Thank You Chair,

At the outset let me also align my delegation with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Thank you Chair,

Let me start by congratulating you on your election as Chair. We have confidence in your abilities and pledge our support. Zimbabwe aligns itself with the statements delivered by the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Zimbabwe remains unequivocally committed to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. But our commitment, as well as that of the Non-Aligned Movement, have not been matched by any demonstration of political will and good faith by the nuclear powers to disarm.
We are particularly and gravely concerned firstly at the disproportionate attention given towards the three pillars of NPT, and secondly, that the nuclear powers have given lip service to the critical issue of nuclear disarmament. We wish to reiterate that equal weight and attention must be given to both horizontal and vertical proliferation, as well as to the other pillars of the NPT, namely the attainment of complete nuclear disarmament and unfettered access to, and use of, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

It was in furtherance of this objective to achieve complete nuclear disarmament that Zimbabwe supported, last year, the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly, of the treaty to ban nuclear weapons. We welcomed this important milestone only as a first step in the journey to achieve the total elimination of all nuclear weapons, because a nuclear weapon-free world is the only guarantee we have against a possible nuclear holocaust. We are therefore not convinced of any notion of a “progressive approach” to nuclear disarmament.

Chairperson,

I wish to recall the warning from the great Cuban revolutionary icon, Fidel Castro, that if we fail to take decisive action now, perhaps, “the next world war will be the last one”. This is why
we are particularly concerned at the reckless brinkmanship and inflammatory rhetoric in the conduct of international relations, especially among nuclear powers.

Finally Chair,
We are really concerned that the sessions of the NPT have now become monotonous rituals where we meet to go through the motions, as it were, to fulfil a fixture in the Treaty’s 5-year review calendar. Indeed, we feel betrayed by the nuclear powers, and in fact vindicated by events since the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. We feel vindicated by our position then, because now there is no pressure to disarm, and yet the rest of us without nuclear weapons have no chips to bargain with and no cards to play. We ask ourselves the question: “Were we cheated in 1995?” There is now general consensus among the overwhelming majority of UN Member States that since 1995, subsequent Review Conferences, including the last one held in New York, have only confirmed our worst fears about the unwillingness to disarm.

I wish to end on this rather unhappy note. We are very worried, Chair.

I thank You.