Mr. Chairperson,

The widespread benefits of peaceful nuclear uses have been central to the NPT since its inception. The United States welcomes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment under Article IV of the NPT to “the fullest possible exchange” and cooperation to further expand these shared benefits. In reaffirming this commitment, we note that the past and future successes in peaceful nuclear uses rest on the Treaty’s strong nonproliferation protections. The Treaty provides the confidence that sharing peaceful nuclear know-how will not contribute to the spread of nuclear weapons capabilities to dangerous regimes or non-state actors. This confidence is built upon the various nonproliferation protections, including safeguards, export controls, and nuclear safety and security practices and standards that comprise the global nonproliferation regime.

The United States is proud to be the largest contributor to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) activities that expand the benefits of peaceful nuclear uses. Since 2010, we have provided voluntary contributions totaling over $378.9 million to support such activities through the Agency, including over $100.7 million to the Peaceful Uses Initiative. Critical to capacity building in peaceful nuclear uses is the infrastructure provided by the IAEA’s Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf, Austria. Therefore, I am pleased to announce today an additional $560,000 U.S. voluntary contribution to help ensure the new and renovated laboratories are fully equipped and operational on schedule.

The United States is also among the world’s strongest contributors to civilian nuclear cooperation – having both a long record of cooperation in this arena going back to the earliest years of the nuclear age and a firm commitment to continuing this legacy. Our collaboration in next-generation nuclear technologies, for instance, supports the development and future deployment of advanced reactors. We also conduct and support capacity-building activities to help countries develop robust, independent regulatory infrastructures. Our bilateral “123” nuclear cooperation agreements provide the framework – in accordance with the highest standards of safety, security, and nonproliferation – for significant transfers of nuclear material and equipment to 50 partners. In addition, the United States supports and commits to high nonproliferation standards in the export of nuclear material, equipment, and technology. Exercising responsible supply policy through the application of export controls – and the insistence upon high nuclear safeguards standards in nuclear cooperation agreements, including
the IAEA Additional Protocol – facilitates legitimate trade and gives confidence that items and technologies transferred will be used as intended in peaceful applications.

We will continue to help lead international efforts in improving nuclear safety and security worldwide. We urge participation in the 2020 Convention on Nuclear Safety Review Meeting and ratification of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. We will apply the highest nuclear safety standards and provide bilateral cooperation and assistance to help others do the same. We will also remain a leader in nuclear security under the broader global nuclear security architecture and through our strong partnerships. We urge others to follow the strongest nuclear security practices to help prevent material diversion or malicious acts and provide confidence that facilitates the broadest access to peaceful nuclear uses.

Those who join us in taking tangible steps to bring to fruition the promise of the peaceful atom are not only contributing to the well-being and development of the peoples they serve, but are also maintaining a strong NPT. To these ends, the United States plans to take part over the next year in enhanced engagement with NPT Parties on how best to maximize peaceful nuclear cooperation under the NPT. We particularly want to hear any innovative ideas on how to increase the collective good of such cooperation and will seek to identify efforts that could be endorsed by the Review Conference. To best identify such ideas, or even specific opportunities for nuclear cooperation projects worthy of international support, I encourage every country represented here to take a “whole of government” approach to our work by including in discussions and on delegations the widest range of constituencies with relevant nuclear-related equities and expertise, including regulators and industry. We are also eager to better identify how non-governmental actors, such as NGOs or foundations, and academia, can play an expanded role in facilitating nuclear cooperation.

Mr. Chairperson,

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the NPT’s entry into force, we look forward to contributing further to the proud and often underappreciated legacy of sharing peaceful nuclear uses widely while reinforcing the NPT as a pillar of global peace, security, and prosperity.

Thank you.