

5th Ministerial Meeting of the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament

Press Statement

Stockholm, 14 December 2021

Today – co-chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden Ann Linde and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany Annalena Baerbock – Ministers from Argentina, Canada, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland gathered for the fifth Ministerial Meeting of the *Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament*.

Collectively, the Ministers reflected on the Stockholm Initiative's work since its inception in 2019 and reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to a results-oriented 10th Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), to be held January 4-28, 2022:

“The upcoming NPT Review Conference – two years after the Treaty's 50th anniversary – is a moment to demonstrate political leadership, honour commitments and achievements made under the Treaty, and set ourselves on a decisive path towards a world free of nuclear weapons, in the interest of preserving humanity. We remain united in our resolve to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons in an irreversible, verifiable, and transparent manner, and to reduce the risks they pose in the interim.

The upcoming NPT Review Conference is a pivotal opportunity for all states to show high-level commitment to nuclear disarmament. The Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament has presented a feasible way forward in this regard. We offer our full support to the President-designate of the Review Conference, Ambassador Gustavo Zlauvinen, in guiding delegations to secure the continued success of the Treaty.

Our message at the Review Conference will be clear: Nuclear weapon *States* must *advance* nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty. They can do so by taking forward the practical and meaningful steps reflected in the Stockholm Initiative's Stepping Stones and Nuclear Risk Reduction Package, supported by an increasing number of NPT *States Parties*, and by presenting a forward-looking plan for making further progress on nuclear disarmament.

In addition to member countries of the Stockholm Initiative, we welcome the additional 20 NPT States Parties that have formally aligned themselves with the Initiative's documents. We encourage all States Parties to draw upon the language and feasible ideas contained in these documents, notably in the drafting of any outcome to the Review Conference.”

Ministers welcomed the the extension of the U.S.-Russia New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) in January 2021 as well as the June 2021 presidential statement announcing a U.S.-Russia Strategic Stability Dialogue, which included a reaffirmation by that

“a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”. These are positive developments that respond to two of the stepping stones for nuclear disarmament of the Stockholm Initiative. Ministers noted the Summit Meeting between the U.S. and China held on November 16, 2021.

Despite some progress, there is considerable work that remains to be done. Ministers acknowledged that further steps remain to be taken by the five NPT-recognized nuclear weapon states reduce their nuclear arsenals, bearing a special responsibility to do so under the Treaty. Also evident is the clear unwillingness to disarm among other nuclear possessing states.

Rebuilding trust and confidence among the nuclear weapon states will help end the longstanding stasis in global nuclear disarmament.

Ministers urged all nuclear weapon states to take clear and decisive steps to lay the groundwork for next-generation arms control arrangements, to reduce or further reduce nuclear arsenals, to show leadership in putting a definite end to nuclear weapon test explosions, commencing negotiations on a treaty prohibiting fissile material production, as well as to support efforts to develop multilateral nuclear disarmament verification capacities.

The Stockholm Initiative developed the **Stepping Stones** for Advancing Nuclear Disarmament and a **Nuclear Risk Reduction Package** with the express purpose of rebuilding trust and confidence and promoting progress through practical measures, such as transparency on nuclear arsenals, reducing role of nuclear weapons in security and defense policy, and increased dialogue. Ministers identified nuclear risk reduction as an area of particular urgency. They discussed concrete measures to curtail risks and avoid escalation, in order to advance the overarching goal of nuclear disarmament.

Ministers took note of the outcome of the P5 Principals Meeting in Paris and encouraged the nuclear weapon states to make full use of, and further develop, the P5 format to yield more concrete results at the upcoming Review Conference and in the next NPT cycle.

Ministers reiterated their call in the “Stepping Stones for Advancing Nuclear Disarmament” to engage with the young generation, including through dialogue platforms, mentoring, internships, fellowships, scholarships, model events and youth group activities. They also reiterated their call to encourage visits to and interaction with communities affected by nuclear weapons, including Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and former nuclear test sites such as Semipalatinsk and in the Pacific. They remained resolved to integrate a diverse gender perspective and promote the full and effective participation of women in nuclear disarmament decision-making.

Ministers also committed to exploring new, innovative ways to advance nuclear disarmament and address associated challenges. They resolved to make full use of the remaining weeks in the lead up to as well as during the upcoming Review Conference, including by advocating for the Stockholm Initiative’s Stepping Stones and Nuclear Risk Reduction Package.

Ministers underlined the need for continued engagement on Article VI of the Treaty beyond the Review Conference in January 2022, to ensure full implementation of commitments and to promote further progress on global nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, Ministers underscored that they are equally committed to further cooperation across the broad spectrum of nuclear opportunities and challenges – including peaceful nuclear uses as well as addressing proliferation challenges.