Thank you Chair

Australia would like to lend its voice to those in the room emphasising the value - in the context of the current Review Cycle — of looking more closely at the question of how to discourage withdrawal from the Treaty.

This is a matter that the Vienna Group of Ten has continued to emphasise including in Working Paper five as submitted by the Group to this Preparatory Committee Meeting.

Australia recognises the risks that would befall international non-proliferation efforts in an instance in which a State was to exercise its right to withdraw from the Treaty as provided for under Article Ten.

To this end and in the context of our collective efforts to consider ways to further strengthen the NPT Australia sees value in giving specific consideration to developing and agreeing on principles or measures that could apply should a Party exercise the right of withdrawal.

Chair

To be clear, Australia is in no way suggesting the Treaty be amended.

But rather, and in the interests of upholding the integrity of the Treaty and consistent with our objectives of promoting Treaty universality — we are proposing that we give active consideration to formulating a set of agreed principles that would make clear the process and limits of responsibility in any instance in which a state was to withdraw from the Treaty. These principles might possibly include but not be limited to recognition of:

- The importance of States Party making every diplomatic effort to persuade the withdrawing state to reconsider its decision; and
- The role of international law, which, for example would determine a withdrawing state's ongoing responsibility for any violations of the Treaty prior to withdrawal and that nuclear material, equipment and technology acquired by a State party under article IV prior to withdrawal must remain under IAEA safeguards or fallback safeguards even after withdrawal.

Australia stands ready to work with other interested States party interested in exploring this matter with a view to enhancing and protecting the integrity of this critically important Treaty.

Thank you