

Statement by the NGO Abolition Caucus
Of the NPT Review Conference 2010

**Response to the Report of Main Committee III:
Chairman's Draft on Substantive Elements**

May 20, 2010

The NGO Abolition Caucus of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference 2010 is generally opposed to the findings of the *Report of Main Committee III: Chairman's Draft on Substantive Elements* released on Friday, 14 May 2010. In particular, the Caucus finds there is no evidentiary basis to support the Chair's assertion in paragraph 6 that nuclear power contributes "in an important way to meet energy needs, improve health, combat poverty, protect the environment... thus helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals..." The Chair's draft does not acknowledge that there is disagreement among states parties on the characterization of nuclear energy as sustainable and safe.

Indeed, numerous independent studies indicate that dollar for dollar nuclear power for electricity production is one of the most expensive ways to meet energy needs, when lifecycle costs are compared to solar, wind, geothermal, appropriate hydropower and biomass, as well as efficiency measures. This is also true for reducing carbon emissions as expensive nuclear power would actually exacerbate catastrophic climate change since there is less carbon emission prevented per dollar spent on costly nuclear technology compared to applying those funds to clean energy sources and efficiency.

Further, countless studies, including recent reports from Germany in three communities with nuclear reactors, indicate that there are higher incidences of cancer, leukemia and birth defects in communities with toxic nuclear power plants that pollute the air, water, and soil in the course of routine operations. A recent report from the New York Academy of Sciences, by distinguished Russian scientists, finds that the deaths from the disastrous accident at Chernobyl now number over 900,000. NGOs also draw attention to the devastating impact of uranium mining on the health and welfare of surrounding communities.

The Abolition Caucus also objects to the *Report's* ostensible recognition of "the safety and security issues associated with nuclear energy as well as the need to resolve the issue of managing radioactive waste in a sustainable manner...recognizing the continuing international efforts to address those issues" while failing to acknowledge that the radioactive byproducts of nuclear power will remain toxic for 250,000 years. There is no known solution to safely store this lethal brew for the eons it would threaten human health and the environment.

Finally, while a great deal of emphasis is placed in the *Report* on handling radioactive materials produced by nuclear energy safely and responsibly, including contemplated transport of those materials from all four corners of the earth over land and sea, there is no assurance that accidents or theft with disastrous consequences can be prevented. Nor will the "peaceful" use of nuclear technology contribute to world peace, when so many more countries will have their hands on the where-with-all and know-how with which to make a nuclear bomb.

We urge the parties to support universal participation in the International Renewable Energy Agency, providing a truly "inalienable right" to energy from the sun, wind, and tides, a right to which no nation can be denied, and to initiate a phase out of nuclear power for the health of the planet and future generations.