Thank you Mr. Chairman,

In looking at other provisions of the Treaty, we should look closely at ways to improve the functioning of the NPT, most notably through establishing a mechanism whereby States Parties can meet collectively to discuss pressing issues. At present we lack the ability to send clear messages and take decisions, in a timely fashion, on subjects of critical importance to the NPT. Rather, we must wait until the quinquennial review for collective action, although even then – as we saw in 2005 – these subjects may not be adequately addressed. If States Parties can react more rapidly to challenges posed to the Treaty, it will bolster the credibility of the NPT and create additional disincentives for states to violate its norms and provisions.

**Institutional Reform:**

At the 2005 Review Conference, Canada submitted a working paper (NPT.CONF2005.WP39) that calls for a series of institutional reforms beginning with the establishment of a small standing bureau of the NPT. This bureau would convene extraordinary sessions in the event a State Party submits a notification of intent to withdraw from the treaty, or if other situations arise that threaten the integrity or viability of the NPT. Its members would also act as stewards of the Treaty and provide much-needed continuity throughout the review cycle. They could also interact with other diplomatic entities or processes relevant to the Treaty’s purposes (e.g. with respect to the Six-Party Talks on the DPRK).

Yesterday, Indonesia on behalf of the NAM called for a standing committee, comprised of the bureau of the Review Conference, to conduct follow-up intersessionally on implementation of the Middle East resolution. We too see benefit in some form of standing bureau that could represent the NPT membership in the period between Review Conferences. In our opinion however such a bureau should be concerned with the Treaty as a whole and the implementation of all its earlier agreements issuing from the review process, rather than focusing exclusively on one element.

The Canadian working paper also recommends the convening of annual meetings of the NPT, which could consider and decide on any issues covered by the Treaty. This would ensure an annual authoritative meeting of the NPT membership and bring our Treaty in line with contemporary practice of the other major WMD-related conventions. Establishing annual meetings of States Parties would also allow for a fixed agenda to be followed at each meeting, sparing us all from the ordeal that has become the NPT agenda approval process. The working paper demonstrates how annual one-week meetings could be organized without an increase in the overall time envelope allotted for the NPT review.
cycle while still leaving sufficient space for necessary preparatory work to be undertaken in the two years preceding a Review Conference.

Other elements espoused by the paper include the importance of annual reporting by States Parties on their implementation of the Treaty and a fuller participation of civil society in NPT meetings. These contributions, taken together, would lead to a major increase in accountability and transparency within the NPT. We look forward to further discussion of these ideas here and in the future, leading, we would hope, to appropriate action being taken at the 2010 Review Conference.

**Article X and withdrawal:**

Recent events have underlined the necessity to address the issue of Article X and withdrawal during this NPT review cycle in order to establish a common understanding before we are faced with any new challenges on this front. In this respect, there are a few basic principles upon which it is crucial that the PrepCom agree:

1) No state should be allowed to withdraw from the NPT in a way that enables it to retain the fruits of its adherence to the Treaty while abandoning its obligations:

2) A State Party needs to be in compliance with its NPT obligations prior to exercising its right to withdraw under Article X; and

3) Withdrawal from the NPT does not absolve a State from responsibility for violations committed while a party to the NPT.

In conclusion, we reiterate the point made in Canada’s working paper noted above, that any notification of intent to withdraw from the NPT should be considered as an extraordinary situation that threatens the integrity and viability of the treaty, and which merits a commensurate response.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.