

A GLOBAL NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

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When addressing today's nuclear proliferation challenges, we must recognize that the world entered into a new millennium with new strategic relationships and expectations. The UN Secretary General encouraged us to broaden our reflection accordingly. A comprehensive report was prepared by the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change for the 2005 World Summit. Most of the elements contained in that report remain entirely valid. While it has not yet been possible to move significantly forward into the various directions that the report hinted at, I am confident that common and global action will follow in due time.

The risk analysis in the area of nuclear proliferation is on many points consensual, as illustrated by recent statements and studies from various origins, including the UN Secretary general, the High Level Panel and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Their conclusions point to the risk of covertly and illegally developed full scale weapons programs, as well as to concerns about the erosion and possible collapse of the non-proliferation regime, referring to the recent expansion of the technological potential. They also mention the clear desire of terrorists to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

In the wake of the horrific events of 9/11, the Belgian Presidency of the EU initiated an in-depth reflection on the implications of the terrorist threat on the non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control policy of the EU. Belgium advocated a multi-faceted approach that would also address the complex issues of root causes and dealing with non-state actors, and proposed to fill the existing loopholes in the global non-proliferation instruments. The Brussels European Council in December 2001 adopted conclusions that paved the way for the elaboration of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, that was agreed in 2003.

Our strategy is based on the conviction that an effective multilateral approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international order.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This risk analysis should prepare the ground for the adoption of new international non-proliferation benchmarks.

First and foremost, we must underline that nuclear proliferation, while often rooted in unstable regional situations, is a global challenge that needs to be taken up at the global and multilateral level. This puts the UN Security Council in focus, together with the specialised UN agencies. We should build stronger bridges between the political and technical levels, while respecting their specific missions. Some of the difficulties encountered in the present management of the Iranian nuclear issue find their origin in the lack of clarity concerning the relationship between political accountability and legal requirements. Whereas the IAEA verification mechanisms are and need to remain based on technical and

thus objective foundations, the UN Security Council action resulting from that verification process cannot be other than politically inspired. This interaction will inevitably lead to widening the range and scope of elements out of which all parties concerned can start constructing the foundation for a balanced and solid conflict settlement.

The adoption of Resolution 1540 by the Security Council is a welcome new feature. The Security Council is determined to facilitate an effective response to global proliferation threats and to act accordingly under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. In other words, the Security Council is raising the stakes for would-be proliferators.

The resolution calls upon all States to present an implementation report. Belgium has done so.

Our report gives an overview of the Belgian WMD-related export control system and the enforcement measures in place. It confirms the participation of Belgium in the Proliferation Security Initiative, aimed at the interdiction of illegal trade in WMD related material.

The report also refers to our adherence to the G-8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of WMD, which co-ordinates the enormous international financial investment needed to eliminate the WMD stockpiles in the former Soviet-Union. Belgium is investing in the dismantling of nuclear submarines and in the construction of a chemical weapons destruction site.

The EU is playing an active role in providing assistance to interested States that face practical problems in implementing the provisions of Resolution 1540. Such a commitment is reinforcing the new EU policy to

include non-proliferation clauses in trade and cooperation agreements with third countries.

Besides, regular reporting on non-proliferation policies is in conformity with the principles of transparency and accountability that Belgium wants to uphold.

UN Security Council involvement in non-proliferation affairs leads us to raise the issue of the universal adherence to the NPT.

It is not logical to plead for a global approach to non-proliferation, yet continue to remain faced with a situation in which three countries are outside of the Treaty. We thus call upon these countries to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapons States.

We all understand that this question needs to be put in the appropriate regional context.

The fragile processes of raising the security quality in the Middle East and South-East Asia, merit our full support. At a certain point, the proliferation concerns will have to enter into these peace efforts, and that is where the international community, through innovative thinking, might have to intervene.

The EU Strategy rightly points out that the best solution to the proliferation of WMD is that countries would no longer feel they need them. We therefore will foster regional security arrangements and disarmament processes. In due course, the EU and other nations will have to define their contribution to the elaboration of effective security assurances in the regions of concern.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This brings me to the current international political agenda.

The recent North-Korean ballistic missile and nuclear tests have sent a shockwave through the non-proliferation regime. These provocative acts neglect the international commitments and endanger the security in the region and beyond.

We strongly condemn this type of irresponsible behaviour on the part of a State that believes that isolationism can be a guarantee for impunity.

Belgium called for swift action by the Security Council.

The Security Council has adopted a sanctions resolution that Belgium is committed to implement. The EU has already taken the necessary measures thereto. I am convinced that all other countries will do likewise. It remains to be seen how North Korea will react to this situation. Its leadership should understand that continued provocation and intimidation, in particular towards the immediate neighbours, will be counterproductive. It will not bring the resumption of the Six Party Talks any closer. It will increase pressure on South Korea to reconsider its humanitarian aid policy, as well as on China to take its distance from Pyongyang. Such developments would undoubtedly create a dilemma, since further North Korean isolation could lead to an implosion of its regime, with disastrous consequences for the neighbouring countries.

I am therefore convinced that we should strongly encourage all efforts to bring the negotiating process back on track. Within the framework of resumed Six Party Talks and following a credible commitment from North Korea to show restraint, as it had been willing to do in September 2005, it should be conceivable that more focused bilateral contacts, for instance with the USA, may become possible.

Today, once more momentum is building up on the Iranian nuclear issue. Having dealt with the North Korean nuclear test crisis, the Security Council is now preparing a sanctions resolution concerning Iran. Most of us will agree that this is not the preferred option, not for the neighbouring countries, nor for us as trading partners in general. The EU has invested tremendous efforts in trying to convince Iran to accept negotiations on a far-reaching and long-term agreement. Such agreement was offered to Iran during the summer. It would have given Iran everything it needs to develop a modern civil nuclear power industry while addressing also adequately the widespread international concerns on the purely peaceful nature of its nuclear activities.

I regret that Iran has declined this offer. I am deeply concerned by Iran's lack of cooperation: rather than suspending its nuclear enrichment activities, as required by the IAEA Board of Governors and the UN Security Council, Iran seems to be gearing up for confrontation.

Under those circumstances, the international community has no other option than to uphold the authority of the Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors by adopting appropriate measures under article 41 of the UN Charter. This was agreed in UN Security Council Resolution 1696. The EU is supporting the ongoing consultations on this subject. What we have in mind is a set of counter-proliferation measures, best to be compared with the key elements in the North Korean sanctions resolution. It goes without saying that we are contemplating a gradual build up of pressure that will always be reversible if and when Iran decides to accept negotiations after suspension of its enrichment.

It is vital that the international community remains transparent and cohesive on this issue. I understand that we may have to go through a

rough period and that the implementation of sanctions against Iran will create certain tensions. However, we must all be aware that the continuation of the existing confidence deficit regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme will seriously undermine stability in the region which is already under great strain. Neither can a nuclear armed Iran be contemplated.

The higher the risk for confrontation, the more the need to try to engage Iran in a dialogue. The current challenge is to activate certain channels of communication with Teheran. We should avoid pushing Iran into a level of isolation that would only be to the benefit of those who stand to gain from the existing confidence deficit. I believe that the Iranian people want and deserve a brighter perspective.

Ladies and Chairman,

Let me in conclusion raise more directly some specific questions regarding the role of Pakistan in the current non-proliferation debate.

The IAEA and other bodies are pointing to the increased relevance of nuclear energy in meeting the demands created by economic growth and development as well as the increased reliance on secure and environment-friendly energy sources.

It is obvious that this debate is also important from the nuclear non-proliferation perspective. The international non-proliferation regime is affected by globalisation: new technologies, speed in communication and travel, the spread of knowledge. The EU continues to believe that Pakistan has much to gain from signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear weapon State, and equally that the NPT has much to gain from Pakistan's membership.

We understand the complex regional context in which this subject has to be examined and encourage you to consider every possible confidence building measure with the Indian neighbour that could further the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

In addition, new approaches to counter proliferation are being promoted. We value your country's efforts in the area of exports control and welcome Pakistan's cooperation with the EU. This will contribute to the effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 that is outlining the international community's present expectations and requirements concerning the fight against proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. This cooperation will also facilitate the implementation of UN Security Council sanctions resolutions, related to proliferation challenges. It is interesting to see how the Security Council starts building on the increased export control vigilance towards proliferators which has been prepared within international export control fora, such as the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Once again, this trend shows the need to build bridges between the various bodies dealing with proliferation issues.

These developments pave the way for a more global and engaging international non-proliferation regime.

Thank you for your attention.

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