Ambassador Adam Bugajski
Chair of the II Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference

Opening Remarks
Geneva 23 April 2018

Mr. Minister, Ms. High Representative, Excellences, Distinguished Participants and Guests, Dear Colleagues,

It is a great honour to me to declare open the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This second session of the Preparatory Committee has been convened pursuant to resolution 70/68 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 2015.

It has been almost one year since I assumed my responsibility as Chair of the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee. It has been an honour and pleasure discharging this duty. Thank you very much for the credit of confidence that you gave me.

I have been studying and travelling a lot during this time to learn about your positions, your motivations and your concerns. I engaged in this effort to prepare our session in the best possible way, making sure that we can be as comprehensive as the scope of the NPT, as effective as its complex nature only permits and as efficient as our abilities allow.

Throughout that period I have been consistently supported by my Dutch colleagues. In this context I would like to extend, on behalf on the States Parties to the NPT as well as on my own behalf, our appreciation to Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast, Chairman of the first session of the Preparatory Committee, for his untiring efforts to successfully launch the preparatory process for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. His vast professional experience and outstanding diplomatic skills have greatly facilitated the successful conclusion of the first session of the Preparatory Committee, thus establishing a sound basis for our work during this session. Moreover, I believe that the Dutch-Polish exemplary cooperation charts new waters and in itself contributes to strengthening of the review process. I am already looking forward to extending this working method to the Chair of the third PrepCom, whom we will elect later in this session.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The international security environment is today at least as fragile as it was at the time of the last PrepCom. Regional conflicts, pockets of instability or tensions among some States parties are by no means fewer or less pronounced. Our positions are at times more polarized and a number of old outstanding issues are still with us. Nonetheless, there have recently been promising developments as well. Moreover, throughout its almost fifty years the NPT asserted itself as the centre piece of the global non-proliferation regime. It not only curbed the temptation by some to acquire the nuclear weapon, survived the peak of confrontation of nuclear superpowers during the Cold War, but also survived 4 Review Conferences without tangible outcome. Admittedly, the Treaty is not perfect, but it is the one that unites us all in the effort to arrive one day at a world free from nuclear weapons. Moreover, it provides an indispensable reference framework for such institutions as IAEA or the CTBTO, without which either effective disarmament, non-proliferation or advancement of peaceful uses would be unthinkable. They also help us understand and harness evolving technologies in the service of peace and development.

Let this legacy of the NPT motivate us in our discussions from now through to the Review Conference in 2020. Upholding the credibility and integrity of the NPT as well as strengthening its effectiveness and implementation remain our utmost collective responsibility. The agenda and the timetable have been structured so as to allow for a balanced discussion across all three pillars and to allocate the optimal time to discuss even the most contentious issues. The outcome is in your hands. I am just a humble custodian of the Treaty and a facilitator, and that for a short while only.

Let us not only talk but also listen to each other with respect and open mind. Let the proceedings be a quality discussion and not a quantity competition. Let there be room for positive engagement by everyone on every aspect of the review. Let us constantly look for what unites us and for practical solutions. Let us use these two weeks before us for focused, result-oriented and fair debate that will produce solid building-blocks for the next PrepCom and the Conference in 2020. I specifically encourage female participants to come forth and take active part in the discussion. Our deliberations will certainly profit from the qualities you can bring into them.

These are probably going to be busy and long days for next two weeks. We have therefore catered for a survival kit for you: you will find there some tools that will help you to endure and succeed as a PrepCom participant: a notebook, a pen, and
a drinking mug in case you feel drained. And in case you felt like going to Poland after this experience you will find in the package a useful booklet to guide you. Please make use of all of them, as appropriate.

_Ladies and Gentlemen,_

I am certain that there are long distance runners among us. It is going to be a long and exhaustive run between now and the Review Conference in 2020 with two steep up-hill stripes along the way. But marathon runners use to say that _pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional_. Let us try to internalize this slogan for the sake of a healthy and fruitful PrepCom session.

_Thank you very much for you attention and I wish you endurance._