Mr. Chairman,

Together with our EU partners, France has concerns over the difficulties which affect today the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament machinery. We have witnessed them during the NPT Review Conference, as well as within the Conference on Disarmament, during the 60th Summit and also in the UNDC.

For more than 2 years now, France has been trying its best in order to stimulate the Conference on Disarmament and to increase its level of activity. We have suggested in particular that it would be good for the Conference on Disarmament to explore new approaches, that this forum could deal with not only the most traditional issues put on its agenda, such as FMCT, Paros, or NSA, but also to answer the challenges which did appear in a more recent past. That’s why some try to sum up this new approach under the generic denomination of “new issues” or “out of the box”.

Mr. Chairman,

We have developed this approach in cross-cutting way. Today, more than half of the Conference on Disarmament, coming on in a balanced manner from various horizons, has shown interest and support for this approach. I welcome hearing Indonesia claiming that the Conference on Disarmament should have a program of work which should deal with both disarmament and non-proliferation.

This new approach aims not only at identifying new issues, it seeks also new methods of work, which should be based on the idea that the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament should make full use of all the possibilities which are currently provided by the rules of procedure. We believe that this will enable us to limit in a constructive way the situation described improperly by some as an abuse of consensus which is in fact a situation resulting from the weakness of Chairs. Should I recall that, during many years, the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament did outline a program of work, and allocation of slots on each
important issue under his own authority. But he didn’t venture into defining negotiating
mandates, this being a matter, that is to be decided by consensus.

Mr. Chairman,

It is to be noted that this approach has taken place during the two last years within a
movement that is yet very modest but nevertheless positive. Under the impulse of Kenya,
then of Mexico, we have successfully launched last year informal discussions, with a view to
negotiate on all issues of the agenda without forgetting to make room also for the "new
issues". This year we have been able to go slightly beyond formal plenary sessions held on
the basis of existing proposals, with a view to negotiate on the most important issues brought
up in the Conference on Disarmament: "cut-off", Paros, NSA, nuclear disarmament, and
room has also been made for new issues. This evolution has been reflected in the last
Conference on Disarmament reports and in the resolutions brought forward to the First
Committee on this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

For two years we have sown, we hope that 2006 will provide some harvest even modest. In
this context, for 3 months now, France has been supporting the efforts of the future
presidencies of the Conference on Disarmament in 2006, in particular of Poland who will
have the honour of guiding our work, in January next year, in order to ensure progress in the
Conference on Disarmament in a way which will not damage global interest of international
community. I state again this support her. With our EU partners, with whom we are trying to
define a common EU position in the Conference on Disarmament, France stands ready to
work with all will try in good faith to do the same.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.