Statement by H.E. Mr. Markku Reimaa  
on behalf of Finland and Sweden  
on Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons  
at the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference  
of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons  
on April 11, 2002 in New York

Mr Chairman,

I am very pleased to take the floor today on behalf of the delegations of Sweden and Finland on non-strategic nuclear weapons.

First let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, for the most efficient way you are conducting our work. The general debate has already shown that we have a challenging task before us to start preparing the road to the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The 2000 Review Conference results were most encouraging and also opened ways to new approaches. Now it is time to start considering them jointly. This is the case in particular concerning the question of non-strategic nuclear weapons.

We appreciate the constructive way in which the discussion has started. It is not necessary for me to repeat here what our Spanish colleague stated on behalf of the European Union on Monday, April 8th. Let me just add the voice of our delegations in welcoming the many useful and interesting interventions on this issue. They show that the new results achieved at the NPT Review Conference 2000 have been concrete and very timely.

In the 2000 NPT Final Document, the NWS made the commitment to further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part on the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process. The implementation of this commitment should be a priority.

We welcome the German views in their working paper presented to us today, where important questions were pointed out, e.g. the reporting on the implementation of and the formalisation and codification of the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of 1991/1992, as well as the negotiations on non-strategic nuclear weapons in order to close the existing loopholes in the nuclear disarmament process.

Those parties, which have specific obligations, should take appropriate and urgent action to achieve the objectives based on the NPT Conference in 2000 and bilateral declarations.

Transparency, irreversibility, reduction of operational status and confidence-building measures are necessary elements in this regard. Non-strategic weapons are of concern to our countries and people. Our strong wish is to see negotiations on a formal and legally binding verifiable agreement as soon as possible.

We are living in a new security environment. It is not only crucial to remember the importance of non-strategic nuclear weapons in our deliberations, it is an obligation to work towards the further progress on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects in order to promote international stability.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.