Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Withdrawal]

As numerous delegations have pointed out, the issue of preventing the abuse of withdrawal from the Treaty carries greater importance in that it has an inherent risk to undermine the Treaty implementation as well as the international peace and security itself.

While recognizing that the right to withdrawal is a sovereign one embedded in Article X of the Treaty, my delegation is of the view that the specified conditions allowing the exercise of the right to withdrawal should be interpreted in a stringent manner in order to not allow any attempt to abuse the objectives of the Treaty.

Given that the current NPT regime lacks a proper mechanism to respond to a State Party’s withdrawal after violating the Treaty or to address the ramifications of such violations perpetrated prior to one’s exit from the Treaty, we need to examine and develop principles to govern the operation of Article X including the following elements.

First, all possible efforts should be made to dissuade the withdrawing party running against the universalization of the Treaty. During the three-month period for a withdrawal notice to take effects, State Parties should be able to review the appropriateness of such notice substantially and procedurally, and assess the withdrawing party’s compliance with the Treaty and the IAEA safeguard agreement.

Second, withdrawal should not affect any right, obligation or legal situation between the withdrawing State Party and other respective State Parties created in the
implementation of the Treaty prior to withdrawal.

Lastly, the withdrawing State Party must return all nuclear materials, equipment and technology acquired prior to withdrawal, or put those materials, equipment and facilities under the IAEA safeguards.

[Review Process]

The Republic of Korea reiterates its full commitment to our collective efforts to guard and improve the NPT as the cornerstone of the nonproliferation regime in the face of emerging challenges and security threats. And, taking this opportunity, I would like to applaud the PrepCom Chairs of this cycle for their proactive and inter-related efforts and coordination works aimed at a successful conference in the year 2020. As we assemble in this hall and hear many resonant voices emphasizing that we cannot afford to have another non-delivering review cycle, my delegation stands ready to actively participate in all efforts to bolster the efficiency of the review cycle.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. /End/