

GLOBAL ENTERPRISE TO STRENGTHEN NONPROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

March 25, 2021

MEETING SUMMARY

The March 25 meeting of the Global Enterprise (GE) focused on identifying meaningful outcomes that would create a sense of success at the 10th NPT Review Conference (RevCon) and practical steps that could strengthen the NPT in the context of the RevCon and beyond. Participants engaged on Dr. Lewis A. Dunn's discussion paper entitled "Success at the 10th NPT Review Conference: Raising our Level of Ambition," including consideration of how recent developments – such as the new Biden administration, the extension of New START, and the entry into force of the TPNW – could create an opportunity for NPT States parties to consider a more ambitious approach to strengthening the NPT and reaffirming the Treaty's critical role for nonproliferation and disarmament.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

General Comments

- Due to the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision whether an in-person RevCon will be held in August 2021 will be made in mid-May. Participants expressed *uncertainty* regarding what would be achieved at the upcoming RevCon given the limited opportunities for in person negotiations and time available to create momentum.
- All participants agreed that the RevCon should be seen as an opportunity to sustain and strengthen the NPT. Participants recognized that recent positive developments could support a new sense of aspiration for a positive outcome. However, some cautioned that, States parties should focus on what is realistically achievable.
- Participants further noted that the willingness of NPT States parties to approach RevCon negotiations in a civil and respectful manner and show openness to cooperation would be as important as bringing the right policies to the table.

Views on Raising the Level of Ambition at the 10th NPT RevCon

- ***Approaching RevCon as an opportunity to introduce a new vision for disarmament and nonproliferation:*** Several participants highlighted that a reaffirmation of the NPT's importance for global peace and security—either in a comprehensive final declaration or in a short declaration of support by the Heads of State or Government—would set a positive tone for the RevCon. In light of the challenges faced by the NPT, one participant stressed that such a reaffirmation should reflect a new ambitious vision for the Treaty's future approach to disarmament that would introduce fresh thinking on how to address the changing environment. Participants reiterated concerns about prospects for disarmament, noting recent and ongoing modernization efforts and

policy changes to increase reliance by some NWS. NWS participants again affirmed their commitment to Article VI and the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

- ***Combining words with deeds:*** Many participants reiterated that concrete actions remain the best evidence for the Parties' commitment to the NPT's obligations. There remains value in declaratory measures, such as a reaffirmation or reformulation of the Reagan-Gorbachev statement (either issued by the P5 or the broader NPT community). These should in addition be underpinned by actionable commitments and concrete steps by NWS. Participants identified the following measures as examples in support of a positive outcome (stressing that these should complement not substitute discussions and progress on actual disarmament):
 - High-level commitment to the pursuit of arms control by all P5 countries;
 - Continued P5 dialogue on doctrines and the Glossary to enhance mutual understanding and strengthen strategic stability, including steps to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons and decrease the role of nuclear weapons in national strategies;
 - Concerted effort by the P5 to report on their process and actions taken towards implementation of the NPT's three pillars.
- ***Focusing on risk reduction:*** There was particular support among participants to continue emphasizing risk reduction as a means to address the changing security environment. Ongoing efforts to conceptualize risk reduction, map existing agreements, and identify new measures were highlighted as actions the P5 could take to demonstrate progress in this area. The Joint Voluntary Commitment (JVC) to establish a P5 working group on risk reduction was raised as a useful contribution.
- ***Establishing a balanced, comprehensive, and problem-solving oriented dialogue:*** Acknowledging the critical role of the review process, several participants stressed the need to create a more robust, interactive, and multi-layered dialogue between the P5 and all NPT States parties. Some reiterated the central importance of humanitarian consequences in those discussions and others underlined the need to keep a balance between all pillars of the Treaty. Strengthened engagement between NPT parties would increase transparency, strengthen trust, and create an opportunity to find mutually acceptable ways to navigate politically difficult and controversial issues at the RevCon, such as the reaffirmation of previous commitments.