



CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT

9TH ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING ON NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

Auckland, New Zealand, 8-9 March 2017

Introduction

1. The 9th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ARF ISM on NPD) was held in Auckland, New Zealand on 8-9 March 2017. The Meeting was co-chaired by Ms Dell Higgin, New Zealand Ambassador for Disarmament, Mr Ikram Mohammed Ibrahim, Undersecretary, Multilateral Security and International Organisations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia and Mr Martin Larose, Director, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Division, Global Affairs Canada.

2. Representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, the United States, and Viet Nam participated in the Meeting. Also present were representatives from the Group of Experts established pursuant to UNSCR 1540, the Panel of Experts established pursuant to UNSCR 1874, the ASEAN Secretariat and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP). The List of Participants is attached as **Annex 1** and the Agenda appears as **Annex 2**.

Opening Session

3. Following a traditional Māori welcome by local iwi (Ngāti Whātua), the participants were encouraged by the co-chairs to engage in a productive discussion.

Session 1: General Survey of developments/forthcoming events with regard to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation

4. The Ambassador of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to New Zealand delivered a statement on behalf of the Chairman of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) Mr Henk Cor van der Kwast. The

statement emphasised that the NPT is a fundamental component of the international legal order, and that constructive dialogue and new approaches will be required to overcome the failure to reach consensus on the final document at the 2015 Review Conference (RevCon). The forthcoming PrepCom session is an opportunity for real dialogue and improved momentum but discussions at the PrepCom will need to be inclusive and no single issue should be allowed to dominate proceedings. Working methods should also be reviewed, including the link as between PrepComs and with the RevCon. In addition, peaceful uses of nuclear energy remain an important part of the NPT for many countries and new ideas in this area should be discussed. Finally, the statement highlighted the recent and upcoming NPT regional dialogue meetings that continue to provide valuable input to the forthcoming PrepCom.

5. Indonesia gave a presentation specifically on the forthcoming Asia-Pacific NPT regional dialogue meeting. Indonesia believes that the NPT is an indispensable instrument for international peace and security but more progress in implementing it is urgently required. It is the responsibility of all NPT members to work to strengthen the NPT. Suggestions that the nuclear prohibition negotiations could constrain implementation of the NPT had no basis. The 2015 RevCon illustrated that a more progressive stance is required to maintain the NPT's viability. This is why Indonesia together with the Netherlands is hosting the regional dialogue on the NPT on 13-14 March 2017 in Jakarta. It hopes that this regional dialogue will serve as a platform to discuss pertinent issues, share concerns and look towards the 2020 RevCon. The overarching aim is to maintain the continued relevance of the NPT in order to achieve the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

6. Thailand gave a presentation reviewing the 2016 Open-Ended Working Group on Taking forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations (OEWG) which its Ambassador in Geneva had chaired. The importance of nuclear disarmament was highlighted in the period since the first UN General Assembly resolution in 1946. The Conferences on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons and the establishment of the 2016 OEWG were recent positive developments on nuclear disarmament. Many common views had been expressed in each of the three OEWG sessions although there were some differences on the possible approaches and elements for a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. It was noted that the NPT text does not provide specific guidance on effective measures to be pursued in fulfilment of its Article VI. The OEWG recommended, with widespread support, the convening by the General Assembly in 2017 of a conference to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons leading to their total elimination, and this was later adopted as UNGA resolution 71/258. Thailand emphasised the importance of inclusiveness, transparency and participation in moving forward. These sentiments were later echoed by the Philippines as being the "ASEAN way". Thailand's presentation appears as **Annex 3**.

7. A statement from the Costa Rican Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, Elayne Whyte Gómez, was read out regarding the upcoming UNGA nuclear prohibition negotiations for which Ambassador Whyte has been elected President. The negotiations will be held in New York from 27-31 March 2017 and 15 June-7 July 2017. Her statement provided a summary of milestones from the recent organisational session of the Conference. It is Ambassador Whyte's intention to submit a redraft of the rules of procedure in early March and to make a first draft of the treaty available in April. Ambassador Whyte emphasised her willingness to work in an inclusive and transparent manner with all delegations of the UN. In a subsequent videoconference, Ambassador Whyte joined the meeting from Geneva and provided a useful update on the forthcoming first session of the negotiations. She emphasised the need for all norms established by the Treaty to strengthen and complement the current non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and the NPT in particular. She would be conducting the negotiations and her various consultations in a comprehensive and inclusive manner with all stakeholders.

8. Japan provided an update regarding the CTBT and its efforts, as the only country to have suffered atomic bombings, to promote the entry into force of the Treaty, and as part of its promotion of practical and concrete nuclear disarmament measures. Japan noted that the CTBT has an important disarmament aspect by restraining the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. Its verification regime is also important. UNSC Resolution 2310, adopted in September 2016, called for the entry into force of the Treaty as did UNGA Resolution 70/73. Japan had co-chaired the 9th Conference on facilitating the Treaty's entry into force (in Sept 2015) and the "Friends of CTBT" Foreign Ministers meeting (in Sept 2016). As co-ordinator of the Article XIV process Japan will host a CTBT regional conference in mid-2017. In addition, the Japan International Cooperation Agency conducts global seismic observation training and Japan provides financial assistance to strengthen the CTBTO's International Monitoring System including an extra-budgetary contribution of 2.43 million USD. Japan also touched on the importance of transparency in the NPT context and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative's (NPDI) promotion of an NPT standard reporting form for all NPT state parties. Japan's presentation appears as **Annex 4**.

9. Angela Woodward, Deputy Executive Director of the NGO VERTIC gave a presentation describing two current nuclear verification activities. The first concerned the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) which was launched in 2014 by the US Department of State and The Nuclear Threat Initiative NGO. Its objectives include capacity building and generating greater understanding in the field of nuclear verification. IPNDV working groups are focusing on aspects of a hypothetical dismantlement scenario, including monitoring and verification, on-site inspections and technical challenges and solutions. Phase 1 of the project (2014-2017) will conclude shortly and it is expected to move to Phase 2.

Clarification was provided, making it clear that the intention was to make some of the outcomes of Phase 1 available later in 2017. The second part of the presentation focused on the UN Group of Government Experts created pursuant to the adoption of UNGA resolution 71/67 (also known as “the Norway Resolution”) which will meet in 2018-2019. Asia-Pacific states might like to take the opportunity to consider contributions to both initiatives as they move forward. Ms Woodward’s presentation appears as **Annex 5**.

Session 2: Panel Discussion on Nuclear Disarmament – prospects for the new NPT review cycle and UNGA nuclear prohibition negotiations in 2017

10. Mr Ian McConville (DFAT, Australia) spoke first on the prospects for the forthcoming NPT RevCon cycle. He acknowledged that this cycle will be a challenge given the many difficult issues that are currently being faced globally, including the ongoing strategic competition among the P5 and the possibility that the prohibition treaty negotiations could impact on the willingness of states to move ahead constructively to address the NPT agenda. That said, the NPT is certainly not failing. Rather, he argued that the NPT remains a key, enduring part of the disarmament architecture and all states have an interest in it. Mr McConville also noted that references had been made to ASEAN providing the third PrepCom chair so it would be useful if ASEAN member states were able to identify a candidate as soon as possible. The need for broad engagement was emphasised, along with the importance of strong leadership by the P5. Transparency and reporting were identified as areas for improvement; these will be a key focus for the NPDI grouping’s efforts. A question was also posed to the room regarding whether the transactional nature of the NPT review cycle is the best way to move forward or whether there might be better ways to distil important outcomes and significant steps forward that have been progressed during PrepCom meetings.

11. The second panellist, Dr Anna Hood, (from the Faculty of Law at the University of Auckland), presented on the upcoming prohibition treaty negotiations and addressed some of the concerns that have been raised regarding the treaty and its possible impact on the NPT - especially implementation of Article VI. Dr Hood’s view was that the prohibition treaty would enhance, rather than undermine, the NPT. Firstly, Article VI of the NPT does not require that disarmament negotiations take place within the NPT framework – and indeed taking the negotiations outside the NPT framework could be a useful step. Secondly, while it is inevitable that the prohibition treaty will mirror some provisions of the NPT and other disarmament treaties, thereby creating an “overlap”, international law is well-equipped to deal with the issue of obligations repeated in successive treaties. Thirdly, there is concern that conducting negotiations, in the absence from the room of some, possibly all, Nuclear Weapons States and other nuclear weapon possessors, might be pointless. However, it must be remembered that there is an obligation on all States Parties to

the NPT to engage in disarmament negotiations (as had been made clear by the ICJ in its 1996 Advisory Opinion). Further, there is increasing evidence in international law that a treaty can have a significant impact on states' behaviour and start setting powerful norms even if some states remain outside it (as is, for example, exemplified by US behaviour in connection with the Landmines Treaty and also by the CTBT. The vast majority of states abide by the latter Treaty notwithstanding its lack of entry into force).

12. Finally, the Philippines Ambassador to New Zealand, HE Jesus (Gary) Domingo, spoke as the third panellist and expressed his country's firm support for the complete elimination of WMD. Consistent with the agreed ASEAN position, ASEAN colleagues had been providing leadership on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. For example, the Philippines had successfully chaired the 2010 NPT RevCon, Indonesia has continued acting as coordinator on disarmament for the Non-Aligned Movement, and Thailand has ably chaired the OEWG in Geneva. All ASEAN members remain committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Of its three pillars nuclear disarmament has been the most challenging; the Philippines see the prohibition treaty negotiations as fully complementary to the NPT. Indeed these negotiations will strengthen the disarmament pillar and the Philippines have now joined the "core group" taking forward the prohibition treaty. As to the inability to reach consensus that has occurred with respect to a number of NPT RevCons, Ambassador Domingo suggested that more vigour would be required in preparing for 2020. It was noted that all states must avoid acting in a silo and should pursue closer synergies with regional and national stakeholders as well as greater engagement with civil society.

13. Following the panellists' comments, the Meeting was opened up to discussion from the floor. The US stated that it was opposed to both the OEWG and the prohibition treaty negotiations. In the US's view, a prohibition treaty will come at enormous cost to the NPT process without eliminating "one single nuclear warhead". The treaty would further polarise the political environment and limit any ability to reach consensus either through the NPT or the Conference on Disarmament. A prohibition treaty also ignores the essential link between disarmament and underlying security conditions and could undermine much of the existing global security architecture. The US noted in conclusion that the abandonment in recent years of the principle of consensus in disarmament discussions was to be lamented – a consensus approach will yield fruit if we are patient and persistent.

14. Japan noted that it had not yet decided whether to participate in the prohibition treaty negotiations, but this was a hotly-debated topic in Japan. Japan asked two questions of the core supporters of the prohibition treaty negotiations: first, why were the prohibition negotiations said to lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons; and second, how do the core group and other prohibition treaty

supporters plan to follow up on the useful discussions and recommendations for practical disarmament measures such as transparency and awareness raising contained in the 2016 OEWG report? In response to these questions, the New Zealand co-chair said that the reference to the total elimination of nuclear weapons in the UNGA resolution helped make it clear that the prohibition treaty was the first step of a journey, the ultimate end point of which is the elimination of nuclear weapons. It was not intended as an end in itself. (Thailand referenced paragraphs 34-36 of the OEWG report as confirming this.) In response to the second question, New Zealand said that proponents of the prohibition treaty maintained their full support for *all* measures long sought under the NPT and would continue to press for these as well as advancing the ban treaty. New Zealand, for instance, would continue pressing for all the interim measures (e.g. de-alerting, transparency and reporting, and a reduced role for nuclear weapons in states' security strategies) that it had been advocating for many years.

15. The Russian Federation reminded the Meeting that while it respects the views of those supporting the renouncement of nuclear weapons, the Russian Federation believes that it is necessary to pursue this goal without undermining strategic stability or jeopardizing the integrity of the NPT regime. It is necessary to follow the tested approaches that have already enabled states to reduce the world's nuclear arsenals more than five-fold. All the factors affecting strategic stability should be taken into account including deployment of a global ABM system, development of non-nuclear precision-guided long-range weapons for strategic purposes, the menace of the deployment of strike weapons in outer space, stronger quantitative and qualitative imbalances in conventional arms and lack of progress on CTBT ratification.

16. In response to the concerns expressed, Ambassador Domingo noted that just like an urban landscape, the architecture of a treaty process (whether the NPT or a prohibition treaty) can evolve over time. Processes can be valuable for a number of broad-ranging reasons. Dr Hood reinforced her belief that the pathway towards the elimination of nuclear weapons can begin with a norm around a ban (citing as an example the 1925 Geneva Protocol – which set out a modest ban on chemical weapons but eventually led to the more elaborate and comprehensive regimes in the Biological Weapons and Chemical Weapons Conventions). She noted that consensus procedures were not the best option in all circumstances (drawing an analogy here with the regular failure of the NPT RevCons). Mr McConville disagreed with those views, and confirmed that Australia would not attend the prohibition treaty negotiations. Canada noted that although it supports the idea of a prohibition treaty, it would not be participating in the negotiations because it does not consider this to be the right time to commence negotiations. Canada also provided an update on the NPDI's work on transparency and reporting – encouraging reporting from both Nuclear Weapons States and Non-Nuclear Weapons States. The NPDI hopes to continue to engage with the P5 to ask for the release of reporting at each PrepCom

rather than on a five-yearly basis at each RevCon. China confirmed that it was still undertaking a comprehensive study of the prohibition treaty negotiations, which China considers will change the international disarmament context and whether it would attend. The P5 have particular responsibility to show leadership on the international scene.

Session 3: CSCAP – Update on the outcomes of the Study Group on WMD Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in the Asia Pacific

17. CSCAP reported on its Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (NPD) study group meeting which was held just prior to the ISM. Topics discussed included developments in NPD, denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, strategic trade controls and nuclear governance. CSCAP members noted that adherence to non-proliferation and nuclear security instruments by Asia-Pacific states has improved but implementation still lags behind in many states. Implementation gaps stem from lack of capacity, lack of awareness, and/or lack of political will. CSCAP and the ARF should focus on raising awareness and capacity-building, while encouraging states to exercise the political will required to come into full compliance. Noting the growth of nuclear technology in the ASEAN region, CSCAP suggested that the ARF could become a home for regional nuclear security governance. In the disarmament area, CSCAP discussed the nuclear ban and how to find pathways forward, such as exploring links between nuclear weapons and other weapons systems, including high-precision conventional weapons and missile defence, as well as the growing roles of the space and cyber domains. CSCAP also reported on the work of its two expert groups, on strategic trade controls and nuclear energy/security. CSCAP made three proposals to the ISM: (i) a workshop on nuclear security governance in the Asia-Pacific region; (ii) a workshop on SEANWFZ, which could help to widen understanding of SEANWFZ, and facilitate consultations between zonal and extra-zonal states; and (iii) a workshop on nuclear disarmament verification, drawing on the work of the IPNDV. These proposals stimulated a discussion on the status of SEANWFZ and the concept more broadly of a zone free of WMD in the region. The presentations made on CSCAP and SEANWFZ are at [Annex 6](#).

Session 4: Developments on nuclear, chemical and biological WMD Non-Proliferation

18. A representative of the 1874 Panel provided an overview of the UN sanctions regime, the recent UNSC resolutions relating to the DPRK, the role of the 1874 Panel of Experts (POE) and implementation/reporting by UN member states. The goal of sanctions was to facilitate a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the nuclear issue in DPRK. Information was provided on the expansion of the sanctions regime under UNSCRs 2270 and 2321, in particular financial, sectoral and transport measures; an expanded arms embargo; and restrictions on scientific cooperation.

The Panel representative also briefed on the 2017 report of the POE, which indicated continued sophisticated efforts by the DPRK to evade sanctions. The 1874 Panel's presentation is at **Annex 7**.

19. The Republic of Korea noted that concerted efforts to implement UNSCRs were giving effect to the international community's concern about the DPRK. This included limits on the DPRK's transport operations, deterring military-police cooperation with DPRK, blocking of certain financial activities, expulsion of DPRK representatives, suspension of training for DPRK, controls on DPRK exports, and restrictions on DPRK diplomatic activities. Sanctions were deepening the DPRK's isolation, reducing the regime's access to foreign currency and increasing the cost of its trade and financial transactions. However, the DPRK has yet to realise that the cost of its WMD programme is exceeding the gain, and it is continuing provocations. This underlined the importance of continuing pressure on the DPRK through faithful implementation of UNSCRs, including a binding cap on coal exports and other measures in UNSCR 2321. The ROK presentation is at **Annex 8**.

20. Several ARF members expressed their concern about the DPRK's recent behaviour and their commitment to take firm measures against the DPRK. The complexity of implementing sanctions on DPRK, and the value of information sharing among states, was also emphasised.

21. Japan presented on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Japan provided background to the Iranian nuclear issue leading to agreement of the JCPOA in 2015 and its implementation in January 2016. The JCPOA and its implementation remain important as it serves to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and stability in the Middle East. Japan has provided financial assistance through the IAEA to support the continuous implementation of JCPOA and Canada stressed the importance of helping the IAEA's activities in this regard.

22. The US gave a presentation on the 2016 Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference, entitled "Picking up the Pieces". It was noted that many delegations came to the RevCon hoping to see the intersessional process strengthened, but a consensus was blocked and there had been no agreement on a work plan for the period before the next RevCon. However, a meeting would be held in December 2017 to attempt to find consensus on an intersessional process. This meeting will be chaired by a representative from the Non-Aligned Movement, although a chair has not yet been identified. It was emphasised that the 2016 outcome should not be seen as a failure of the BWC or the non-proliferation regime more generally, but it does mean that significant effort will be required to ensure progress over the next five years. Hard work will also be required outside of the BWC, and efforts should be made to come up with a new intersessional process and

in preparing for the next RevCon to ensure a better result is achieved next time. This presentation is at **Annex 9**.

23. Australia began its presentation on the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Australia Group by expressing satisfaction that the CWC process is being strengthened. However, there was a real risk of chemical weapons being used in the future, including by non-state actors (reference was made to the recent Kuala Lumpur attack). The CWC had learned from the inadequacies of the BWC and the CWC had an Executive Council that assisted with implementation. The main issues in recent years included the situation in Syria and the disturbing reports that have come in from the Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Joint Investigative Mechanism. Australia noted that there are some thorny issues unfolding due to a lack of consensus and which could send the wrong message to proliferators. The CWC is ambitious in that it aims to eliminate an entire category of WMD and creates a verification regime which includes a unique state challenge inspection mechanism.

24. On the Australia Group (an informal forum of 42 countries), Australia highlighted how the forum promotes the harmonisation of export controls. It is not a closed group, and efforts are made to promote cooperation and engagement with all countries, including non-members, and via outreach to all regions. The Group is looking to harmonise export controls as far as possible and it has a strong presence in Asia. In conclusion, Australia explained how the Group supports implementation of the CWC on a number of fronts. The Group chair and secretariat (DFAT) is a 'one stop shop' for outreach and adherence. This presentation is at **Annex 10**.

25. Canada then presented on the destruction of Libya's chemical weapons, a less well-known example of a successful international partnership. In 2004, Libya acceded to the CWC and joined the OPCW. Their stockpiles of chemical weapons, including sulphur mustard, and precursors needed to be destroyed. This was a difficult process due to both technical difficulties and security problems in the country but was important given ISIL's presence and the need to avoid the stockpile falling into the wrong hands. Libya requested assistance from OPCW and a number of parties offered assistance including Canada, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, Malta, Spain, the UK and the US. By 2014 Libya's sulphur mustard stocks were completely eliminated but the remaining chemical weapons precursors were stored under precarious conditions in close proximity to ISIL. Libya requested assistance to remove precursors and this was ultimately done by September 2016 (with the precursors currently being destroyed in Germany). The key to this achievement was the willingness of a number of countries to come together to contribute to this goal. Canada's presentation is at **Annex 11**.

Country Statements

26. Myanmar noted that, while not a nuclear state, it cooperates fully with the international community and its non-proliferation and disarmament regime. In 2016 it ratified the CTBT and acceded to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) amendments and held a national roundtable with UNODA on implementation of UNSCR1540 which had focused on good practices to counter WMD proliferation by non-state actors.

27. New Zealand commented that it saw 2017 as an unprecedented opportunity to develop the global architecture for nuclear disarmament through the nuclear weapon prohibition negotiations. A nuclear ban treaty would advance the objectives of the NPT and assist with implementation of its provisions – most notably of Article VI. After the disappointing outcome of the 2015 NPT RevCon, the new review cycle provides an opportunity to reinforce the NPT regime. New Zealand expressed concern at the DPRK's WMD programmes and called for the DPRK to abandon them in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. New Zealand was committed to the entry into force of the CTBT and supported the development of the Treaty's verification regime. New Zealand recorded its commitment to nuclear safety and security, for example through the recent incorporation of international best practice into its domestic regulatory framework.

28. Pakistan fully shares the global objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation. It will continue to work at the regional and global levels towards achieving these objectives. Pakistan is hosting a regional seminar on strengthening the implementation of UNSCR 1540. This seminar will be held in Islamabad on 14-15 March 2017.

29. India registered its support for universal disarmament in a non-discriminatory manner. This commitment was reflected in India's participation in the UNGA and the CD. India urged the international community to continue its efforts in preventing terrorists and non-state actors from gaining access to nuclear weapons and related sensitive items and technologies and in isolating states that harbour and provide support to such terrorists. In this regard, India supports the activities of multilateral arrangements such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

30. Singapore urged states to look beyond the 2015 NPT RevCon outcome and work constructively to ensure the success of the next NPT Review Cycle; international security is a shared interest of all member states. Singapore recognised the need for pragmatic options to take the work on nuclear disarmament forward. It was for this reason that Singapore had supported the 2016 OEWG process as a possible avenue to take multilateral nuclear disarmament discussions

forward. However, for any agreement to be effective all relevant parties need to come on board or at the very least subscribe to its principles and objectives.

31. The Russian Federation drew attention to its initiative to begin negotiations on an international convention for suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism (ICCBT), which could also give impetus to the joint efforts to bring the Conference on Disarmament out of its impasse.

Session 5: Update on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology

32. Malaysia briefed the Meeting on the development of ASEANTOM, a network of regulatory bodies for atomic energy in the ASEAN region. ASEANTOM held its first meeting in 2013 and became a sectoral body under the ASEAN Political-Security pillar in 2015. ASEANTOM's mission is to enhance activities and further strengthen nuclear safety, security and safeguards by enhancing cooperation and complementing the work of national, regional and international mechanisms. Activities conducted to date include meetings, workshops and exercises. Malaysia would welcome the ARF's support for ASEANTOM. Malaysia's presentation appears at **Annex 12**.

33. New Zealand presented on developments in nuclear security and New Zealand's recent experience with an International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission from the IAEA. Even though New Zealand is geographically isolated and has limited radioactive or nuclear material, this mission had provided benefits to New Zealand before, during and after the mission. The IAEA had provided a number of recommendations to New Zealand which are currently being implemented. A follow-up IPPAS mission to New Zealand will take place in 2018. This presentation appears at **Annex 13**.

34. In comments following the presentations, Singapore noted that it had conducted a pre-feasibility study on nuclear energy which concluded in 2012 that nuclear technologies presently available were not yet suitable for deployment in Singapore. But Singapore would continue to strengthen its understanding of nuclear science and technology to make an informed decision about available technologies when the issue was reviewed again in future. At the same time, Singapore had established a Third-Country Training Programme with the IAEA to provide technical training courses for regional countries on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Japan noted that it had accumulated considerable experience of nuclear safety and security issues in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear accident and was therefore ready to share its experience and expertise with countries of Asia Pacific. Japan would be hosting the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) Plenary in June 2017. Canada and the EU also underlined the value of hosting IPPAS

missions. The EU noted it has contributed €9 million for IAEA nuclear security activities, including support for IPPAS missions.

Session 6: International mechanisms to prevent and counter WMD proliferation; and capacity-building/assistance available

35. Australia and Singapore both gave presentations on the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Australia covered how the PSI strengthens interdiction capabilities by conducting exercises to test capabilities and promoting cooperation including through strengthening critical capabilities and practices (CCP). The PSI aims at strengthening international norms against the proliferation of WMD but it does not create any new international norms. The Operational Experts Group (OEG) of 21 countries meets annually. Australia led the CCP process in 2015 and 2016 and has produced a CD which can be made available to participants. It will also host the Pacific Protector exercise this year in Cairns. This will involve a table top exercise, a live exercise, a port exercise and an academic session. Australia's presentation urged all participants in our region to endorse the PSI.

36. Singapore followed this with a presentation on Exercise Deep Sabre 2016 which it had hosted in September 2016 as a partner of the PSI Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER) initiative. The Exercise involved a table-top exercise which enabled rich and fruitful discussions on policy issues that countries face in addressing counter-proliferation; a port exercise which involved container inspection demonstrations; and a maritime live exercise which involved the simulated search, localisation and interdiction of a vessel. The PSI continues to encourage coordination within and between countries to counter the proliferation of WMD. Australia and Singapore's presentations are set out in **Annex 14 and 15** respectively.

37. New Zealand noted the assistance available to PSI adherents through the PSI Model National Response Plan and observed that the PSI legal matrix can also afford insights into the international and domestic legal context applicable to any PSI related situation. It emphasised the PSI's full compatibility with international law.

38. A member of the Group of Experts assisting the UNSCR 1540 Committee briefed the meeting on the Committee's work. Resolution 1540 was the first international instrument to deal with all WMD non-proliferation in an integrated manner. The resolution sets out multiple broad obligations which states implement according to their domestic legal frameworks. The Committee's work relates to national implementation, assistance, cooperation, transparency and outreach, including visits to member states by invitation. All but 16 UN members have submitted national reports to the Committee and 26 states have submitted National Implementation Action Plans. The Committee compiles an implementation matrix for

each country. There is scope for Asia-Pacific countries to improve their implementation measures. Recently the Committee has been conducting training courses for national points of contact, and acts as a clearing house for assistance requests. Since 2004, 12 ARF members have offered assistance, and six members have requested assistance, but no requests have been made from the ARF region since 2008. The Committee is seeking to make its assistance mechanism more effective and to strengthen relations with international organisations. A Comprehensive Review resulted in UNSCR 2325 (2016), which encouraged member states to remedy gaps in implementation, including through a more focused and targeted approach to specific issues. The 1540 Committee representative's presentation is at **Annex 16**. Japan indicated it will provide \$1 million to the UN Trust Fund established to assist with implementation of UNSCR 1540.

39. Canada presented on international developments following the end of the Nuclear Security Summit process. While not all ARF members were part of the Summit, the task for all states remains to further nuclear security and prevent nuclear terrorism. The Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSCG) is now tasked with helping carry the five NSS action plans forward. These developments promote the nuclear security work of the IAEA, the UN, Interpol, the GICNT and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The Contact Group currently has 40 states and four international organisations participating. It is open to new states that commit to the NSCG Statement of Principles. The Group meets on the margins of other meetings (including the IAEA General Conference and the NPT PrepCom) to coordinate with other countries, industries and NGOs as appropriate. Efforts are currently focused on issues requiring consistent messaging, those requiring concrete actions (including supporting the IAEA) and those requiring coordination outreach or demarches. Finally, Canada gave an overview of the important role ASEAN can play in advancing nuclear security globally. Canada's presentation is at **Annex 17**.

Session 7: ARF work plan review

40. Canada noted that it had called for ARF members to send through suggested amendments to the ARF work plan ahead of the Meeting. Minor amendments had been received along with a proposal for a new workshop. The amendments had been tracked into the existing work plan document and tabled by Canada. The draft was accepted by the room, with a request for any comments or further amendments to be relayed to Canada by email before 18 March 2017 after which the Co-Chairs would consult regarding the next steps.

41. With regard to the co-chairs for the next three years, Japan expressed strong interest and offered to host the ARF ISM on NPD in 2020, when it focuses on

disarmament. Malaysia undertook to seek expressions of interest for an ASEAN co-chair/s prior to the Intersessional Group Meeting in early May.

Country Statements

42. Timor-Leste noted that peace and security can be enhanced by dialogue and cooperation. A consensus building approach is useful, providing the membership with the opportunity to work together. Timor-Leste believes in regional integration, especially as a means for regional peace and stability. Having applied for membership of ASEAN in 2011 Timor-Leste looks forward to greater engagement with ASEAN in the years to come.

43. Bangladesh noted it had always been committed to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It has signed and ratified the CTBT and also signed an international safeguards agreement with the IAEA. Bangladesh has always maintained its firm commitment to disarmament of both nuclear and conventional weapons. Bangladesh also noted its strong support for the safe use of nuclear technology which it sees as a priority in order to advance the country's development. Bangladesh considers the total elimination of nuclear weapons to be the highest priority in the disarmament context.

44. Canada reported that it had been pleased with the level of participation and the calibre of discussions at the Informal Consultative Meeting on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) held in New York on March 2 and 3. Most of the more than 100 delegations attending the meeting engaged actively and constructively by offering their views on aspects of a future treaty. This high level of engagement further reinforces the strong support in the UN General Assembly for negotiation of this treaty. Canada will prepare a Chair's summary of the main points expressed during the meeting. This will be conveyed to the High-level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group prior to its meeting in Geneva. The Preparatory Group has been given a clear mandate to discuss, and make recommendations on, substantive elements of a future treaty. Although this Group will not negotiate a treaty, Canada hopes that its members will be as ambitious as possible, so that its work can serve as a useful reference for future negotiations. A great deal of preparatory work can be done to expedite the eventual negotiation process.

45. The EU noted that it regards itself as the ARF's natural partner in the responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. 28% of the EU's domestic energy production is nuclear. Nuclear and radiation technology has many beneficial applications. ARF partners also participate in the ITER project which is an EU flagship project to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion as a safe, environmentally responsible and abundant energy source. The EU has

substantial experience in nuclear safety and is happy to share it. The EU regards nuclear security as an enabler of peaceful uses. It is aware that the implementation of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material may require capacity building and is ready to provide assistance through the IAEA. The EU also encouraged a fresh look at the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and its civil applications and expressed readiness to organize an event on this topic in the region. Support for the CTBT within the EU is already strong and universal.

46. Thailand underlined the importance of cooperation within the framework of SEANWFZ in promoting nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, especially the early signing by the NWS of the SEANWFZ Protocol which will reinforce security in the region. Thailand supported ASEANTOM's role in coordinating cooperation on nuclear energy uses and safeguards with the IAEA. Nationally, Thailand strengthened implementation and enacted legislation on disarmament and non-proliferation through the Financing of Counter-terrorism and Proliferation of WMDs Act and the Nuclear Energy for Peace Act. Thailand also highlighted the participation of academic and private sectors in raising awareness of WMD non-proliferation and disarmament.

47. Viet Nam reaffirmed its policy of nuclear security, disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Viet Nam gave an overview of recent non-proliferation and disarmament activities it has supported. This included the establishment of a national database of radioactive sources; upgrading of the physical protection system within the framework of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative with the assistance of the United States; working closely with the IAEA and ROK on a radiation source location checking system project; and holding 3 capacity building seminars on nuclear security, culture and practices with the IAEA. Viet Nam worked closely with Russia to complete the conversion of the Dalat reactor from highly enriched uranium, which was returned to Russia, to low-enriched uranium. Viet Nam suggested more training courses, especially in legal training or law enforcement, in order to build capacity for countries in the region.

48. Lao PDR took the floor to express its view that the creation of nuclear weapon free zones is an important contribution to the strengthening of global efforts in disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, it expressed its hope that ASEAN member states and nuclear weapon states would be able to resolve the outstanding issues related to the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty in order to enable the signing of the Protocol by NWS as early as possible.

Concluding remarks

49. In conclusion, the Co-Chairs thanked all participants for their active and stimulating engagement on these issues and looked forward to next year's commencement of the new three-year ARF ISM on NPD cycle.