Thank you Mr Chairman,

I would like to thank Piet de Klerk for his presentation which highlighted both the national policy on nuclear weapons of the Netherlands and the International Partnership NDV. Sweden is an active member of the IPNDV and believes that it is a necessary component in our work to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. It is crucial when implementing Article VI of the NPT and will both help and reinforce work on additional legal instruments for the prohibition and the elimination of nuclear weapons that are needed to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world. There is no contradiction between the work of the IPNDV and the work on additional legal measures that we consider in other sessions of the OEWG. Instead, they are mutually reinforcing processes.

We appreciate that Costa Rica and Malaysia in their working paper “Empirical analysis...” identify the development of verification capacity as one of the measures that could be immediately pursued since it enjoys the support of, and is not blocked by, nuclear armed states.

Verification is an endeavour that needs to be pursued by countries with and without nuclear weapons alike. It has been key for the credibility of the IAEA and the CTBTO that its technical staff or inspectors come from different corners of the world. And it is key for the credibility of the CTBTO that non-nuclear weapon states contribute with monitoring technologies and techniques. Sweden for example has developed the noble gas detection system SAUNA which is crucial for detecting radioactivity emanating from underground nuclear explosions. Sweden is one of three countries in the world that masters this technology, the other two being nuclear weapon states.

Sweden participates with technical expertise in all the working groups of the IPNDV and encourage more countries from nuclear-weapon-free zones to participate in this work. Experts from the Swedish Defense Research Agency (FOI) co-chair working group 3 on technical solutions together with experts from the United States. This WG focuses on finding technical solutions for verifying the dismantlement of nuclear warheads. It presently works on assessing applicable technologies that could be used during different stages of dismantlement as well as on how these different technologies can reinforce one another and increase the level of confidence that the dismantled warhead indeed can be accounted for in an applicable disarmament treaty. The initial findings will be presented at the next plenary meeting of the IPNDV in Tokyo on 28 – 30 June.

Mr Chairman,

It is important to Sweden that the proliferation and security concerns connected to any disarmament verification process are handled; however, it is equally important that these
concerns not be exaggerated and used to hamper actual progress on verification, which sometimes has been done.

The achievement of the CTBT provides an example of a verification process that was developed with a particular end scenario in mind, the ban on nuclear explosions. The Group of Scientific Experts that was set up in 1982, under Swedish chairmanship, to develop the verification system for a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing that yet didn’t exist, did so with the scenario in mind that all nuclear explosions would be banned and that violations would be detectable. The GSE never lost sight of this goal. Their elaboration of the verification system also helped facilitate agreement on the necessity to agree on a norm to ban nuclear explosions and also helped speed up Treaty negotiations and the conclusion of the actual treaty once negotiations commenced in the mid-1990s.

It is equally important not to lose sight of the goal of the IPNDV which is to verify the total elimination of nuclear weapons and to maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world once it has been achieved. Verification does not take place in a vacuum.

Mr Chairman,

I’d like to express our support for the working paper put forward by Japan and Kazakhstan on the CTBT. We support its proposal on the importance of nuclear armed states reiterating and strengthening all existing moratoria on nuclear explosions and refraining from any action or activity that could undermine the object and the purpose of the treaty. It is equally crucial to emphasize that it is the International Monitoring System under the CTBT that is the sole, effective regime for the detection of nuclear explosions and that it is this system that should be maintained and enhanced. This needs to be reflected properly in the chair’s outcome paper.

Let me also take the opportunity to comment briefly on other measures proposed under this heading. In particular, my delegation wishes to thank Japan for its diligent and unrelenting work over the years in trying to persuade the nuclear weapon states to commit to more comprehensive obligations as regards to transparency and reporting. We support the specific proposal made by Japan in its working paper “Effective measures” to create a reporting mechanism for all countries that possess nuclear weapons within the framework of the UN, with specific reporting requirements.

We are also glad that the specific proposal made by SIPRI’s Tariq Rauf in the February session on the importance of non-nuclear-weapon states making use of already available information on nuclear weapons and related issue in disarmament processes has been included in the chair’s synthesis paper. We hope that we will see this proposal operationalized in the UNGA in the fall and in the NPT Review process starting next spring.

Finally, let me underline that from the Swedish perspective, the IPNDV is an important but not the only tool on the table in this OEWG that countries with nuclear weapons can embrace right now. There are many tools on the table that the nuclear armed states could embrace now if they showed the necessary political will. It is also important to underline that they also have an obligation to do so, according to their obligations and commitments made in the NPT.
Thank you.