

Options for Consideration

Given the wide recognition and appreciation among governments and the UN Secretariat of the important role NGOs play in supporting multilateral nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts, and given the significant levels of NGO access that have become the convention in many other multilateral forums and processes, States Parties should give consideration to enhancing NGO access to the NPT Review Process. The following measures are presented not as recommendations but as options for discussion and to encourage NGOs and States Party to explore additional ways and means of drawing on the international NGO community to support the full and ongoing implementation of the NPT.

1. It is now the usual practice to provide NGOs the opportunity to address the PrepComs/RevCon at each of their sessions through a special meeting for delegates to hear from NGOs. These meetings have been appreciated by delegates and NGOs alike, and the 2005 Review Conference could agree to make this a permanent feature of the review process.

2. In addition to providing the equivalent of opening statements in the special NGO meetings referred to above, the review process could benefit from NGO statements to the cluster working groups, as well as from NGO interventions in plenary and cluster debates. The practical implementation of such participation could require that such NGO interventions be linked to particular agenda items and be made through a limited number of representatives of NGOs speaking on behalf of larger groupings.

3. In the interests of greater dialogue and transparency, States Party to the NPT could agree that more sessions and meetings of the Review Conference and its Preparatory Committees, including its plenary and some cluster meetings, be open to NGO participation.

4. Dialogue could be further advanced by granting accredited NGOs access to, and suitable seating arrangements within, the conference, committee, and cluster group meeting rooms at all open meetings.

5. Timely NGO access to all official documentation, provided at the same time as it is distributed to delegations, would further enhance informed dialogue.

6. The Conference and PrepCom Secretariat could be invited to distribute written NGO statements to delegations in the numbers and languages received.

7. As is generally the current practice, it could become the formal practice to make available to NGOs a designated meeting room at all RevCon/PrepCom meeting sites (without charge), as well as providing access to additional meeting rooms for NGO-sponsored roundtables and briefings.

8. The Conference Secretariat, DDA, and States Party should also be encouraged to pursue further ways and means of developing substantive interaction with NGOs, for example, through joint sponsorship of:

- I. consultations on particular agenda items or issues,
- II. dialogues,
- III. panel discussions,
- IV. briefings.

Such informal sessions could also be encouraged between the RevCon and PrepCom sessions.

9. States Party and DDA should also explore, in cooperation with engaged NGOs, ways and means by which NGOs from States Parties among developing countries and from Nuclear Weapon Free Zones could better participate in the NPT review process.

10. States Parties should also be encouraged to include NGO advisors on their national delegations to the PrepComs and RevCons.

11. All NGOs that wish to participate in the NPT review process, and whose work is relevant to NPT issues, should be accredited, with the understanding that accredited NGOs then have a responsibility to work together and with the Secretariat to ensure effective and constructive NGO participation within agreed parameters.