STATEMENT BY

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Mr. Chairman,

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement made by the EU Presidency. From a national point of view, we would like to add the following observations.

The Netherlands warmly welcomes the new élan in disarmament and non-proliferation. The historic Security Council Summit and the unanimous adoption of Security Council Resolution 1887, which resolves to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world free of nuclear weapons, shows that serious work is being done. The Security Council Summit demonstrated that the P5 are commonly committed to work for further nuclear disarmament and we expect therefore concrete steps in this context by all five. The non-nuclear weapon states of course also have an obligation in this regard. The negotiations between the two largest nuclear powers on a START follow-on agreement constitute a positive development in this context. An ambitious agreement before the end of this year would have an enormous impact on further reductions.

The Netherlands believes that the international community should build on this momentum and take concrete steps towards a nuclear weapon free world. The coming year will be crucial in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

The 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference marks an important milestone for the international Non-proliferation system. In view of the lack of outcome of the conference of 2005 and recent developments, it is important that real progress is made to strengthen the non-proliferation system. The Netherlands believes that in order to move forward we need a strategic and creative approach. The coming months we will be active in preparations for the Review Conference, working closely together with countries from all regions of the world. Cooperation is of the essence. The NPT should not merely serve the interests of the P5 or a small group of countries, a well functioning and effective NPT serves all of us. We call on those states that have not ratified it to do so. On those states that have ratified it, we call to implement it. Ownership by all of us is fundamental and in this context the best way to move forward is by maintaining the balance between the three pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation, peaceful use and disarmament.
Another important milestone would be the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). In the past years The Netherlands has been very active in the promotion of the entry into force of the CTBT. In this regard The Netherlands would like to recognise the tireless efforts of Ambassador Jaap Ramaker as a Special Representative to Promote the CTBT Ratification Process. We still need nine ratifications for the treaty to enter into force. The Netherlands welcomes the commitment of President Obama to seek US ratification of the CTBT as well as positive statements in this regard by other states, and hopes that all states concerned will soon live up to their responsibility and take this crucial step.

With the new momentum in disarmament, we call on the Conference on Disarmament to leave the period of often interesting but inconclusive discussions behind it. The CD should again become a forum for new and concrete steps. In this context The Netherlands would also like to stress the importance of an early start and conclusion of negotiations on an effectively verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). In May of this year, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva agreed on a programme of work that included the start of these negotiations. The Netherlands therefore calls on all members of the CD to commence substantive work, including FMCT negotiations, at the beginning of its next session. A lot of groundwork for the negotiations has already been done. We should not waste any more time and get to work.

Mr. Chairman,

To conclude, The Netherlands believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty should not be seen as entirely separate agreements; they are linked and mutually reinforcing. If you view the NPT as a house, the FMCT is bound to strengthen its foundations and the CTBT serves as its roof.

The Netherlands wants to help build this house and stands ready to work constructively with all those states that want to build it with us.

Thank you