Thank you, Chair

As we noted during our opening statement, the UN’s First Committee on Disarmament and International Security is meeting at a troubled time for multilateral nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. In his statement to the UN General Assembly last month, Canada’s Foreign Affairs Minister deplored that the UN World Summit’s declaration did not contain a single paragraph on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Regret was also expressed regarding the failure of the States Parties to the NPT to come to an agreement on a substantive outcome at the Review Conference in May. In both cases, the inability to reach a consensus stymied the attempts of the many to make progress in achieving long-standing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation goals. Here in this forum, however, the large majority of states may demonstrate their commitment to the principles of the NPT without the limitations caused by the need for unanimity.

While the CTBT’s membership has steadily grown to 176, and its international monitoring system continues to be built up into a modern verification regime with global reach, the Treaty’s legal entry-into-force remains frustratingly out of reach. At the fourth Entry into Force Conference held last month, the ratifiers of the Treaty agreed on a Final Declaration that reiterated their continued support for the Treaty and made recommendations on how to gain the ratifications of the remaining eleven Annex 2 States. We are pleased that the Final Declaration included the Canadian proposal that calls on states in a given region to consider ratifying the CTBT in a coordinated manner. Over the past number of years, Canada noted in its deliberations with many non-ratifiers that regional security dynamics tend to be a strong impediment to ratification for some. Our proposal sought to address one of the most common objections to ratification by such states in light of these realities: "why should I ratify when others in the region refuse to do so?" By agreeing to ratify simultaneously, both Annex 2 and non-Annex 2 States in a given region can help build security and confidence in regions that suffer all too often from insecurity and uncertainty.

While the CTBT is being implemented provisionally as it awaits entry into force, other disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms that would bolster the NPT regime, such as the FMCT, remain to be negotiated. Turning off the tap of fissile material production for nuclear weapons is a pressing priority on which no forward movement has been registered since the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The Conference on Disarmament had been given a specific negotiating mandate by the 2000 Review Conference, which it has failed to realize due to the continued gridlock over a Program of Work. Canada has stated its willingness to be flexible on the precise mandate for negotiating an FMCT as part of a compromise package on a CD Program of Work. We continue to urge other CD members to display an equal flexibility in our collective efforts to break the deadlock that has persisted for far too long.

The integrity and viability of the NPT depend on continuing strong momentum in nuclear weapons reductions. There can be no going back to the nuclear arms race of the 20th century. Since the 1980s, a number of nuclear-weapon States have made significant and welcome progress in reducing their nuclear arsenals. All nuclear-weapon States have a responsibility to ensure that their actions and pronouncements continue to be compatible with a progressive and
consistent movement towards nuclear disarmament. Doctrinal or policy utterances that give the impression that nuclear weapons are being accorded increased importance in respective security policies are anathema to disarmament efforts. We encourage all nuclear-weapon States to securely reduce and dismantle their nuclear weapons arsenals with a maximum degree of transparency. We continue to call on those states outside the NPT to join as non-nuclear weapon States.

The integrity and viability of the NPT also depends on State Parties fulfilling their non-proliferation commitments. The right of a state to develop fuel-cycle technology must be considered in the context of its NPT nuclear non-proliferation obligations. Iran must satisfactorily address the case of its non-compliance, which has been documented by the IAEA. Until all outstanding questions have been resolved, we believe Iran must maintain the suspension of all its uranium enrichment-related activities. The resumption of conversion is a breach of the Paris Agreement with the EU 3 and ignores successive International Atomic Energy Agency resolutions. In view of the recent IAEA Board of Governors resolution finding Iran in non-compliance, Canada believes that the IAEA must report the issue to the United Nations Security Council at the earliest opportunity.

Canada welcomes the agreement reached at the Six Party Talks toward resolving nuclear proliferation concerns on the Korean Peninsula. We urge all parties to follow through on their commitments without delay and to build upon this agreement at the next round of talks in order to ensure a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons once and for all.

Finally, Canada welcomes the recent announcement that the IAEA and its Director General, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005. A founding member of the IAEA, Canada is a major participant across the full spectrum of IAEA activities, serving this past year as Chair of its Board of Governors. A deserving recipient of this prestigious award, Dr ElBaradei has demonstrated capable leadership on a host of difficult non-proliferation and disarmament issues of concern to Canada and the world, including North Korea, Iran, Iraq and the strengthening of nuclear safeguards agreements under the NPT. The Agency makes a major contribution to international peace and security through its verification and safeguards activities. Canada congratulates the IAEA and Dr. ElBaradei on this historic occasion.