Mr. Chair,

The consequences of any nuclear detonation would be global, whether caused by a state’s intentional use, terrorist action or accident.

As mentioned in our general statement, Norway will hold a conference in Oslo in March 2013 to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear detonations, as well as our ability to respond to such a disaster credibly and effectively. The Conference will create an arena to discuss immediate effects, longer term impact and consequences, and the actual state of preparedness to provide an adequate humanitarian response.

Through covering themes such as preparedness, protection, civilian loss of life and damage, humanitarian efforts and response capacity, refugee flows, health issues and climate effects, the conference will provide greater insight and a fact-based understanding of the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation. We look forward to welcoming all states and relevant humanitarian actors that recognize the need to discuss the humanitarian impact of nuclear
weapons and the corresponding emergency and disaster response capacities. We will encourage participation with both senior officials and experts.

Mr. Chair

Throughout the history of the United Nations, we have seen the humanitarian perspective grow stronger in international politics, and in international arms control. The humanitarian impact of weapons has increasingly become recognized as a key consideration. However, nuclear weapons have rarely been seen in this light. This may be about to change, and rightly so, since the humanitarian impact is the most fundamental motivation for all our efforts for disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear security.

It is a motivation relevant for all countries, irrespective of political and geographical affiliations. And it is an issue proving its relevance to a broad array of organizations and interest groups, since it relates to a number of issues that are of great concern for people far outside the traditional meeting rooms of international politics.

It was high time that the recognition of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons was finally brought to the forefront by the NPT review conference in 2010, in our view one of its most important achievements.

Mr. Chair.

Nuclear non-proliferation is crucial to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. Non-proliferation is essential for the security of all countries, and we should all do our utmost to make full use of the tools at our disposal. We also urge all member states to fully implement Security Council resolution 1540 and have ourselves allocated substantial voluntary contributions to the UNODA to this end.

The IAEA is the custodian of the global non-proliferation regime. The IAEA comprehensive safeguards and the IAEA Additional Protocol should constitute the verification norm. We are pleased that a majority of the UN member states have signed and implemented the Additional Protocol. However, there are still many who need to take this vital step to enable the IAEA to conclude that nuclear activities in a given country are for peaceful purposes only.

The IAEA must be fully equipped to carry out its crucial non-proliferation efforts. Norway has on a number of occasions expressed deep concern over outstanding proliferation challenges, such as those posed by Iran, Syria and DPRK.
Norway urges Iran to do its part in restoring international confidence concerning its nuclear activities. A first important step would be to comply with relevant Security Council and IAEA resolutions. A political solution to the outstanding issues would greatly strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

Norway condemns the violation by the DPRK of relevant Security Council resolutions and urges the DPRK to abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programs and return to full compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

Norway also urges Syria to fully cooperate with the IAEA in resolving outstanding matters in relation to its Safeguard Agreement and bring into force an Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Mr. Chair

All of us were very much younger than we are today, or not even born, when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty entered into force in 1970. Forty-two years later, we are still living in a world with nuclear weapons. We rightly celebrate the NPT Review Conference in 2010, since it did achieve a detailed Action Plan covering all three pillars. But only implementation of the Action Plan can bring us from diplomatic achievement to results that matter.

We are pleased that the implementation of the New START agreement is running smoothly. However, we would also encourage the US and the Russian Federation to be guided by the treaty’s name and pursue further negotiations, including all categories of nuclear weapons.

We certainly also encourage other nuclear weapons states to engage in nuclear disarmament. We are pleased to note that all the nuclear weapon states of the NPT are meeting on a regular basis in order to fulfill their obligations under the Action Plan, and look forward to seeing the concrete results of their deliberations.

Mr. Chair,

An important item in the NPT Action Plan is the Middle East Conference on a Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held by the end of this year. Norway warmly supports the efforts to ensure that the Middle East Conference on a Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction is successful in making a substantial contribution to the actual establishment of a WMD free zone in the region, which would strengthen the security of us all. More than half of the world’s countries have freely joined such zones.
Mr. Chair,

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are also important elements in achieving nuclear security. Norway participated in the successful Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul this March, and we look forward to continuing this important process. We must secure all nuclear material, continue our efforts to develop cooperative arrangements for producing nuclear fuel for civilian reactors and significantly reduce the use of highly enriched uranium in all its applications. All of these tasks are doable, and they will enhance security for us all.

Norway joins others in calling for the immediate commencement of FMCT negotiations. At the same time we clearly need to accelerate the process of bringing stocks of fissile materials under IAEA safeguards. In this respect we welcome the US and Russian agreement on disposition of plutonium and encourage further steps in this field.

Additionally, Norway would like to see additional steps towards bringing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty into force. It would be an essential step toward a world without nuclear weapons. Like others, Norway welcomes the recent ratifications of the treaty, including the one by the Annex II country Indonesia.

Mr. Chair

There is also a need to ensure that our verification systems are robust enough to provide the necessary confidence in the integrity of both non-proliferation and disarmament processes, based on the principles of verifiability, irreversibility and transparency. We believe the IAEA has an important role to play in this respect and will work to strengthen its capacities.

Bilaterally, The United Kingdom and Norway have cooperated at expert level for a number of years to develop technology and procedures to verify nuclear disarmament and explore possible solutions to the technical and procedural challenges in this regard. An important part of this work is to demonstrate that Nuclear Weapon State and Non-Nuclear Weapon State collaboration in nuclear disarmament verification is both possible and necessary.

Finally Mr. Chair,

We must conclude yet again that the current state of our multilateral disarmament instruments is a challenge to us all. They are not open to all interested countries and relevant stakeholders, they are completely tied up in procedural knots, and they do not work.
The responsibility and right to contribute to the development of new ideas and approaches rests with all member states of the General Assembly, and are clearly needed if we are to achieve our common goal of a world without nuclear weapons. This is why Norway joins other Member States in calling for a resolution at this year’s session of the First Committee that will enable us to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations by exploring possible new ways to do so. We’ve got to try.

There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament is not easy and requires hard work. That is why we cannot allow the current impasse in the machinery to prevail. And just as nuclear weapons concern us all, so the responsibility to work for a world without nuclear weapons rests with all UN Member states.

Thank you!