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**Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review  
Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the  
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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**Taking forward gender mainstreaming efforts in the  
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**

**Working paper submitted by Australia, Canada, Ireland,  
Mexico, Namibia, Norway, Panama, the Philippines, Spain,  
Sweden, Thailand and the United Nations Institute for  
Disarmament Research**

*Summary*

This working paper builds on the valuable discussions addressing gender considerations in nuclear policy that took place during the previous review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It encourages all States parties to acknowledge the relevance of gender perspectives in the Non-Proliferation Treaty by considering practical ways to promote women's participation and leadership in the Treaty, as well as by implementing a gender analysis in nuclear policymaking.



## **Gender-related dialogue and action in the previous review cycle of the Non-Proliferation Treaty**

1. A positive aspect of the previous review cycle of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the rich discussion on gender-related matters and their relevance to all three pillars of the Treaty. A large number of States parties from diverse regions raised the issue of gender and the Treaty at the first, second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the previous Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle, and at the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Side events were held in all sessions, and a record number of six working papers were submitted addressing the topic of gender in the context of the Treaty.<sup>1</sup>

2. In 2017, 2018 and 2019, the Chair's summaries and working papers underlined the importance of promoting the equal, full and effective participation and leadership of both women and men in the nuclear field, as well as the need to recognize the disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on women and girls.

3. In 2022, at the tenth Review Conference, a joint statement on gender, diversity and inclusion was delivered by 67 countries. The statement underscored the importance of full, equal and effective involvement of women in all aspects of the Treaty, highlighted that nuclear weapons have different effects on different demographics, and that the intersections of race, gender, economic status, geography, nationality and other factors must be taken into account as risk-multiplying factors in relation to nuclear weapons.

4. Gender-related topics were reflected in the draft final document of the tenth Review Conference, which contained multiple references to gender issues, especially in relation to women's meaningful participation and leadership in the implementation and review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This language was accepted by all States parties, despite the fact that there was no consensus on a final document.

### **Why gender matters**

5. Improving gender equality in participation in the Non-Proliferation Treaty review process is highly desirable, as it has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of Treaty processes and their outcomes. Diverse teams are more innovative, take more sustainable decisions and are more effective in resolving impasses. Women and men have an equal right to participate meaningfully in negotiations and shape the decisions that affect their lives.

6. The General Assembly has recognized the need to facilitate women's participation in this field, urging Member States, the United Nations and others to promote equal opportunities for women and men to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts.<sup>2</sup>

7. Beyond issues of participation, there are other areas of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in which gender roles are relevant. Across the three pillars of the Treaty, gender can affect exposure to nuclear risk; the impact of ionizing radiation resulting from nuclear weapons use; the ability to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; and access to education and training in nuclear science and engineering.

8. This highlights the importance of gender analysis as a tool that can be used to design and implement policies in a gender-responsive way, making sure both women

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<sup>1</sup> [NPT/CONF.2020/WP.54](#), [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.48](#), [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.27](#), [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.25](#), [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.38](#) and [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.38](#).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, General Assembly resolution [77/55](#), as well as steps 36 and 37 in the 2018 Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament.

and men benefit from policy development and are equitably involved in the development, implementation and review of policymaking.

9. A sample framework for conducting gender analysis in policymaking related to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was presented in a working paper submitted to the third session of the Preparatory Committee.<sup>3</sup> It included a series of questions to be considered in policy development, implementation and review to ensure that gender inequalities are not exacerbated, and that equality and justice in gender relations are promoted, for instance:

(a) Have sufficient time, resources and expertise been allocated to address gender consideration in the proposed policy?

(b) Are systems in place to collect, track and publish relevant data disaggregated by sex, gender and age?

(c) Do women have equal access to education and/or technical and military training?

(d) Did women and men benefit equitably from the services and technologies provided by the policy?

(e) Has the policy identified opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes and increase positive gender relations through equitable actions?

10. Improving gender diversity in the Non-Proliferation Treaty processes and encouraging States parties to integrate gender analysis into nuclear policymaking will strengthen the Treaty review process.

### **Moving forward**

11. At this Preparatory Committee meeting, States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty have the opportunity to begin the review cycle where the last ended with a clear focus on the relevance and importance of gender issues within the Treaty. As a first step, States parties should ensure the full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to the Treaty review process, including in informal discussions and also in more formal settings.

12. The Chair's summary of this Preparatory Committee meeting should consolidate and build on the discussions and conclusions on gender from the previous review cycle through the following recommendations:

(a) Recall the working papers, statements, joint statements and side events on gender in the context of the tenth review cycle and to call for continued engagement on the issue in the forthcoming review cycle;

(b) Recognize the importance of and commit to ensure the equal, full and meaningful participation and leadership of both women and men in the implementation and review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty;

(c) Call for the further integration of a gender perspective in all aspects related to implementation of the Treaty.

13. Additionally, States Parties should:

(a) Request the Secretariat to collect, track and publish gender-disaggregated data and statistics on gender balance in delegations, including at the Head of Delegation level;

<sup>3</sup> See [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.27](#).

(b) Encourage the incorporation of gender perspectives in Non-Proliferation Treaty-related capacity-building technical cooperation programmes;

(c) Support initiatives to further develop gender analysis in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy;

(d) Encourage the Chairs of all Preparatory Committee meetings to organize informal briefings, calling for ideas on how to improve gender equality, including the equal and effective participation of women and men, provide a space for a specific discussion on the issue, and include these issues in their outreach and communication.

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