

As I said earlier, Canada believes the NPT must link permanence with accountability. Future review conferences will ensure that, every five years, we will have the opportunity to strengthen compliance with Article VI as well as the other provisions of the Treaty.

There is simply no substitute for the NPT. Its benefits for non-nuclear weapons states, in terms of bringing the NWS into compliance over time with the fundamental standards set out by the NPT, are invaluable.

I believe that the Treaty speaks for itself in terms of its value and the need to perpetuate it indefinitely. We are faced with three simple choices: to extend the Treaty indefinitely, for a fixed period, or for a number of fixed periods.

Only indefinite extension guarantees the future existence of the Treaty. Anything less runs the risk of calling the NPT into question at some future point.

Indefinitely extending the NPT means enshrining, permanently, the legal commitment to dismantle all nuclear arsenals. The NPT is the only multilateral legal instrument to contain such an injunction. Without it, we have nothing.

There is a temptation to say that countries can be forced into timetables and meeting goals that they have had no role in developing. In our view, this is an unproductive course. We believe that the seriousness of the issue demands that we think, speak and act pragmatically.

In conclusion, as NPT states parties, we have the political responsibility to make a decision that responds to present realities and positions us to meet future challenges. This Treaty is our flexible instrument for dealing with nuclear non-proliferation; it is our instrument for promoting and achieving nuclear disarmament.

Canada is committed to both elements of the Treaty.

We are confident that all of the countries gathered here are committed to the Treaty. We should all be committed because the NPT provides us with enhanced security.

Let us use the only opportunity to make a firm, political decision in favour of indefinite and unconditional extension.

Thank you.