Mr. Chairman,

Israel signed the CTBT in September 1996. This decision reflects its long standing policy on arms control and its support for international nonproliferation efforts, with due consideration to the specific characteristics of the Middle East and our national security requirements. Furthermore, Israel had played an active role throughout the negotiations of the treaty in Geneva and contributed conceptually, technically and politically to its drafting.

Since the establishment of the PrepCom in November 1996, Israel has played a major part in the endeavors to develop the elements of the CTBT verification regime, including the practical procedures to be adopted in the operational manuals, by which the Treaty will be implemented.

Israel decided to vote in favor on resolution A/C.1/59/L.25 because of the importance it attaches to the objectives of the CTBT, notwithstanding its reservations regarding some of the wording in operative paragraph 1.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel remains committed to the objectives of the CTBT. We would like to emphasize however, that progress has still to be made on several important issues:

First, the development and readiness of the verification regime: In our view, its completion constitutes a prerequisite to entry into force, as required by the first paragraph of Article IV of the Treaty.

Moreover it is our belief that the verification regime should provide for a robust system that is as effective as possible to detect non-compliance with the basic obligations of the Treaty. At the same time, it should be immune to abuse and allow every State Signatory to protect its national security interests.

These principles guide Israel in the development of the CTBT verification regime.

Second, resolving several salient political issues, in particular those related to the geographical region of the Middle East and South Asia (MESA).

Lastly, reversing the negative dynamics evolving in our region, where certain States Signatories are not fully cooperative with the efforts to complete and test the IMS element of the verification regime, thus impeding the pace of development of this element in the verification regime.

Mr. Chairman,

Recognizing that entry into force of the Treaty is still pending and does not look imminent, we believe that the advancement of the objective of the CTBT calls for the following commitments and
activities to be diligently pursued:

• First and foremost, sustain the commitment not to carry out any nuclear test explosion in line with the Treaty basic obligations.

• Provide sufficient funds to the CTBTO in order to complete as soon as possible the essential elements of the CTBT verification regime.

• Operate, maintain and test the IMS stations and the IDC as appropriate to gain experience in order to provide detection capabilities prior to EIF, as well as a smoothly-operating monitoring system by EIF. In addition, expand the seismic cooperation among all member states.

• Build the OSI element of the CTBT verification regime.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman