consistent with international law, particularly international

justifications for the associated maintenance and modernization programmes and the vast resources diverted for this purpose are unsustainable in a world where the basic needs of billions, including the achievement of the developmental goals agreed to at the turn of the century, cannot be met.

South Africa is pleased that nuclear-weapon States are now engaging in order to build trust and confidence amongst each other, but it is equally important for them to build trust and confidence with non-nuclear-weapon States. Given that 45 years have now passed since the entry-into-force of the Treaty, we can no longer afford to strike hollow agreements every five years which only seem to perpetuate the status quo. The time has come to bring a decisive end to what amounts to *nuclear apartheid*.

Madam President,

In 2010 we agreed that *all States need to make special efforts to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons*. It is regrettable that five years on, no such framework has been established nor have serious discussions commenced so as to give effect to this commitment.

We therefore welcome the constructive proposals on *effective measures* required by article VI of the Treaty that have been presented during the course of this review cycle and we urge this Conference to commit to a thorough consideration of all possible options for a framework of *effective measures* that would strengthen article VI as an effective means for achieving the core disarmament objective of the Treaty.

South Africa supports the growing call for the construction of a legally-binding agreement or agreements. South Africa has also long supported a systematic and progressive approach to nuclear disarmament, including through a framework agreement of mutually reinforcing instruments.

South Africa has no set conclusions as to what this should look like or about the sequencing of the implementation of the mutually reinforcing elements that are needed to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. What is important is that this *framework* must be the product of an open multilateral process; contain clear benchmarks and timelines; ensure transparent, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament measures; and importantly move us closer to the achievement of the objective that we seek.

With reference to arguments that the effective measures propos

It remains South Africa's principled position that it is the obligation of States Parties to accept safeguards as required under Article III of the Treaty.

Safeguards contribute

In conclusion, Madam President, South Africa supports the full implementation of the NPT and its universality in pursuit of the goal of achieving and maintaining a world entirely free from nuclear weapons. The strength, credibility and vitality of the NPT rests on a fundamental bargain across its three pillars, which must be recognized and upheld.

Thank you.