



UNITED KINGDOM

CLUSTER I - DISARMAMENT

By

Ambassador Jo Adamson

**UK Ambassador to the
Conference on Disarmament**

Head of the United Kingdom Delegation

at the

**2012 Preparatory Committee for the
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**

VIENNA, 3 May 2012

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STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JO ADAMSON TO THE FIRST PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS: VIENNA, 30 APRIL – 11 MAY 2012

CLUSTER I – DISARMAMENT

Mr Chairman,

My delegation fully supports the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. On the disarmament pillar, I would like to set out what the UK has been doing to make progress, and what we have been doing in concert with our P5 and other partners.

UK unilateral action

The UK remains absolutely committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We have a strong record of fulfilling our disarmament commitments and of meeting our international legal obligations which flow from our membership of the NPT as a Nuclear Weapons State.

While nuclear weapons exist, and while the future security environment remains so uncertain, the UK government remains committed to retaining a credible and effective minimum nuclear deterrent. At the 2010 Review Conference, we declared for the first time the maximum number of nuclear warheads in the UK stockpile, and announced a re-examination of the UK's nuclear declaratory policy.

Our 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review concluded that the UK could meet the minimum necessary requirements for credible deterrence with a smaller nuclear weapons capability. We therefore set out a number of new disarmament measures, announcing that we would by the mid 2020s:

- reduce the number of warheads onboard each of our submarines from 48 to 40;
- reduce the requirement for operationally available warheads to no more than 120;
- reduce the number of operational missiles on the Vanguard class submarines to no more than 8; and
- reduce our overall nuclear weapons stockpile to no more than 180.

In June 2011 we announced that the programme for implementing these warhead reductions had commenced early, and that at least one of our submarines now carries a maximum of 40 nuclear warheads. We expect the reduction in operationally available warheads to 120 to take place by the time of the next Review Conference in 2015.

As a result of our declaratory policy review, we also announced in the SDSR a new, stronger security assurance that the UK will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Non-Nuclear Weapons States Party to, and in compliance with their obligations under, the NPT.

Multilateral cooperation

As well as these important unilateral steps, the UK has been working hard to make progress multilaterally.

The P5 Conference in Paris in June 2011 was a vital opportunity for the five nuclear weapon states to meet a year after the RevCon, to focus on the disarmament-specific commitments in the NPT Action Plan, and to map out a way forward. We agreed on new confidence-building disarmament initiatives, including a nuclear weapons definitions working group, which will help establish mutual understanding and facilitate future P5 consultations. We look forward to continuing our discussions across the NPT Action Plan with our P5 partners, and to reporting further the ways in which we are delivering against our commitments.

The disarmament pillar of the NPT is, of course, primarily about the particular responsibilities of the P5 to work towards the requirements of Article VI. But we must not forget that all Parties to the NPT share responsibility across the three pillars to deliver against the agreed Action Plan - and to report their progress in doing so. The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative is a great example of countries taking a lead to make cross-pillar progress. And so the UK has been collaborating not only with the P5, but with Non-Nuclear Weapons States to make disarmament progress.

UK – Norway Initiative

We have been working with Norway since 2007 on ground breaking research into the verification of nuclear warhead dismantlement. The work is founded on two principles: that any future process will need to be underpinned by a verification regime that can demonstrate with confidence that disarmament has taken place. And secondly: that Non-Nuclear Weapons States can also play a critical role in creating the conditions for disarmament and fulfilling their own obligations under Article VI of the NPT. The UK-Norway Initiative has focused on the joint development of effective and mutually trusted solutions to technical and procedural disarmament hurdles which will not breach our respective non-proliferation obligations under the NPT.

Since the Review Conference, we have been working hard with Norway to take forward the Initiative. In 2010, we hosted a managed access exercise in the UK. In December 2011, we hosted with Norway a technically-focused workshop in London to share our progress with technical experts from twelve non-nuclear weapon states that had expressed an interest in our research. The workshop was invaluable for sharing information with Non-Nuclear Weapons States about the real and practical challenges that disarmament is likely to pose in the future. And, as announced at the Paris P5 Conference, on 4 April this year the UK hosted a meeting with our P5 partners at which British technical experts shared the outcomes and lessons from the UK-Norway Initiative, and P5 experts offered their own perspectives. We

look forward to welcoming delegations to a presentation of the 2010 exercise, the December workshop and our forward plan for the Initiative in Room M3 at 1pm today.

In addition to the work that the UK has been doing unilaterally, bilaterally and with the other Nuclear Weapons States and Non-Nuclear Weapons States on nuclear disarmament, we continue to press strongly for progress on the other key instruments that will help us to move towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

CTBT

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty continues to be one of the UK's key disarmament priorities. We were one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Treaty, and continue to maintain a voluntary moratorium on nuclear test explosions. The UK has been working hard to encourage ratification by those Annex II countries that need to ratify the treaty for it to enter into force. We congratulate Indonesia, Ghana, Guatemala and Guinea on their ratifications during the past year, bringing the treaty closer to universality. We also welcome Niue's signature in the last month, following their participation in a UK-funded project to promote ratification among small island countries.

The UK continues to work to build up all elements of the Treaty's regime: we provide expert advice in seismology and radiochemistry to help establish a viable verification regime, ready for entry into force. In November 2011 we co-hosted with the CTBT Organisation a P5 experts meeting in Edinburgh on improving the international community's ability to detect underground nuclear weapon tests.

Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty

We urgently want to see the start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. The UK remains firmly committed to an FMCT. With a verifiable treaty in place, we will be a significant step closer to our goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Without an FMCT, we still have no legally binding way of putting a stop to the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. And yet another year has gone by with the CD still unable to start negotiations or even agree to a Programme of Work. The P5 have been working together on the commitment that we made in Paris to renew efforts to promote negotiations in the CD, and we will continue to do so. Not only are reinvigorated CD efforts important in their own right, but are incumbent upon the NPT community to deliver as one of the key recommendations in the 2010 Action Plan.

Conclusion

Mr Chairman, I will conclude by reiterating the UK's commitment to take tangible and mutually reinforcing steps that show we are serious about disarmament, that reduce incentives to others to proliferate, and that create the conditions and confidence for others to take their own steps, working towards our shared long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons.