

Toward a Successful 10th NPT Review Conference

Recommendations informed by NTI's Global Enterprise to Strengthen Nonproliferation and Disarmament

Launched in 2018, the [Global Enterprise to Strengthen Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#) (GE) works to advance the goals of strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and ensuring a successful 10th NPT Review Conference (RevCon)—one that includes specific commitments to **practical and achievable actions** that will advance the NPT's goals now and in future review cycles.

To that end, the GE has regularly convened meetings with officials from more than 20 countries—along with a small number of non-government experts—representing a geographically and politically diverse set of NPT States parties, including each of the five nuclear weapon states (NWS). The meetings have provided an informal setting for participants to better understand each other's perspectives and priorities, identify areas of agreement, collaboratively explore creative solutions to difficult problems, and generate support for specific actions. The discussions have spanned substantive options for cooperative engagement on nuclear risk reduction, transparency, and fissile material management, as well as new ways to advance NPT goals through Joint Voluntary Commitments by groups of States parties.

Drawing from these discussions, this paper offers a focused set of recommendations for achieving success at the RevCon to advance the shared interest of NPT states and promote and strengthen the NPT regime. It reflects the views of the NTI team, informed by the GE process, but the views are **not necessarily shared by all GE participants**.

Recommendations for the 10th NPT RevCon

➔ **Success should not be limited to a consensus final document, even though achieving this outcome should remain the goal.**

States should pursue multiple outcome options, including:

- » A [high-level political declaration](#) by all States parties reaffirming a shared commitment to the core principles of the NPT and reinvigorated pursuit of all its goals.
- » Joint Voluntary Commitments (JVCs) made by individual states or groups of states. JVCs are cooperative commitments that could be made prior to or at the RevCon and/or be reflected in a RevCon Final Declaration to advance the treaty's core objectives.
- » Use of multiple documents to reflect the RevCon's results, some agreed to by consensus, others reflecting differences, and others put forward by groups of States parties.

➔ **States should engage privately in advance of the RevCon to find mutually acceptable ways to navigate politically difficult issues.**

Specific examples include how to refer to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in any final declaration, how to deal with past commitments, and how to manage differences between the United States and Russia and the United States and China in explaining disappointing progress on implementation of Article VI's disarmament obligations.

➔ **States should take specific actions to reduce the heightened risk of use of nuclear weapons, even while acknowledging that risk reduction cannot substitute for renewed progress on nuclear disarmament consistent with Article VI.**

Among them:

- » A joint affirmation by all members of the P5, building on the bilateral U.S.-Russian and Russian-Chinese declarations that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” Such an affirmation should be accompanied by a commitment to use the P5 process to agree on specific actions to prevent nuclear catastrophe. A comparable affirmation by all NPT States parties at the RevCon would send an important signal of wider concern about the risk of use of nuclear weapons and the need for NWS to take credible actions to reduce that risk.
- » The establishment of a P5 working group dedicated to reducing the risk of use of nuclear weapons, however that risk might arise. This should be accompanied by a commitment to report annually during the review process on the specific risk-reduction actions taken as a result of the deliberations. An annual reporting obligation throughout the five-year review process would heighten the credibility of the working group, add a measure of accountability to achieve results, and offer transparency for non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS).

- » A high-level declaration by all P5 countries committing to pursue dialogue and cooperative actions to enhance strategic stability, decrease nuclear competition, and contribute to implementation of their Article VI commitments.

➔ **Building on past commitments, states should agree at the 10th RevCon on a short set of objectives to be achieved prior to the 2025 RevCon, with a particular emphasis on reenergizing action on Article VI.**

These could include:

- » Sustaining, extending, and reenergizing the **U.S.-Russian arms control process** through comprehensive discussions within the bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue, with the goal of a set of legally and politically binding follow-on agreements to New START, as well as related measures to address the many aspects of U.S.-Russia nuclear and strategic competition.
- » Putting in place an official **Track 1 U.S.-China strategic dialogue** (supplemented by Track 1.5 and Track 2 exchanges) with the goal of enhancing U.S.-China strategic stability and avoiding accelerating strategic competition.
- » Reaching agreement among the P5 to implement a set of **focused confidence-building and transparency measures** aimed at lowering the risk of unintended military confrontation, crisis, and escalation. Actions could include restraints on military exercises and on activities in space and cyber space, as well as other means to address possible strategic miscalculation.
- » Initiating discussions within the P5 process on what is holding back **progress toward full implementation of Article VI** and report back to the 2024 PrepCom on the results of those discussions as well as actions taken to overcome the obstacles to progress.
- » Resolving outstanding issues to complete and bring into force the **nuclear-weapon free zone** treaties and their protocols.
- » Reaffirming the moratoria on nuclear-weapons testing and completing additional **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** ratifications with a view to entry-into-force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date.
- » Successfully negotiating a **Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty**, including necessary transparency and verification provisions.
- » Developing and demonstrating the necessary technologies, concepts, and procedures needed for **verification of elimination of nuclear weapons**.

➔ **NWS and NNWS should affirm the importance of greater interactive dialogue as part of the future review process and agree on approaches to achieve that objective.**

Doing so will increase transparency between NWS and NNWS, strengthen trust and accountability, and help to reestablish a common foundation and commitment to advancing all objectives of the NPT. Specific approaches could include:

- » Providing opportunities for NNWS to interact with NWS during the preparation of the reports NWS provide to the 2025 RevCon on implementation of their Article VI and other NPT commitments.

- » Agreeing to dedicate time at one (or multiple) PrepCom(s) during the 2025 review cycle for comprehensive and detailed presentations by NWS on their nuclear forces, doctrines, and postures.
- » Agreeing to dedicate time at one (or multiple) PrepCom(s) for the 2025 RevCon for a dialogue among NWS and NNWS on near- and long-term priorities and practical measures to advance nuclear disarmament.
- » Strengthening dialogue between NWS and NNWS on the plans, discussions, and results of the P5 process.

➔ **States should commit at the RevCon to taking specific national actions to strengthen [fissile material management \(FMM\)](#).**

Accounting, securing, safeguarding, and, in the case of weapons-usable materials, minimizing fissile material is critical for disarmament. Among specific actions to strengthen security, transparency, and accountability of fissile material:

- » Acknowledging that [robust and effective FMM](#) advances the goals of the NPT.
- » Undertaking and/or fully implementing commitments related to minimizing and eliminating the use of [highly enriched uranium](#) in civilian applications, minimizing stockpiles of separated plutonium, and ensuring and strengthening the physical protection of nuclear materials.
- » Beginning work and supporting incremental steps toward the development of a [comprehensive baseline of information](#), including for stocks of military as well as civilian fissile material and their production infrastructure, as well as mechanisms to ensure transparency and accounting of materials moving forward.

➔ **States should affirm their commitment to the inclusion of diverse perspectives in the NPT review process.**

Diversity will support progress on the treaty's implementation and could be buttressed by:

- » Ensuring diverse representation across States parties' delegations.
- » Taking advantage of the work of [regional organizations](#) and other multilateral initiatives to strengthen participation and engagement across [geographical regions](#).
- » Supporting and facilitating the active participation of civil society organizations throughout the review process.