Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the Working Paper on Disarmament and Nonproliferation Education, which the Secretariat has made available to delegates. Additional copies of a slightly revised draft of the Working Paper are available at the back of the room.

Let me begin by expressing appreciation to you for including D and NP Education in your list of proposed “Additional Measures” in Annex IV of your Synthesis Paper. It is a good starting point but not a
substitute for a focused discussion of the issue.

Indeed, the need to promote D and NP Education and particularly the imperative to foster critical thinking skills among youth has been voiced repeatedly within the UN framework for nearly two decades. It found most concrete expression in the adoption without a vote by the General Assembly at its 55th Session in 2000 of the creation of a group of experts, who were charged with recommending specific means and tools to promote education and training in disarmament and non-proliferation at all levels of formal and informal education. The
resulting UN Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education articulated 34 recommendations that were endorsed by the Secretary General and adopted by the General Assembly in 2002. The study’s overarching principle was that empowering the next generation of experts and the public required them to learn “how to think, rather than what to think” about issues fundamental to the disarmament and nonproliferation.

A number of positive developments have taken place with respect to D and NP Education since the Expert’s Group report, including the recent launch by the CTBTO of a major Youth Initiative. But we still face a
predicament on a global scale in which otherwise well-educated citizens (and many of their elected representatives) are amazingly complacent about and ignorant of disarmament and nonproliferation issues. Although this low knowledge base is deplorable, it also is understandable given the general absence of opportunities for study of the subject. Regrettably, today as in 2000, there are surprisingly few venues available for training the next generation of specialists or even for introducing our future leaders to the subject. As UN Secretary General observed in an important speech he made at my university in Monterey two years
ago “funding for disarmament [and nonproliferation] education, training, and research remains low to non-existent in many States….” In the words of the Secretary General, “It is easier for students to learn the logic of nuclear deterrence than to learn to discard the myths that keep nuclear weapons in place”

Although he chose not to make the point, the Secretary General also might have added that despite the fact that all states now endorse the general concept of D and NP Education, relatively little action has been made in translating that support in principle into global action. In fact, although
states continue to endorse the Experts Group’s 34 recommendations, few states appear to be aware of what those recommendations are, and even fewer of them have implemented them. Indeed, as simple an obligation as reporting on a bi-annual basis to the General Assembly of their implementation of the recommendations is ignored by the overwhelming majority of states, and only nine of them reported last year (Those nine states were Austria, Cuba, El Salvador, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Mexico, Panama, and Portugal). This list should be a wake-up call for those states at this OEWG
meeting, who purport to support D and NP Education.

The Working Paper I have submitted provides a number of steps that might usefully be taken by the OEWG. Let me conclude my remarks by noting only two of them:

1. First, it is essential to find mechanisms to alert States (and appropriate individuals/offices with States) to their reporting obligations. My impression is that many states fail to act because they are ignorant of the content of the 2002 UNGA Resolution. They also fail to note their accomplishments in D
and NP Education at for a such as the OEWG. This is unfortunate as a number of states have done impressive things in education that deserve to be noted, and hopefully will be during this session of the OEWG.

2. Secondly, I would hope that during this week or next, we will follow the model of the 2013 Open Ended Working Group, which recognized the importance of D and NP Education and devoted an entire panel to its discussion. It is regrettable that the subject has not received comparable attention to date at this year’s Open Ended Working Group.
Thank you.