STATEMENT
by Ambassador NGUYEN THANH CHAU
Head of the Delegation of Vietnam at the First Session
of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Conference of the State Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
(New York, 9th April, 2002)

Mr. President,

It is my great pleasure to see you, distinguished representative of Sweden, a country well known for its total dedication to disarmament and with which Vietnam has enjoyed good relations presiding over the First Session of the Preparatory Committee. I am confident that with your ample diplomatic skills and experiences, you will lead this important Session to successes.

In the same vein, I wish join others to commend UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala whose Alan Cranston Peace Award is just another recognition for the tireless efforts he has made in the field.

Mr President,

My delegation is fully associated with the views expressed by previous speakers, particularly the one by the Indonesian Ambassador on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. It is our opinion that this PrepCom session is again very important as it provides an opportunity for each member state to review how far it
has carried out the agreements reached in 1995 and the NPT Review Conference in the year 2000, and makes recommendations in preparation for the NPT Review Conference in the year 2005.

The Review Conference held here in the year 2000 with the participation of 187 States Members to the Treaty was an important event vis-a-vis nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The final document adopted by consensus once again testified to the fact that the enhancement of the nuclear non-proliferation regime required international stability and could not be detached from the prevention of nuclear war and nuclear disarmament.

The last two years have witnessed a number of events that adversely affected the goals set forth at the 2000 Review Conference. The horrendous terrorist attacks on September 11 gave rise to greater concerns about possible acquisition by the terrorist groups of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, the instances of using or threatening to use force at variance with international law have pushed tensions to the flare-ups of bloody conflicts in a number of regions. The decision to abrogate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) went against the principle of irreversibility of nuclear disarmament agreements, leaving disarmament in a vacuum and could potentially lead to a renewed arms race not only on earth but also in outer space. Then the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) by a Nuclear-Weapon-State grossly deviates from the security assurances under the NPT, thus threatening not only those countries tentatively listed, but endangering other countries as well.

Mr. President,

The NPT is the milestone on the path to total nuclear disarmament. All States Parties to the Treaty, especially the five Nuclear States must reaffirm their unequivocal commitments and fulfill their obligations under the said Treaty. It is regrettable, however, that little progress has been made in nuclear disarmament over the last years, and many provisions of the Final Document have not been met. In view of recent developments, it is now urgent for us all to find out the effective measures to prevent the nuclear
proliferation and to promote disarmament. The Nuclear Weapon States should strictly undertake their responsibilities to stop the improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery system, and as an interim measures, to de-alert and de-activate them and gradually reduce them. They must also guarantee not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devises, or in any way assist and/or encourage any nuclear weapon states to manufacture nuclear weapons as well as nuclear explosive devises. Along this line, my delegation believes that the IAEA with its safeguard monitoring system will play an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty.

Mr President,

The Government of Vietnam persistently supports the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones as established under the various international treaties, considering them to have a significant role toward achieving regional as well as global peace and security. In this spirit, Vietnam acceded in 1995 to the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ) which has entered into force since 1997. We earnestly urge the NWS to ratify the Protocol under it as soon as possible so as to further contributing to the enhancement of peace and security in the Southeast Asia region and the world over.

Mr. President,

We are heartened by the agreement between some leading Nuclear Weapon States to reduce their nuclear war-heads. But that is not enough to dispel our greater concerns for those fearsome developments around the world today in disarmament. My delegation believes that it is an urgent need for this session to come up with concrete conclusions to rectify the situation, thereby seriously contributing to the full implementation of the NPT.

Thank you Mr. President./.