Mr. Chairman,

I am taking the floor to second the statement made by Ambassador John Quinn of Australia, who has introduced a joint working paper entitled “A Progressive Approach to a World Free of Nuclear Weapons,” which includes legal effective measures. I would like to underline a couple of points in this paper from our national perspective.

First, this working paper provides a concrete roadmap with a clear vision towards a world free of nuclear weapons. This paper illustrates how individual nuclear disarmament measures perform their roles to achieve our shared goal. Effective measures, which should be promptly undertaken, are the combination of both practical and legal measures towards reaching minimization points of nuclear weapons. After reaching this point, with a strict international verification regime, it would be necessary to give further thought to legal measures as a final building block. That might be a plurilateral nuclear elimination treaty among nuclear weapon possessors, a NWC, or others.

Second, this working paper stresses the importance of confidence-building among the countries concerned and of addressing regional issues as well. Given the current severe international security situation, progress in nuclear disarmament requires the advancement of confidence building as a priority, while also addressing regional issues in a correct manner. We believe that easing tension in regions will definitely contribute to reducing the incentive for or motivation of possessing nuclear weapons.
Mr. Chairman,

Next, I would like to make a brief comment about the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

During the previous sessions, an argument was put forward that a negotiation on prohibition of nuclear weapons should start sooner rather than later. We are concerned about an immediate negotiation for the prohibition of nuclear weapons without considering the current security situation and without the participation of NWS since that would bring further divisiveness not only between NWS and NNWS, but also among NNWS. That could widen the gap, and cement the current stagnation of nuclear disarmament. We are very concerned about such fragmentation among our disarmament community which would undermine the process of the next NPT review cycle towards 2020.

Mr. Chairman

This is a real political concern which the international community has to address.

Furthermore, a ban treaty formulated by a limited number of countries may undermine the existing legal framework, including the NPT. For instance, given the frustration prevailing among some Member States to the NPT, we cannot exclude the possibility that such a treaty may be formulated as posing less restrictive non-proliferation obligations compared to those under the NPT. Then, there is a possibility that countries leave the NPT regime and enter the new treaty. It may erode the international legal norm on nuclear non-proliferation. Therefore, unless there is a guarantee of avoiding such a risk, we must be extremely cautious about an immediate negotiation of ban treaty.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.