Mr. Chairman,

During the general debate, many States Parties emphasized and focused their attention on the lack of progress towards achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons. My delegation fully shares this concern, as Article VI and the consensus agreement reached at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conference remain largely unimplemented. This has certainly been a perennial source of concern as it impinges upon the vital security interests of a vast majority of States Parties to the Treaty.

We have also witnessed a number of developments that are incompatible with the spirit and letter of the Treaty. These include the reaffirmation of the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies, their qualitative improvements, reassertion of strategic doctrines and new targeting options which have cast doubt on nuclear disarmament.

On this specific issue, it should be borne in mind that one of the objectives of the Treaty is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It is undeniable that the 1995 Review and Extension Conference extended the NPT indefinitely, but it should be underlined that it does not equate the indefinite possession by the nuclear weapon states to retain their stockpiles. Thus, all nuclear-weapon states are obligated to end the production of nuclear weapons and their components, dismantle existing nuclear weapons and their means of delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

Some of the nuclear weapon states, pointed to bilateral and unilateral reductions as evidence of their good faith efforts to comply with their obligations under the Treaty. Although these undertakings are welcome, unfortunately, we

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still have to see whether they will sincerely carry them out in the near future. Moreover, what is lacking is transparency and accountability in their nuclear programs and the need to uphold the principle of irreversibility in nuclear disarmament.

Progress in the area of nuclear disarmament is far from being favorable for a successful outcome of the review process. There have been some mitigating developments in this direction which include, among others, negligence and disregard of the commitment to uphold the principles and objectives of nuclear disarmament - and in some cases backsliding - in the implementation of the "3 practical steps", and the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament.

In this context, we also note with deep concern that the nuclear-weapon states tend to be motivated by a desire to avoid any deliberation from focusing on the obligations under Article VI as well as implementation of commitments made in 1995 and 2000 to advance systematically and progressively towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Finally, it bears reiteration that non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually interdependent and reinforcing. The fulfillment of both these objectives should be carried out through a matching series of undertakings by both nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states in a balanced manner. Only with serious and full implementation of these two pillars can their objectives be achieved.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.