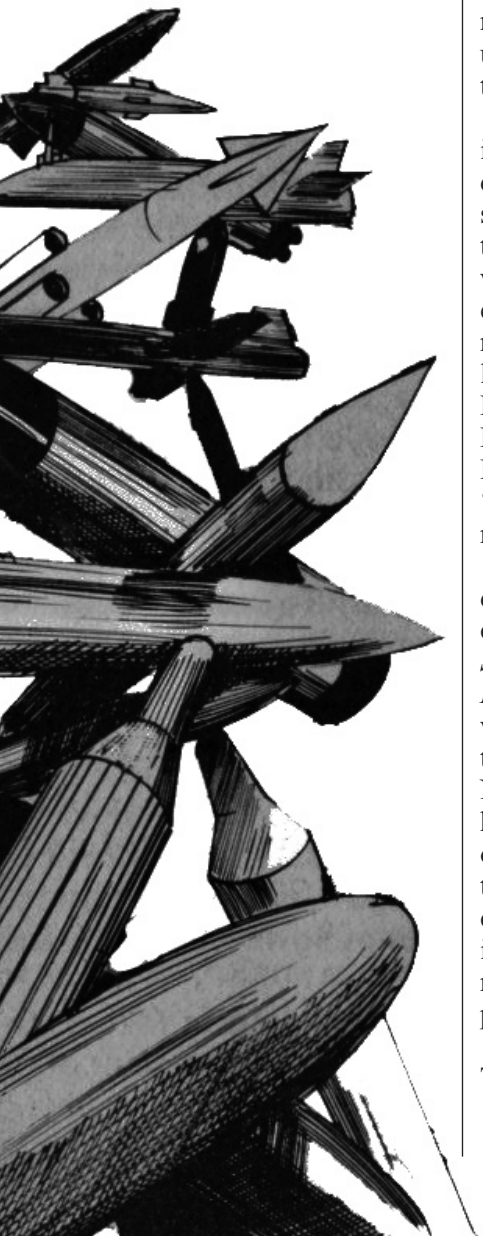
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

Dossier



Introduction

The 'Review Conference' (RevCon) of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) met at the United Nations in New York from April 27 to May 22, 2026. The US Department of State website explains that the "NPT, with its 3 pillars of nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, is the cornerstone of the global nuclear nonproliferation regime."

The word "cornerstone" is frequently invoked by NPT states parties when describing the treaty. In masonry, all other stones in a construction are set in reference to the cornerstone. The implication of the word "cornerstone" is that there are other elements to the "global nuclear nonproliferation regime." This is now largely not the case. The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty, Open Skies, JCPOA/'Iran Deal' and New START have been 'removed' from the construction. Who removed them and why?

The answers to these questions – and the disastrous consequences – have been covered in detail in previous issues of *The Spokesman* and in the Russell Foundation's *END Info* bulletin. The main conclusions are worth repeating, especially in the context of the grave nuclear tensions under which the NPT convened: successive US governments have undermined and destroyed the 'nuclear order', with the intention of re-writing rules to the US's advantage in a world characterised by tectonic shifts in power and influence. In so doing, the US is taking reckless and potentially deadly risks with prospects for human survival.

What better illustration of this than Trump's recent threats against Iran?

Iran

The NPT and calls for a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in the Middle East have been linked since the mid-90s, even if calls for such a zone have a longer history. Despite this link and in line with the general functioning of the NPT, no progress has been made on establishing such a zone. The longer-range reason for this lack of progress is the fact that only one state in the region is in possession of nuclear weapons and that state refuses transparency on its status. Israel is not a party to the NPT and it comes under no pressure from its closest allie – all 'committed' NPT state parties – to join. Whilst there has been an intense and ongoing focus on nuclear developments in Iran – which is not a nuclear power and which prohibits such weapons – Israel's active and significant nuclear weapons capabilities have not attracted the same levels of scrutiny.

The fact that the US and UK are in close military cooperation with Israel illustrates the ongoing double-standards at work. As Iran's submissions to the RevCon explain – two of which are reproduced in this dossier – these double-standards have a long history and a deadly recent impact. Palestine's statement on 'Israeli exceptionalism' reiterates these points.

More than a cornerstone is needed

The NPT is intended to restrain proliferation and states parties are technically committed to disarmament. However, not only are the nuclear-armed states enhancing their nuclear capabilities; not only are plans afoot for further proliferation within the nuclear-armed NATO alliance; not only is there precisely zero evidence of efforts for nuclear disarmament; but recent events – either instigated or sanctioned by nuclear powers – are making nuclear proliferation all-the-more likely.

In 1981, Peggy Duff urged movements for peace and disarmament to reduce the "imbalance" between nuclear and non-nuclear states and to "prioritise the essential issues". We need more than a cornerstone, particularly when that cornerstone sits on such shoddy foundations. We need clarity over which forces are undermining efforts at disarmament and driving nuclear risks. We need to be clear-sighted about why they're doing it. The International Committee of the Red Cross's call for risk reduction is an important contributions to this effort.

The RevCon convenes just months after the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* set the hands of the 'Doomsday Clock' even closer to midnight and just weeks after President Trump threatened to eliminate a civilisation. Those meeting at the NPT failed, for the third time, to agree a final statement. The stakes could not be higher.

Tom Unterrainer

Establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East

Islamic Republic of Iran

Working paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

I. Introduction

1. The illegal attacks and acts of aggression by the Israeli regime against its neighbors, mass killing of civilians, mainly women and children, in Palestine, as well as defying all and any calls by the international community to stop the bloodshed of innocent people, are blatant evidence of the grave and serious threats posed by such an aggressive regime against regional and international peace and security. These heinous actions are accompanied by repeated and irresponsible threats involving the use of nuclear weapons. Given the regime's record of aggression, occupation, and systematic violations of international law, it constitutes a serious threat to regional and international peace and security and must be addressed with the utmost seriousness by the international community. Additionally, from the standpoint of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the possession of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, by the Israeli regime, along with the support of certain Western States, particularly the United States, poses a significant threat to peace and security in the Middle East and beyond. It also directly challenges the integrity and objectives of the Treaty. Despite widespread international calls for transparency and disarmament, this regime – known for its crimes against humanity – continues to operate outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty framework, refusing to join the Treaty or subject its nuclear facilities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. This blatant disregard for global disarmament and non-proliferation norms not only undermines regional stability but also sets a dangerous precedent that erodes the credibility and

effectiveness of the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime. It highlights the serious threat posed by such a regime and underscores the urgent need to address this threat swiftly.

II. Iran's perspective

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly supports efforts to establish nuclear weapon-free zones, pursuant to Article VII of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and believes that such zones contribute to the nuclear non-proliferation objective and enhance global and regional peace and security. Iran, which originally presented the long-standing proposal on a Middle East free from nuclear weapons in 1974, strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Iran asserts that establishing such a zone is essential for addressing the broader security concerns in our region.

3. Iran has consistently advocated and called for the prompt implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the full realization of its objective of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This commitment reflects our dedication to fostering an environment devoid of nuclear threats.

4. In alignment with our commitment, Iran also supported the adoption of actions in the 2010 action plan related to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which called for the convening of a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. On 6 November 2012, Iran officially declared its readiness to participate in this conference scheduled for December 2012 in Helsinki.

III. Implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 action plan

5. Despite the strong support of the overwhelming majority of the States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, as well as the efforts by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Arab countries in the region, the 1995 resolution and the action plan are yet to be implemented. The Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its deep concern over the persistent and long delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the Action Plan and urges immediate action towards fulfilling these commitments.

6. The Israeli regime has been the main obstacle to any progress towards the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. Israel is the only one in the Middle East that has not acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and refuses to place its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of IAEA and to implement the relevant international resolutions. This regime seeks to impede all efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

7. The nuclear weapons in the hands of the Israeli regime constitute a serious threat to the security of the Middle East region and beyond. During its short history since its inception, the Israeli regime has committed all international core crimes, including aggression against all its neighbors, war crimes, crimes against humanity and occupation of the territories of several neighboring countries. This nefarious regime has recently threatened Iran with nuclear annihilation.

8. The Israeli stubbornness and defiance towards international norms, rules and decisions are not viable without the blind support of the United States. The United States actively assists and protects the illicit nuclear weapons of the Israeli regime both materially and diplomatically, in violation of its international commitments. The Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference called on all States to refrain from undertaking any measures that preclude the achievement of the objective of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. However, the United States, which is a co-sponsor of the 1995 resolution and a co-convener of the 2012 Conference, by supporting the obstructive positions of the Israeli regime and setting preconditions for the implementation of the action plan, acted as a stumbling block in the way of convening the 2012 Conference and, on 23 November 2012, unilaterally announced that the Conference could not be convened and that it would not support a Conference in which Israel would be subject to pressure. Furthermore, the 2015 Review Conference was unable to reach an agreement on its outcome document as a result of the objection raised by the United States to a decision contained therein on the implementation of the action plan.

9. The international community should make the Israeli regime accountable for its covert nuclear weapons programme and exert sustained pressure on the Israeli regime to compel it to accede, promptly and unconditionally, as a non-nuclear-weapon Party, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all of its nuclear activities, as well as related installations, under the full-scope IAEA safeguards.

10. The Islamic Republic of Iran stresses that achieving the objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East is the common but differentiated responsibility of all States Parties to the Treaty, especially the Nuclear-Weapon States and in particular the three depositary States of the Treaty that co-sponsored the 1995 resolution. Iran underscores the urgent need for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, citing the aggressive actions and nuclear threats posed by the Israeli regime as significant threats to regional and international peace. Iran reaffirms its long-standing commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, advocating for the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan aimed at creating a secure environment free from nuclear weapons.

IV. Recommendations to be incorporated in the outcome document

11. Considering these challenges and given the above-mentioned considerations, this working paper aims to outline the recommendations for inclusion in the report of the Preparatory Committee:

(a) Express concern about the lack of progress towards implementation of the 1995 resolution and the actions in the 2010 action plan related to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East;

(b) Reaffirm the urgent need for prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan;

(c) Reiterate the firm commitment of all States Parties, in particular the Nuclear-Weapon States, to undertake all necessary measures aimed at the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the action plan and to extend their cooperation in this regard;

(d) Express serious concern that the Israeli regime remains the only one in the Middle East that has not yet joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty nor declared its intention to do so, and continues to operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities in contravention of the non-proliferation regime and Security Council resolution 487 (1981);

(e) Express deep concern that the possession of nuclear weapons by the Israeli regime constitutes a serious threat to the Non-Nuclear-Weapon States in the Middle East, as well as international peace and security;

(f) Call upon the Israeli regime to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and eliminate its entire stockpiles of nuclear weapons, and strongly deplore that the refusal of the Israeli regime to do so impedes the establishment of a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Middle East;

(g) Reaffirm that the accession of the Israeli regime to the Non-Proliferation Treaty without precondition and further delay and the placement of all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive IAEA safeguards are essential in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

(h) Commit all States Parties to the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, materials and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of know-how or any kind of assistance in the nuclear field to the Israeli regime so long as it remains a non-Party to the Treaty and has not placed all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the full-scope IAEA safeguards;

(i) Express its strong support to the process launched by the United Nations Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction convened by the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, to elaborate a legally binding treaty on the establishment of the zone on the basis of consensus;

(j) Call on all the invited parties to earnestly and constructively participate in the United Nations Conference, and request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure the convening of the Conference until its objectives are achieved and to report to the next Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee sessions on implementation of General Assembly decision 73/546.
(k) Highlight that the declared policies aimed at resuming nuclear weapons testing constitute serious setbacks to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation obligations, and call for their unequivocal condemnation.
(l) Condemn unequivocally any threat or use of force against nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards and reaffirm that such acts are against the principles and the objectives of the NPT and international law.

Israel's nuclear capabilities

"Successive Israeli governments have maintained a policy of official ambiguity on the issue of nuclear weapons. Despite this, it is universally acknowledged that Israel possesses a nuclear weapons capability, outside of the framework of the NPT, after a former Israeli nuclear technician revealed details of the country's alleged nuclear weapons programme in 1988" ... "Israel is not a State Party to the NPT. In April 2010 the then Israeli Defence Minister, Ehud Barak, indicated that the international community should not expect Israel to join the NPT anytime soon" ... "Israel opposes a fissile material cut-off treaty on the basis that it would undermine Israel's official position of ambiguity on nuclear weapons. It has also diplomatically opposed the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East" ... "SIPRI estimates that Israel possesses a highly developed nuclear arsenal of approximately 90 warheads" ... "Based on unconfirmed reports, Israel could be in possession of the nuclear triad making it capable of delivering a nuclear capability via land, air and/or sea" ... "It is thought that approximately 30 of its 90 nuclear warheads are gravity bombs assigned to the F-16" ... "Approximately 50 nuclear warheads are thought to be assigned for delivery by land-based ballistic missiles".

Nuclear Weapons Profile: Israel, House of Commons Library, 2025

Prohibiting Attacks on Peaceful Nuclear Facilities and Scientists

Islamic Republic of Iran

Working paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

1. Introduction

Nuclear facilities, as critical infrastructure, are protected under international law due to the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of their destruction. However, there have been multiple instances where such facilities have been attacked, particularly in the case of Iraq and Iran. This paper analyzes historical attacks on Iran's nuclear sites, the legal framework prohibiting such actions, and recommendations for reinforcing these protections.

2. Background

2.1 Israel's Attack on Iraq's Osirak Nuclear Reactor

On June 7, 1981, Israel conducted a surprise airstrike on Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor near Baghdad, claiming it was a preventive measure to stop Iraq from developing nuclear weapons. The attack, marked the first time a nuclear facility was destroyed by a military strike, raising serious legal and geopolitical concerns.

The attack was widely condemned as a violation of international law, particularly the UN Charter's prohibition on the use of force (Article 2(4)). Additionally, in response to the attack, the UN Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted Resolution 487 on June 19, 1981. Its key provisions are: "strongly condemnation" of Israel's attack as a clear violation of the UN Charter and international law; call for compensation for Iraq that was entitled to "appropriate redress" for the destruction of the reactor; reaffirming the exclusive role of the IAEA in verifying nuclear activities, rejecting unilateral military action, and calling on Israel to submit its own nuclear program to IAEA inspections.

The UNSC's unanimous condemnation reinforced that any unilateral military action against peaceful nuclear programs is illegal. In addition, while Israel tried to justify its aggression, the UNSC's Resolution firmly rejected this argument, emphasizing that nuclear non-proliferation must be pursued through diplomatic and legal means, not military force.

2.2 Assassination of Iranian Nuclear Scientists as well as Attacks on Iran's Nuclear Facilities

Against the backdrop of several international instruments, including interalia, Article 2(4) of the UN Charter (prohibiting the use of force) UN Security Council Resolution 487 (1981) (condemning attacks on nuclear sites); and IAEA General Conference Resolutions including Resolution 533 and Article 56 of the Additional Protocol to Geneva Conventions (prohibiting attacks on nuclear facilities); the Israeli Regime and the US instigated since June 13, 2025 several attacks against Iranian peaceful nuclear facilities that are under Comprehensive Safeguards of the IAEA. The Israeli regime has further assassinated several Iranian nuclear scientists and made efforts to sabotage the Iranian nuclear facilities starting from the notorious Stuxnet malware sent to Iran's nuclear facilities.

These kind of attacks represent a gross violation of Iran's territorial integrity and national sovereignty as a UN member state; a reckless endangerment of global peace and security, with potential for catastrophic humanitarian and environmental disasters including potential radioactive radiations; an attack by a Nuclear Weapon State as well as an illegitimate entity in possession of nuclear arsenals against a Non-Nuclear Weapon State Party to the NPT whose nuclear program is under the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards; an attack by a depository of the NPT and a co-sponsor of the Resolution on establishing a Middle East zone free of WMDs at 1995 NPT RevCon and Indefinite Extension—that betrayed diplomacy by supporting Israel's lawless acts, and initiated a dangerous confrontation against Iran, further destabilizing the region; and last but not least, a blatant disregard for international law. The figures and statistics thereof are self-explanatory and are as follows:

- Stuxnet Cyberattack (2010): A joint U.S.-Israeli operation introduced the Stuxnet malware into Iran's Natanz enrichment facility, causing significant damage to centrifuges. This marked the first known instance of a cyberattack on nuclear infrastructure.
- Assassinations of Iranian Nuclear Scientists since 2007: Several Iranian nuclear scientists were assassinated in operations conducted by Israel, to disrupt Iran's nuclear progress.

List of Airstrike Attacks on Iranian Nuclear Facilities by the Israeli Regime (as of 23 June 2025): Natanz Nuclear Facility, Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center, Arak Nuclear Complex, Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant, Iran Centrifuge Technology Company, Tehran Nuclear Research Center

List of Attacks on Iranian Nuclear Facilities by the US (as of 23 June 2025): Fordow, Natanz, Isfahan.

3. The US and the Israeli regimes' responsibility:

President Trump: "Tonight, I can report to the world that the strikes were a spectacular military success. Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated."

Vice President JD Vance: "That was the objective of the mission, to destroy that Fordow nuclear site, and of course, do some damage to the other sites as well, but we feel very confident that the Fordow nuclear site was substantially set back, and that was our goal."

Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth: "Based on everything we have seen — and I've seen it all — our bombing campaign obliterated Iran's ability to create nuclear weapons. The impact of those bombs is buried under a mountain of rubble in Iran; so anyone who says the bombs were not devastating is just trying to undermine the President and the successful mission."

Secretary Hegseth: "Given the 30,000 pounds of explosions and the capability of those munitions, it was DEVASTATION underneath Fordow … Any assessment that tells you otherwise is speculating with other motives."

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Dan "Razin" Caine: "Initial battle damage assessments indicate that all three sites sustained extremely severe damage and destruction. More than 125 US aircraft participated in this mission, including B2 stealth bombers, multiple flights of fourth and fifth generation fighters, dozens and dozens of air refueling tankers, a guided missile submarine, and a full array of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance aircraft, as well as hundreds of maintenance and operational professionals."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio: "The Iranian program — the nuclear program — today looks nothing like it did just a week ago … That story is a false story and it's one that really shouldn't be re-reported because it doesn't accurately reflect what's happening."

Secretary Rubio: "Everything underneath that mountain is in bad shape … There's no way Iran comes to the table if somehow nothing had happened. This was complete and total obliteration. They are in bad shape. They are way behind today compared to where they were just seven days ago because of what President Trump did."

Special Envoy Steve Witkoff: "We put 12 bunker buster bombs on Fordow. There's no doubt that it breached the canopy, there's no doubt that it was well within reach of the depth that these bunker buster bombs go to, and there's no doubt that it was obliterated — so the reporting out there that in some way suggests that we did not achieve the objective is just completely preposterous."

Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard: "The operation was a resounding success. Our missiles were delivered precisely and accurately, obliterating key Iranian capabilities needed to quickly assemble a nuclear weapon."

International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi: "Given the explosive payload utilized, and the extreme vibration-sensitive nature of centrifuges, very significant damage is expected to have occurred. At the Esfahan nuclear site, additional buildings were hit, with the US confirming their use of cruise missiles. Affected buildings include some related to the uranium conversion process. Also at this site, entrances to tunnels used for the storage of enriched material appear to have been hit. At the Natanz enrichment site, the Fuel Enrichment Plant was hit, with the US confirming that it used ground-penetrating munitions."

Institute for Science and International Security President David Albright: "Overall, Israel's and U.S. attacks have effectively destroyed Iran's centrifuge enrichment program. It will be a long time before Iran comes anywhere near the capability it had before the attack."

Foundation for Defense of Democracies' Nonproliferation and Biodefense Program Deputy Director Andrea Stricker: "I think that because of the massive damage and the shock wave that would have been sent by 12 Massive Ordnance Penetrators at the Fordow site, that it likely would render its centrifuges damaged or inoperable."

American Enterprise Institute Middle East Portfolio Manager Brian Carter: "There is no question that the bombing campaign 'badly, badly damaged' the three sites."

Institute for Science and International Security Senior Research Fellow Spencer Faragasso: "Overall, it may possibly take years for Iran to reconstitute the capabilities it lost at these facilities."

Israel Atomic Energy Commission: "The devastating US strike on Fordo destroyed the site's critical infrastructure and rendered the enrichment facility inoperable. We assess that the American strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, combined with Israeli strikes on other elements of Iran's military nuclear program, has set back Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons by many years."

IDF Chief of Staff "I can say here that the assessment is that we significantly damaged the nuclear program, and I can also say that we set it back by years, I repeat, years."

4. International Legal Framework Prohibiting Attacks on Nuclear Facilities

Multiple international treaties and customary laws prohibit attacks on nuclear installations due to the severe risks they pose:

4.1 Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols

Article 56 of Additional Protocol I (1977) explicitly prohibits attacks on nuclear electrical generating stations due to the danger of radioactive release. Customary International Humanitarian Law (Rule 42, ICRC Study) bans attacks causing severe environmental damage, including nuclear facilities.

4.2 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Article IV guarantees the peaceful use of nuclear energy, implying protection from sabotage. UN Security Council Resolution 487 (1981) condemned Israel's strike on Iraq's Osirak reactor, reinforcing the illegality of such attacks.

4.3 International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards

The IAEA's mandate under Article III of the NPT includes ensuring the safety of nuclear facilities, implicitly discouraging attacks.

4.4 The UNSC Resolution 2231

This Resolution reinforces diplomatic commitments – An attack can and is undermining the UN-backed JCPOA process.

Finally, as a general rule governing on any attempt to use or threat to use of force it must be mentioned that under the UN Charter, any use of force must comply with Article 2(4) (prohibition on aggression) or be authorized by the UNSC. Therefore, any unprovoked strike could violate international law.

5. Proposed Recommendations for the NPT Review Conference Final Document

These incidents raise serious legal and ethical concerns regarding the violation of international norms protecting nuclear facilities.

Attacks on nuclear facilities, as seen in Iran's case, violate international law and set dangerous precedents. Any related international forum must take decisive steps to reinforce legal protections and prevent further destabilization. By adopting the proposed recommendations, the

international community can uphold the principle of peaceful nuclear energy use and global security.

In this context, to reinforce the protection of peaceful nuclear facilities and scientists, the following provisions should be included in the outcome documents to be adopted by that forum:

- Reaffirm the IAEA related Resolutions: The conference reaffirms the IAEA General Conference decision on prohibition of armed attack or threat of attack against nuclear installations, during operation or under construction (GC(53)/DEC/13) of 18 September 2009, as well as IAEA General Conference resolutions GC(XXVII)/RES/407, adopted in October 1983, GC(XXIX)/RES/444, dated 27 September 1985, GC(XXXIV)/RES/533 of 21 September 1990 and GC (67)/RES/8.
- Reaffirm and Urge to adhere to UNSC Resolution 487: The conference reaffirms the critical importance of full compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and calls upon all states to fully adhere to United Nations Security Council Resolution 487 (1981), which condemns the military attack on nuclear facilities and underscores the imperative to refrain from threats or use of force against such installations. The resolution further calls upon all states to respect IAEA safeguards, uphold their NPT obligations, and ensure that nuclear activities remain exclusively peaceful, in line with UNSC resolutions and international law, thereby reinforcing global nuclear security and stability.
- Explicit Condemnation of Attacks on Peaceful Nuclear Facilities – The conference should denounce all acts of sabotage, cyberwarfare, and military strikes against nuclear sites and scientists.
- Legal Accountability for Violators – Actors attacking nuclear facilities must face sanctions and legal consequences under international law.
- Establishment of a Monitoring Mechanism – A dedicated NPT working group should document and investigate attacks on nuclear sites.
- Promotion of Diplomatic Solutions – Encourage dialogue over coercion to address proliferation concerns without resorting to sabotage.

Israeli exceptionalism

Riyad Mansour

Statement by H.E. Dr. Riyad Mansour, Minister and Permanent Representative of the State of Palestine to the United Nations before the Eleventh Review Conference of the Parties of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 27 April 2026

Humanity finds itself living under a nuclear sword; inching closer and closer to our necks. Threatening our mere existence, our planet, and life as we know it. Peoples around the world are all living in fear, engulfed by terror, subsisting under the perpetual "crushing burden of armament." It feels that we are minutes away from a disaster, but we know that we are one miscalculation away from abolishment, and one accident away from annihilation. If humanity does not put an end to nuclear weapons—nuclear weapons may very well one day put an end to humanity.

This is why, Mr. President, this Review Conference should bring about genuine progress especially when it comes to nuclear disarmament. It should reinforce the dividing line between our capacity to build and our capacity to destroy. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is the enduring cornerstone of the disarmament regime.

Its full implementation is both the measure and the vehicle for disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses—its three mutually reinforcing pillars, which should be pursued together, and with equal determination, in a time-bound manner. The indefinite extension of the Treaty was never meant and could never mean indefinite acceptance of the existence of nuclear weapons and indefinite delaying of full, complete, irreversible, and verifiable nuclear disarmament.

The State of Palestine reiterates that nuclear weapons, their use and threat of use are, and have always been, illegal, as they violate, by their very essence, the fundamental principles of humanity and distinction. Nuclear deterrence is an oxymoron. Peace and stability cannot arise by the threat of assured and mutual

destruction. Nuclear deterrence is not a sane, safe, or sustainable model.

We recall that the conclusion of negotiations leading to disarmament is not an equivocation but a legal obligation clearly stated by the ICJ, which requires concrete and time- bound actions by the nuclear weapon States to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons in accordance with their nuclear disarmament legal obligations and commitments and most importantly what morality and humanity demand.

As there can be no justification for the exceptional status granted to nuclear weapons, there can be no justification for Israeli exceptionalism in our region. We reject the presence of nuclear weapons in our region. Our region should be free of nuclear weapons, full stop. This dangerous precedent continues to loom over the future of our region.

The State of Palestine stresses that this Review must further the implementation of the 1995 resolution on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which is an integral part of the package that led to the indefinite extension of the Treaty and whose objectives are yet to be realized. This is a recognition of the significance of our region, given its history and geography, and the conflicts it is a witness to.

For the past decades our concessions have been met by obstruction, our patience by intransigence, and fundamental commitments by disregard. We thus welcome the successful convening of the six sessions of the Conference on the Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons. We reiterate that the Conference is open to all invited Parties and operates by consensus. Those who decide to exclude themselves cannot blame others for their so-called exclusion.

We call on the three co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution to uphold their obligations. This is indispensable for regional and international peace and security and for the credibility of their calls for nuclear non-proliferation in our region.

The Treaty was a negotiated product of finely tuned compromises; an accepted balance of responsibilities and obligations for which all Parties could be held accountable and that could be measured, monitored, and strengthened to advance disarmament while promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The treaty must be strengthened not undermined.

The only effective remedy against the threat nuclear weapons pose on all humanity is ridding the world of these weapons. The only effective remedy against nuclear proliferation is complete nuclear disarmament. What happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki did unfortunately not stop the nuclear weapons race but rather accelerated it. May the memory of the victims and the suffering of the survivors finally guide us on a wiser path, away from such horrors.

Reducing nuclear risks

Steps to increase disincentives to using nuclear weapons

International Committee of the Red Cross

ICRC

Working paper by the International Committee of the Red Cross submitted to the 2026 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

1. The humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, are too catastrophic for such a risk ever to be acceptable. While nuclear weapons have not been used in armed conflict since 1945, the probability of a detonation occurring has been steadily increasing since the last Review Conference. We are alarmed both by this evolution and by the lack of an appropriately urgent and focused collective response from the international community. This Review Conference must address this grave situation with decisive action.

2. The increasing risks stem from the maintaining of nuclear arsenals on high levels of alert; the vulnerability of nuclear weapon command-and-control networks to human error and cyberattack, which grows with technological developments that increase complexity and vulnerability of such networks; existing military doctrines and security policies that give a prominent and even increasing role to nuclear weapons; and the dangers of access to such weapons and related materials by non-State actors. The risks are exacerbated by growing international and regional tensions, explicit and implicit threats to use nuclear weapons, rhetoric that envisages or normalizes possible use of nuclear weapons, and the ongoing modernization and development of new nuclear weapons with novel, "more usable" capabilities.

3. The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again is to prohibit and eliminate them. The ICRC repeats its call for NPT States Parties to implement their obligations under Article VI to achieve nuclear disarmament. The ICRC also reiterates the consistent call by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to all States that have not yet done so to promptly adhere to and faithfully implement the NPT as well as other

mutually reinforcing instruments of international law that seek to achieve the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, including the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and regional treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones1.

4. Pending the elimination of nuclear weapons, reducing the risk of their use is an urgent humanitarian imperative. Specific risk reduction measures are therefore urgently needed, and nuclear-weapon States and those allied to them bear the primary responsibility in this respect. But all other members of the international community also have a direct stake in ensuring that risk reduction measures are implemented, in order to protect their populations from threats to their security given the catastrophic, far-reaching and transboundary effects of any use of nuclear weapons.

5. A number of risk reduction measures are well known and have been proposed at successive Review Conferences. They include unequivocal commitments never to use nuclear weapons first; removal of nuclear weapons from high operational alert; pre-notification of military exercises that may involve the launch of missiles or other vehicles associated with nuclear weapons; re-establishment of joint early warning centres to clarify in real time unexpected and potentially destabilizing events; and steps to progressively reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security policies. Such measures would be effective and are thus indispensable. They can and must be implemented urgently by the nuclear-weapon States (and, as appropriate, their allies) not in spite of the current international security situation, but because of it.

6. There is an additional approach to risk reduction that can be pursued in parallel, not just by nuclear-weapon States but by all NPT States parties, along with the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and civil society. This is risk reduction based on increasing disincentives for using nuclear weapons. This includes: strengthening the taboo against their use; highlighting the human costs and catastrophic consequences of use; raising political and ethical barriers to use; and condemning or otherwise discouraging behaviour that makes use more likely, such as nuclear threats or coercion, or discourse that envisages, normalizes, or encourages the use of nuclear weapons.

7. This approach to risk reduction has three core elements:

1. Consistently and visibly highlighting the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. This involves targeted efforts to highlight such consequences in any relevant national and international fora and related debates, including as a response to any new nuclear weapons policy announcements or speculation.
2. Condemning and stigmatizing any explicit or implicit threats to use nuclear weapons, and any other nuclear rhetoric that erodes the taboo against their use. Such threats go against everything international law and the NPT stand for, and impede the implementation of Article VI. Consistent, coordinated and unequivocal condemnation, especially at

senior political levels, of nuclear threats and other rhetoric that envisages or speculates about using nuclear weapons, lowers the risk of escalation and strengthens the taboo on use of nuclear weapons.

3. Ensuring compliance with IHL at all times and undertaking IHL compatibility assessments of the current nuclear doctrines and postures of nuclear-weapon States. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has repeatedly stated its assessment that it is extremely doubtful that nuclear weapons could ever be used in compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL)2. States' views on the legality under IHL of the use of nuclear weapons may vary, but their catastrophic humanitarian consequences are beyond dispute. The scope for any conceivable use of nuclear weapons that could ever be considered to be consistent with IHL would in any case be exceptionally narrow compared with the wide range of uses that would clearly violate it. Accordingly, ensuring compliance with IHL in nuclear doctrines restricts the scenarios in which these weapons might be used, thus lowering the risk.

8. The ICRC recommends that these risk-reduction measures be included as commitments applying to all States Parties in the outcome document of the Review Conference.

9. Noting that nuclear risk reduction cannot become a substitute for the implementation of States Parties' legally binding obligations to achieve nuclear disarmament, the ICRC further recommends that these risk-reduction commitments be included in addition to specific commitments by the nuclear weapon States detailing steps to implement their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

Fuelling global turbulence

"As once-in-a-century transformations accelerate, the global strategic security landscape is undergoing profound changes. The resurgence of Cold War mentality, hegemonism and bullying, and the return of the law of the jungle and gunboat diplomacy have exacerbated regional conflicts and arms race, eroded the international arms control and non-proliferation regime, and posed a grave threat to global strategic stability. Certain country, in pursuit of absolute strategic advantage, has provoked bloc confrontation, wantonly resorted to the use of force and withdrawn from international treaties and organizations, thereby becoming the biggest source of destabilization that undermines international order and fuels global turbulence.

National Report to the 2026 NPT RevCon, submitted by China