proactively throughout the Preparatory Committee meetings. These papers include a set of conclusions and recommendations for the tenth Review Conference and, in addition, propose concrete measures to strengthen accountability through closer scrutiny of the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments. As a member of the Coalition, Ireland looks forward to building further on these proposals at the tenth Review Conference.

8. Ireland underscores, and keeps at the forefront of all its policy considerations, the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons highlighted in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. Ireland welcomed the decision in October 2015 to hold a second open-ended working group on nuclear disarmament. Ireland presented a working paper in its national capacity related to risk, transparency and risk reduction measures, and actively participated in the working group’s meetings throughout 2016. Ireland welcomed the recommendations of the working group to pursue additional efforts to elaborate concrete effective legal measures to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons; to convene a conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons,

¹ The members of the New Agenda Coalition are Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa.

leading to their total elimination; and that States should consider implementing measures around transparency, risk reduction and increasing awareness of the wide range of humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation.

9. Ireland co-authored two working papers on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons for the Preparatory Committees for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2018 and 2019.² In 2017, Ireland funded Chatham House's paper entitled "Nuclear Disarmament: The Missing Link in Multilateralism",³ which explores the overwhelming dangers that nuclear weapons pose to global health, development, climate, social structures and human rights.

10. Throughout 2017, Ireland was a member of a core group of States leading the negotiations of a legal instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. The final negotiations, chaired by Costa Rica, were held in New York in 2017, where the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by 122 States, on 7 July 2017. Ireland signed the Treaty on 20 September 2017. Ireland is of the firm view that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is fully compatible with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and a concrete measure for the implementation of article VI.

11. In order to enable the ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Ireland enacted the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Act 2019. This Act gives effect to the Treaty in Irish law and creates criminal offences for a comprehensive range of nuclear weapon activities. Ireland deposited its instrument of ratification of the Treaty on 6 August 2020. Ireland welcomed the entry into force of the Treaty on 22 January 2021 and looks forward to the first meeting of States parties in March 2022 in Vienna.

12. Consistent with action 4, Ireland consistently called upon the Russian Federation and the United States to engage in the negotiation of the extension of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms and of a successor agreement. Ireland welcomed the extension of the New START Treaty in February 2021 and continues to encourage the Russian Federation, the United States and other countries to engage actively on broader follow-on agreements, including to limit and reduce the stockpile of nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

13. Ireland was represented by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney, at the high-level segments of the Conference on Disarmament in February 2020 and February 2019, while the Minister of State, Ciarán Cannon, addressed the Conference in February 2018. Ireland recognizes the central role that the Conference has played in promoting the rule of law in disarmament. The Conference has made significant contributions to international disarmament and non-proliferation and to international security and peace through a number of notable achievements, including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Despite these achievements, the Conference has been in stalemate for a long time. Ireland supports efforts that would enable the Conference to deal with nuclear disarmament, within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work (action 6), and begin discussions on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons (action 7). The Conference must also commence negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, and Ireland welcomes the progress that has been made thus far (action 15).

² [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.9](#) and [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.44](#).

³ Patricia Lewis, Beyza Unal, Sasan Aghlani, "Nuclear Disarmament: The Missing Link in Multilateralism", Research Paper (London, Chatham House, 2017).

14. Ireland is a strong supporter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. By prohibiting all nuclear weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, the Treaty impedes the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. Ireland signed the Treaty in 1996 and ratified it in 1999. Ireland strongly supports the entry into force and the universalization of the Treaty. Ireland believes that the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will significantly strengthen the international security architecture built on the foundations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and is an important step along the path to a world without nuclear weapons. Ireland hosted a high-level briefing during our Security Council presidency to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary meeting of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in September 2021. Ireland was represented at the ministerial level at the 2019 and 2021 article XIV conferences.

15. Ireland commends the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization for its excellent work in building up the international monitoring system in anticipation of the Treaty's entry into force. This enables the organization to verify compliance with the Treaty on a global basis. The interpretation of data will be at the core of this verification system, and Ireland participates fully in the exchange of data with the International Data Centre in Vienna through its own national data centre based in Dublin.

16. Ireland is committed to the establishment of further nuclear-weapon-free zones, where appropriate, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned, and in accordance with the 1999 guidelines of the Disarmament Commission (action 9). Ireland, as a State member of the European Union, endorses the provision of European Union support for activities in support of a process of confidence-building leading to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

17. Ireland recognizes the importance of cooperation between Governments, the United Nations, national and regional organizations and civil society, highlighted in action 19 of the 2010 action plan. Ireland considers cooperation with civil society in the disarmament and non-proliferation sphere as vitally important to facilitate informed discussion and to provide valuable monitoring of disarmament negotiations for international stakeholders. During the review period, Ireland provided support to a number of entities, including the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Reaching Critical Will and Chatham House. Ireland also supports the publication and dissemination of the Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor.

18. A particular priority for Ireland in this review cycle has been ensuring the diversity of voices in disarmament, including the full equal and meaningful participation of women and men at all levels of disarmament and security decision-making. In addition, the integration of gender perspectives and issues across all spheres of disarmament is a significant priority. Ireland presented a working paper on gender issues to each of the Preparatory Committees in the current review cycle. Ireland was also a co-author of two working papers, the first on improving gender equality and diversity in the Non-Proliferation Treaty review process and the second on integrating gender perspectives in the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, with our co-Chairs in the Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group (Canada, Namibia, Philippines and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research) together with Australia and Sweden. Based in Geneva, the Group promotes efforts to strengthen the application of gender perspectives to multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control issues. Ireland was a founder donor to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), supporting postgraduate training for young women in the areas of nuclear science and non-proliferation.

19. In action 22 of the 2010 action plan, all States are encouraged to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), in order to advance the goals of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Ireland regularly supports the resolutions in the First Committee on disarmament education and on youth and disarmament. Since 2018, Ireland has also engaged with Irish United Nations youth delegates on disarmament issues. The Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, visited Ireland in June 2019. During the visit, she met with the President of Ireland, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Irish Parliament's Select Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and gave a public address to the Institute for International and European Affairs.

Nuclear non-proliferation (actions 23–46)

20. Ireland has consistently supported efforts to promote the universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The status of Ireland as a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty is confirmed by the comprehensive system of IAEA safeguards, which has continued to assure the international community of Ireland's compliance with its Treaty obligations.

21. Ireland supports the call by previous Review Conferences for the application of IAEA comprehensive safeguards to all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities. Ireland has been a party to the safeguards agreement since 1977 and brought into force the Additional Protocol in 2004. Ireland continues to urge States parties to the Treaty that have yet to bring into force comprehensive safeguard agreements to do so as soon as possible.

22. In relation to the IAEA safeguards system, Ireland has been involved in its enhancement and development, including through the timely payment of assessed contributions and through European Union contributions. Ireland, together with European Union partners, has conducted diplomatic activities to promote the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system ahead of the Review Conference. In 2020, this included conducting démarches to States developing their civilian nuclear programmes calling on them to amend or rescind their small quantities protocol and sign and ratify the additional protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA as a matter of priority.

23. Ireland has also contributed to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund. Ireland last served as a member of the IAEA Board of Governors from September 2014 to September 2016 and is a current member of the Board from 2021 to 2022.

24. Ireland is an active member of the Vienna Group of Ten, which submits a working paper to all of the Treaty's Preparatory Committees and Review Conferences with concrete recommendations. In 2019 and 2020, Ireland was Co-Chair with Belgium of the Western European Group for elections to the Board of Governors of IAEA, and Ireland consistently promotes universal compliance by States with their non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty.

25. Ireland is a committed member of all relevant export control regimes and exercises robust national export controls. Ireland applies the understandings of the Zangger Committee, the guidelines developed by the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime when assessing all relevant export licence applications. Ireland also subscribes to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

26. In 2017 and 2018, Ireland co-chaired the Missile Technology Control Regime together with Iceland, during which time discussions were focused on intangible

technology transfer, unmanned aerial vehicles, catch-all controls and regional proliferation. As Co-Chair, Ireland also conducted outreach meetings and promoted the Regime's guidelines and annex to non-Missile Technology Control Regime countries.

27. Ireland has also played a prominent role in the Nuclear Suppliers Group, working to develop objective non-discriminatory criteria for new membership, which would be consistent with the principles and objectives of the Treaty.

28. In 2019, together with all Zangger Committee members, Ireland tabled a working paper at the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons entitled "Procedures in relation to exports of nuclear materials and certain categories of equipment and material under article III (2) of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons".

29. Ireland, as a European Union member State, is committed to the ongoing implementation of the European Union strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Ireland enforces export controls for dual-use items in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2021/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 setting up a Union regime for the control of exports, brokering, technical assistance, transit and transfer of dual-use items.⁴ The list of dual-use items in annex 1 of the Regulation includes items identified by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (category 0, "nuclear materials, facilities and equipment"). Controlling exports of these items is an important measure for underpinning the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Ireland also fully implements Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment.⁵

30. Ireland ratified the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities in September 2014. Ireland adheres to the principles of the revised IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, as well as the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources approved by the IAEA Board of Governors in 2004. Ireland is in the process of ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Ireland is also committed to maintaining the most robust national regulatory controls of nuclear material, through its national regulatory authority, the Environmental Protection Agency.

31. During Ireland's 2021–2022 membership of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of Ireland has served as facilitator of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). Ireland has also given financial support to IAEA monitoring and verification activities in Iran.

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy (actions 47–64)

32. Ireland strongly supports IAEA in its primary role to promote nuclear and radiological safety and to assist States parties that choose to engage in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes through the development of standards, guidelines and codes of conduct to ensure human safety, security and environmental protection.

33. While not a nuclear energy-producing country, Ireland acknowledges the right of States to determine their own energy mix. However, we expect that, where a State chooses to develop a nuclear power industry, this will be done in line with the highest

⁴ Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0821&from=EN>.

⁵ Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008E0944&from=EN>.

international standards with respect to safety and environmental protection. In this context, Ireland is firmly in favour, and a strong advocate, of any measures that enhance nuclear safety and security.

34. Ireland recognizes that nuclear and radiological technologies play an important role outside the nuclear energy sector in other vital areas, such as medicine, industry, research, food and agriculture, space and pollution control, and can contribute to a wide variety of socioeconomic and environmental benefits, particularly in developing countries.

35. Ireland has ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities and its amendment. Ireland encourages all States to become parties to all conventions listed in action 59 at the earliest possible opportunity.

36. Action 62 encourages ongoing dialogue between coastal and shipping States regarding confidence-building measures concerning the maritime transport of nuclear materials, such as mixed plutonium–uranium oxide fuel, high-level radioactive waste and irradiated nuclear fuel by sea. The dialogue is aimed at building confidence between coastal and shipping States and promoting transparency on these issues, providing a forum for exchanging information and deepening the relationships between the participating countries. Ireland chaired the dialogue between coastal and shipping States in 2018 and in 2019 and has continued to participate actively in its ongoing work.

Conclusion

37. Ireland remains committed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, its acquis and its full implementation. Through the European Union, Ireland has supported the tenth Review Conference through the Council Decision of 15 April 2019 on European Union support for activities leading up to the Tenth Review Conference. Ireland will engage actively in the tenth Review Conference with a view to achieving an ambitious and comprehensive outcome.
