Mr. Chair,

Austria wishes to congratulate you Ambassador Bugajski on your national day and thank you for the always friendly and patient chairing of this meeting. You have created a good atmosphere for our work.

Austria aligns itself with the EU Statement delivered earlier. As we come to the conclusion of this meeting, Austria wishes to complement a number of key points of this second PrepCom which were not fully reflected in the summary, we assume because you wanted to shorten the disarmament part a lot in comparison to last year.

We have deepened our knowledge about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences inter alia through international conferences, we know now that the immediate, mid- and long-term
consequences of a nuclear weapon explosion are significantly graver than it was previously understood. These catastrophic consequences will not be constrained by national borders, but have regional or even global effects, and nuclear weapons are potentially threatening the very survival of humanity. As nuclear weapons pose a constant global threat, it is the shared responsibility of all states to pursue all efforts to contribute to nuclear disarmament. More time should be made available to discuss the catastrophic humanitarian consequences in the context of the NPT.

We welcome that also this PrepCom reaffirmed our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons, as outlined in the NPT. Austria was among the many states that underlined that continued possession of nuclear weapons fuels proliferation. Particularly in times of rising tensions, reaffirming prior commitments is helpful to build confidence and thus to ease tensions. It is precisely the mandate of the review conference cycles to review implementation of the treaty, to assess progress made and to identify measures to strengthen the treaty’s implementation. Echoing many other states, my country particularly welcomes the contribution to the implementation of Article VI through the adoption of the TPNW. We are encouraged by the broad support for the TPNW expressed during the last days. My country is firmly attached to the CTBT, which like the TPNW is indispensable for the full implementation of article VI. The
discussions held in this PrepCom with regard to the Korean peninsula once again expressed the call on all annex 2 countries, including the nuclear armed states, to sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay and preconditions. Austria places high importance on the rapid entry into force of this landmark treaty and welcomes the fact that the IMS is already fully operational.

Notwithstanding the unconditional legal obligation under the NPT to disarm and the unequivocal undertaking, I would like to briefly touch upon something that some have referred to as the urgent need to devote more attention to discuss security implications of nuclear weapons.

Many delegations underlined that security cannot be based on nuclear weapons. This is even the underlying foundation of the NPT and should have been properly reflected in our report. In this respect we noted that the report of the eminent persons group presented by the Japanese Foreign Minister Kono during our session, calls nuclear deterrence a dangerous long-term basis for global security and encourages all states to seek a better solution.

This is precisely what article VI calls for: ceasing to base security policy on nuclear weapons. Otherwise we can never reach the objective of the NPT – a world without nuclear weapons.
I thank you.