The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Norway regrets that the NPT 2005 Review Conference failed in producing a substantive outcome. An important opportunity to further strengthen the NPT was lost.

It is also highly regrettable that the UN Summit Outcome did not reflect the challenges posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Yet another opportunity was missed to enhance our common security. We were, however, encouraged by the broad support for our cross-regional initiative on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in preparation for the High Level Summit. Seven countries from different regions of the world tabled a Ministerial Declaration and specific text-proposals for the Summit Outcome Document. The initiative was well received and a large number of countries expressed support. Regrettably, the proposal did not command the required consensus.

Norway will take up the challenge laid out by the UN Secretary-General and will continue to seek consensus and concrete results. We will do this together with Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Romania, South Africa and the United Kingdom, and all the other countries that have supported our efforts. It is now more important than ever to consolidate and strengthen our global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We must overcome our disappointment on the setbacks in multilateral negotiations so far this year. We must continue to seek and to foster a new global consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. There are a number of concrete steps that should be taken on an urgent basis.

We believe that an early entry into force of the CTBT would be crucial in this regard. It is alarming that we now seem further away from the treaty’s entry into force than we have been in a very long time.

Countries that have not ratified this vital treaty should do so without delay. We urge in particular the Nuclear Weapons States to commit themselves to the CTBT in a legally binding way. Pending the entry into force, we must do our utmost to further consolidate the existing test moratoria. These moratoria have set a norm against all nuclear testing. In order to ensure
credible verification we must accelerate current efforts to complete the International Monitoring System.

It is high time that the Conference on Disarmament moves out of its long-lasting impasse. We urgently need agreement on a programme of work for the CD. FMCT should be our first priority.

A Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty banning future production of fissile materials for weapons purposes will be vital to our non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. An FMCT must also address the question of existing stocks, taking into account the Shannon compromise. Meanwhile, we urge all nuclear-weapons States to place their fissile material, no longer required for military needs, under the IAEA verification regime. All states should increase transparency and security of their fissile material holdings.

We need to see more substantial reductions in existing nuclear arsenals. Norway encourages the Russian Federation and the United States to undertake nuclear arms reductions beyond those provided for by the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty. In this respect we underline the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway would like to congratulate the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and its Director General Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, on the award of this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

There is a growing fear that nuclear weapons might be given a more prominent and additional role in security policies. To strengthen mechanisms of multilateral arms control diplomacy is therefore more important than ever before. The IAEA has a clear mandate to deal with cases of non-compliance, and to verify that NPT states honour their NPT obligations. The IAEA therefore plays a vital role in our global security regime.

The IAEA verification programme is essential for maintaining the confidence needed for the NPT to be credible. The Additional Protocol will give the IAEA a broader basis on which to draw conclusions as regards safeguards. Norway appreciates that an increasing number of countries are implementing the IAEA Additional Protocol. We believe this protocol, together
with the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards, should be considered the verification standard. All states should therefore sign, ratify and implement the Additional Protocol without delay. Further steps to enhance the effectiveness of the IAEA verification regime should also be supported.

Furthermore, Security Council resolution 1540 must be implemented in full, assisted by the appropriate multilateral bodies. This is crucial in order to prevent nuclear material and technology from falling into the wrong hands. We call upon all States to adopt and enforce effective laws that prohibit non-state actors from pursuing WMD-related activities. Norway is ready to consider assisting States in fulfilling the obligations set out in resolution 1540.

Norway has signed the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was adopted earlier this year. This convention should enter into force as soon as possible.

A proliferation-resistant nuclear fuel cycle is in the interest of all States. It will facilitate our right to benefit from nuclear energy and technology as stipulated by the NPT. Norway welcomes the recommendations by the IAEA Expert Group on Multilateral Approaches to Nuclear Fuel Cycles. These recommendations should inspire our efforts to reach a mechanism under clear IAEA control, whereby States are assured supplies of nuclear fuel, provided they refrain from developing the capacity to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium. The IAEA must be given the legal, technical and political capacity to exercise such a role. It is further vital that such arrangements be of a voluntary nature, and not exclude technical assistance and transfers. It may take time to achieve this. In the meantime, we call for a moratorium on the construction of facilities for sensitive technologies.

Curbing the use of highly enriched uranium (HEU) is another measure to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation. We should therefore set ourselves the long-term target of reaching agreement on a prohibition of civilian uses. In the meantime, member States should commit themselves to convert civilian nuclear installations from HEU to low enriched uranium as soon as technically feasible.

To conclude Mr. Chairman,
We believe that general and complete disarmament is a global responsibility. We must continue practical, systematic and progressive efforts to advance nuclear disarmament globally, towards our ultimate objective - a world free of nuclear weapons.