Mr. Chair,

As the Non-Proliferation Treaty continues to be under considerable strain, it is of paramount importance that we increase our efforts to preserve and strengthen the authority and integrity of the Treaty. The most urgent priority must be to ensure a positive and balanced outcome of the Review Conference in 2005.

Credible verification is vital in order to ensure that all States Parties are meeting their NPT commitments, and thus for the Treaty's credibility. Hence, all NPT States Parties must fulfil their basic obligations by signing and implementing the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards.

Furthermore, we urge all States Parties to conclude and bring into force the Model Additional protocol. We expect that the 2005 Review Conference of the NPT will take a decision that the Additional Protocol is mandatory under Article III of the Treaty.

The lack of universality of the NPT continues to be of great concern, and we call for renewed efforts by all states to achieve universal adherence to the Treaty. It crucial to engage states that are not parties to the NPT in constructive non-proliferation efforts. Security Council resolution 1540 reaffirms that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security and instructs Member States to do more to halt the spread of such weapons. Multilateral co-operation must be strengthened in order to support the implementation of the resolution.

Norway is firmly committed to the disarmament obligations contained in Article VI of the NPT, and further elaborated at the 2000 Review Conference. We reiterate that we need a balanced step by step and incremental approach to nuclear disarmament. While we are lagging behind in fulfilling the 2000 obligations, we need to keep in mind that there have been considerable reductions in nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War.

The Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (the Moscow Treaty) is an important contribution to this process, and to strategic stability. However,
we need additional and irreversible cuts in nuclear arsenals, including in the stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons.

Norway regrets that the CTBT has not yet entered into force. We appreciate that nuclear weapon States abide by the moratorium on nuclear-weapon-tests. However, such unilateral steps cannot substitute the significance of the legally binding commitment provided by the CTBT. We urge all countries, and in particular the nuclear weapons-states, to ratify the CTBT without delay and additional conditions.

For the same reason, negotiations on a verifiable multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile materials for weapon purposes (FMCT) are long overdue. We deeply regret that the impasse in the CD has blocked such negotiations, which represents the next logical step on the multilateral disarmament agenda. A credible and verifiable FMCT is essential in closing loopholes in the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

In the meantime, we call upon all nuclear weapons States to declare and reconfirm their moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices and to implement transparency measures related to production and stocks.

To conclude Mr. Chairman,

The NPT is a cornerstone for our collective security. We all have a responsibility contribute to the Treaty’s vitality and to ensure a successfully outcome of the upcoming Review Conference.