



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See  
to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva at the  
**Second Preparatory Committee of the 2020 Review Conference of the  
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**  
*Geneva, 30 April 2018*

Mr. President,

Non-proliferation and disarmament are not only ethical responsibilities but moral and legal obligations toward all members of the human family.

The Holy See accompanies, supports and encourages any useful and sincere initiative aimed at building a better future in the spirit of encounter and friendship among peoples.<sup>1</sup> In this regard, Pope Francis welcomed the Inter-Korean Summit of Friday, 27 April 2018, appealing to “those who have direct political responsibilities to have the courage of hope by becoming ‘artisans’ of peace”<sup>2</sup> and encouraged them to continue with trust and transparency along the path of dialogue toward the goal of a Korean peninsula free from nuclear weapons.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. President,

Weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, create a false sense of security. The tragic illusion of a “peace” based on fear is superficial at best. People fervently desire true peace, security and stability, which are the opposite of fear. The deception of safety in nuclear strength is contradicted by the overwhelming desire of people to true peace and to integral human development.

The Holy See Delegation believes that the initiative of reconciliation in the Korean peninsula can be a testimony that the security concerns that are so often cited as a pretext to slow progress on nuclear disarmament can and must be overcome without further delay.

Well aware that the reconciliation process has only begun, the Holy See Delegation hopes that this initiative will be matched by concrete and effective measures, such as allowing the IAEA to resume its important role of verification, which is so essential to build trust and to reinforce peace and security, and at the same time may lead to a true peace “built on justice, socio-economic development, freedom, respect for fundamental human rights, the participation of all in public affairs and the building of trust between peoples.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, General Audience, 25 April 2018:

[https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2018/documents/papa-francesco\\_20180425\\_udienza-generale.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180425_udienza-generale.html)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Pope Francis, After the *Regina Caeli*, 29 April 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Pope Francis, Message to the President of the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, Vienna, 7 December 2014.

Mr. President,

As we move towards the 2020 Review Conference, the Delegation of the Holy See hopes that these positive developments will contribute to a general “awakening of consciences”, inspiring additional effects that solidify the international efforts towards integral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, through universal and unconditional adherence to, and implementation of, the letter and spirit of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, as well as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

In this regard, confronted with the current situation of increasing international tensions and instability in the Middle East, and with a view to achieving a sound and enduring outcome of the 2020 Review Conference, it is vital that the session on the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the region finally be convened, as was agreed by all parties at the 2010 Review Conference.

The Holy See Delegation hopes that this long overdue process may be brought forward urgently and with greater determination. Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZs) play an important role in promoting regional and international peace and stability. They both complement and reinforce the NPT, replacing the logic of fear and mistrust with an ethics of responsibility. Their existence and broad coverage is a powerful demonstration of the determination of the majority of States and their people’s desire to true peace.

Mr. President,

The only way to ultimately fulfill the non-proliferation goal of the NPT is through its universal and honest implementation in letter and spirit. The Holy See Delegation wishes to recall once again that weapons of mass destruction should find no place in military arsenals, but above all, their use or threat of use should find no place in our hearts and minds.

Thank you, Mr. President.