

Annual EU Seminar of
The Non-Proliferation Consortium
November 3-4, 2014

Tarja Cronberg
PNND Co-President
Former EP Chair of Iran Delegation

Making the NPT Review Conference a Success:

3 STEPS TO A EU COMMON POSITION

What could be considered a success of the NPT Review Conference in May? We do not need another empty document or a document with commitments disregarded by politicians, officials, planners, the citizens and the media. There is no need to once more confirm the thirteen steps agreed in 2000. Steps where there has been no action, with the exception of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones.

The NPT Treaty is not well. Its erosion could lead to a collapse, given the lack of nuclear disarmament as stipulated in Article VI. In 2015 we risk more rhetoric only to create legitimacy for and to avoid criticism of the continued possession of nuclear weapons. The balance, the grand bargain, between non-proliferation and disarmament has to be restored. This should be the fundamental goal of the EU Common Position.

The tensions that are tearing the treaty apart and eroding the trust in the regime are threefold:

- The lack of any progress toward “general and complete disarmament” as stipulated in Article VI.

- The ambiguity related to the rights of non-nuclear weapon states, such as right of enrichment, when engaged in peaceful uses of nuclear technology.
- The complete lack of progress in the universalization of the treaty, called for in past documents, also in EU Common Positions on the NPT.

Each of these tensions has to be dealt with in the EU Common Position on a concrete level drawing upon the specific EU. Below is my proposal for the content with a short argumentation.

On Disarmament:

“pursue negotiations...on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective verification” (Article VI)

The gap between the nuclear weapon states and the non-nuclear states is dramatically widening. 155 states have signed a joint statement on the Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. None of the five declared nuclear states have done so. The UN Open Ended Working Group was established to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament. None of the five states participated in this WG, and maintained that they will not be bound by the results.

There is a need for reform. The debate today is whether the reform process will be with the P5 or without them. The patience of the non-nuclear weapons states is wearing thin, not only that of the non-aligned countries, but also of the European states. Many have concluded that the only possibility is to exert pressure from the outside.

The EU, with both active nuclear and non-nuclear states, would be uniquely positioned to bridge the gap.

First step to a Common Position:

The EU commits itself to forward the pursuit of negotiations in good faith in order to achieve a treaty as indicated in Article VI. The depositors of the NPT should appoint a facilitator for consultations with the five nuclear states and representatives of the non-nuclear states. A conference on the Treaty should be held under the auspices of the NPT no later than....

On the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Technology:
("the inalienable right")

When a state is suspected of having a nuclear program with a possible military dimension, the establishment of the peaceful nature of the program is a complex, not only a technical but also a political process. The Iran nuclear dossier has been negotiated for over ten years without final conclusions. This is partly due to the ambiguity of the treaty. What is meant by the inalienable right?

Taking the Iran case as an example criteria such enrichment rights, exemptions to the inalienable right (if in conflict with other articles) and breakout times for possible weapon development have to be specified in a more unambiguous way than today. Over 30 countries have nuclear power, over 50 countries have expressed an interest. In the future there will be many more cases like Iran. The EU leadership role in the Iran negotiations provides a special competence to resolve this tension.

Second Step to a Common Position:

The EU commits itself in a multilateral context (the IAEA) to define a set of criteria for peaceful use of nuclear technology specifying i.a. the legal right to enrichment levels and capacities as well as break out times in order to remove future conflicts related to peaceful and military uses of nuclear technology.

On Universalization of the Treaty.

The non-declared nuclear weapon states, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have repeatedly -at NPT conferences -been urged to denounce their nuclear weapons and to join the NPT Treaty as non-nuclear states. This has been clearly rejected and there is no movement in this direction.

The EU has relations with all these countries. The EU WMD strategy obliges the Union to mainstream all its policies with third countries in relation to non-proliferation. The strategy also encourages the EU to create security conditions so that nuclear weapons are not needed. Furthermore, the EU should use all its instruments in a coherent way to promote non-proliferation and a world without nuclear weapons.

Third Step to a EU Common Position:

The EU commits itself to conduct a strategic review of all its policies in relation to the four non-declared nuclear states and to mainstream these in relation to non-proliferation. The EU will consider the use of its multiple instruments with both “carrots and sticks” to promote progress towards the universalization of the treaty. The EU will promote regional security environments (i.a. nuclear- weapon-free zones), so that these weapons would not be needed.

The NPT is at crossroads. The success of the review conference will be critical for the survival of the treaty. At a European Parliament hearing on the NPT in March 2013 the experts agreed: “ the NPT is unfair, unjust and ambiguous, but it is the only one we have”. A treaty, the only qualification of which is that it is the only one we have, may not be worth having.