

Foreword

The Netherlands Government is committed to working constructively towards global solutions for the security challenges of the 21st century. It attaches great importance to a strong international regime that aims at, inter alia, preventing the further spread of weapons of mass destruction.

To the Netherlands Government this implies that legally binding treaties should be the basis for this regime. We have treaties completely banning chemical and biological weapons, and the Netherlands, with the OPCW located in The Hague, fully supports their implementation. In the nuclear realm the Non-Proliferation Treaty is the key legal instrument, intrinsically linked to IAEA safeguards including the Additional Protocol; but also other arrangements and mechanisms like the Nuclear Suppliers Group, are part of a strong regime. Nuclear disarmament is, like non-proliferation, an integral part of the international system.

The Netherlands subscribes to the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including the call to the UN Secretary-General and the co-sponsors of the NPT resolution on the Middle East adopted in 1995, to convene, in consultation with the States of the region, a conference, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The Review Conference called for such a conference in 2012. While that is, at this point, not impossible, the window is closing and, given the situation in the region, the prospects do not seem to be bright for such a meeting to take place in the coming months. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs stands ready to assist the facilitator in any way it can, and also to support others, like the Arab Institute for Security Studies, that help to keep the issue high on the international agenda.

The non-proliferation regime is built on the assumption that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to other states makes the world a more dangerous place. The Netherlands fully subscribes to that, but the risks that weapons of mass destruction fall in the hands of non-state actors, in particular those who aim at sowing terror with these weapons, or with the materials of which they are made, are certainly not negligible. Therefore the Netherlands support efforts of the Security Council and other actors to block possible pathways for non-state actors to acquire these weapons and materials. Security Council resolution 1540 and follow-on resolutions are an important instrument in this regard, but also treaties like the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. The Netherlands, as the host of the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit is committed to further strengthening this regime.

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