Statement by the Czech Republic
Cluster 1
Second session of the Preparatory Committee to the NPT
Geneva, 23 April – 4 May 2018

Mr. Chairman,

Since I am taking the floor for the first time, allow me to express my delegation’s sincere congratulations to you on your election as the Chairman of this Preparatory Committee meeting, as well as to the members of the bureau. You can rely on our cooperation and support.

The Czech Republic aligns with the EU statement and I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

With respect to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, they are both equally indispensable for achieving a world without nuclear weapons. We are of the view that complete elimination of nuclear weapons can only be realized in the presence of a strong non-proliferation regime and a robust verification regime that can provide credible assurances of irreversible disarmament. It is our belief that the universal adherence to the Treaty, effective verification tools for nuclear disarmament process and also entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty should facilitate creating new conditions for achieving our common objective. Although we were disappointed with the outcome of the RevCon 2015 in New York, we are convinced that the NPT remains indispensable for our collective security and will continue to serve as a fundamental instrument for advancing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Despite the fact that the CTBT has already become a de-facto international norm and the nuclear tests moratorium in place for many years has been strictly observed by all but one state, we are still missing the final act, its entry into force. Therefore, every occasion must be used to call upon those States that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT. It is this meeting that provides a very good opportunity to remind it, in particular to the remaining States listed in Annex 2 to the CTBT, whose ratification is necessary for its entry into force.

The nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea have proved the necessity of this Treaty to significantly strengthen the international security architecture. The Czech Republic has repeatedly condemned the nuclear and ballistic missiles tests conducted by the DPRK and we urge the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles programmes, and return to the NPT and the IAEA Safeguards immediately. In this regard, we are encouraged by the recent announcements of the DPRK and
hope that the diplomatic initiatives that were put in motion will bring us to the
denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Chairman,

the Czech Republic attaches great importance to the development of
internationally recognized nuclear weapon free zones, established on the basis of
agreements among States in the regions concerned. In our view, the goal of
creating a Middle East WMD-Free Zone can only be achieved if pursued in a
constructive, inclusive and consensus-based manner that takes into consideration
the legitimate interests of all states in the region.

Like the vast majority of UN member states, we also attach priority to the
commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on
Disarmament on a legally binding FMCT. The need for this treaty has been
emphasized on many occasions and the Czech Republic belongs among its
staunch supporters. Pending the entry into force of such a treaty, we call on all
states with relevant capabilities that have not yet done so to declare and apply a
moratorium on the production of fissile materials. The Czech Republic has
always stressed the importance of non-discriminatory and irreversible character
of this treaty. We strongly advocate that the future treaty should not create any
new obligations for the non-nuclear weapon states with implemented
comprehensive safeguards agreements.

As a non-nuclear weapon state, the Czech Republic will continue to fulfil its
obligations under the NPT and remains fully committed to the objective of
achieving and maintaining of a world without nuclear weapons. However, we
are convinced that any effective, verifiable and irreversible disarmament must
be inclusive, firmly rooted in the NPT and it should recognize that elimination
of nuclear weapons is a long-term process, which requires constructive dialogue
with the nuclear weapon states.