Mr. Chairman,

I hope you will permit me to begin by expressing the United States' disappointment that because of one delegation's obstruction of proceedings here for several days, it is only now that we are all in a position to begin structured substantive debate of the sort that the NPT regime so sorely needs in order to meet the challenges it faces—most of all the challenge presented by noncompliance with the Treaty's core of nonproliferation obligations. It has also been a disappointment that it is only now that it is possible to begin formal discussions of the issues of disarmament that are of such great importance to all States Party, and to discuss regional issues, including the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, how to expand peaceful international nuclear cooperation, and how best to deter violators of the Treaty from withdrawing from it. Thankfully, however, we are now at the point where such lamentably delayed discussions can begin.

I am pleased, therefore, to be able to say a few words on the subject of disarmament. The United States has gone to great lengths to engage in open, honest, and far-reaching dialogue on this subject at this meeting. We have spoken with great candor and in unprecedented detail about the subject for months in preparation for this meeting. We have prepared groundbreaking papers on disarmament, have made them available to the public many weeks ago, have distributed them widely here, and have submitted them as working papers to the Secretariat. Last week we also conducted a detailed briefing and discussion with all delegates and NGO representatives who proved willing to join us for this valuable exchange, which lasted for nearly two hours.

In the interest of time, I will not walk now through the details of our exemplary record of compliance with Article VI of the Treaty, or all the aspects of our commitment and progress in contributing to the fulfillment of the objectives of Article VI and the Preamble. I will make available copies of my full remarks later, and I encourage everyone here to carefully study our many papers and detailed materials on this subject. Because we have made such voluminous information available as part of our policy of engagement and dialogue, I will mention only brief highlights here in order not to further
detract from our collective efforts to also discuss matters such as regional issues, including the Middle East and how to expand peaceful nuclear cooperation.

The U.S. Record

Mr. Chairman,

The United States has made clear its commitment to nuclear disarmament and to the goal of general and complete disarmament, since long before the NPT was adopted. The extraordinary progress it has made toward the goal of nuclear disarmament, particularly in recent years, gives the United States an unsurpassed record in this regard.

Reducing the Stockpile

The United States has made extraordinary progress in reducing its nuclear stockpile, dismantling more than 13,000 nuclear weapons since 1988, including more than 3,000 non-strategic nuclear weapons. The United States is now in the process of drawing down its operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 by the year 2012 under the Moscow Treaty. As of December 31, 2006, the United States had 3,696 operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads, which is significantly lower by 40 per cent than the total number of attributed nuclear warheads permitted under START. When this Moscow Treaty process is complete, the United States will have removed approximately 80 per cent of the number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed in 1991. The United States dismantled its last nuclear artillery shell in 2003, and the last W-56 warhead for the Minuteman II intercontinental ballistic missile in June 2006. The Bush Administration recently announced that work to dismantle warheads would increase by nearly 50 per cent from Fiscal Year 2006 to Fiscal Year 2007, and if we are able to complete planned improvements at some of the facilities used for these purposes, the rate of dismantlement will increase even further.

Eliminating Delivery Systems

The United States is also reducing nuclear delivery systems. Four Ohio-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines have been taken out of nuclear service and modified for other uses. The B-1 bomber has been removed from a strategic nuclear role. More than 1,000 strategic missiles and bombers, and 450 silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles have been eliminated. And the final MX “Peacekeeper” missile was deactivated in September 2005.

Fissile Material

The United States has not produced highly enriched uranium (HEU) for use in nuclear weapons since 1964, and stopped producing plutonium for nuclear weapons in 1988. In May 2006, the United States tabled in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament the draft text of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT), long an important objective for
many nations, which would ban treaty parties from the further production of such material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The United States has also declared approximately 174 metric tons of HEU and 52 tons of plutonium from its own stockpile to be surplus to national security needs, and placed some of this material under IAEA safeguards. In November 2005, the United States announced that it would remove an additional 200 metric tons of HEU that could be used in U.S. nuclear warheads, enough material, based on IAEA figures, to make 8,000 nuclear weapons.

Reducing Reliance on Nuclear Weapons

As announced in the Nuclear Posture Review of 2001, strategic deterrence for the United States no longer relies exclusively on nuclear weapons. Instead, the United States relies increasingly on a combination of nuclear and non-nuclear offensive strike capabilities, defenses (including ballistic missile defenses), and a robust and responsive industrial infrastructure. We are working hard to develop improved means by which to meet our deterrent needs in non-nuclear, non-WMD ways.

Helping Russia Disarm

Through various cooperative threat reduction initiatives, the United States and Russia have taken many bilateral steps that support achieving the goals of Article VI and the Preamble. Agreements between our two countries facilitate the shutdown of Russia’s last three plutonium-production reactors, security has been upgraded at many Russian locations where weaponsusable material and nuclear weapons are stored, and the United States is providing funding to redirect the efforts of thousands of former Soviet nuclear weapons scientists to peaceful commercial work. The HEU Purchase Agreement provides for U.S.-Russian cooperation to down-blend 500 metric tons of HEU from dismantled Russian nuclear weapons – half of which has already been down-blended. Ten percent of the electricity consumed by the U.S. population is generated by uranium down-blended from HEU previously in Russian military stocks under the HEU Agreement. The United States and the Russian Federation are also cooperating on a program to turn 68 metric tons of former nuclear weapons plutonium (34 of which is from Russia) into forms unusable in nuclear weapons. Based on IAEA significant quantity figures, various U.S.-Russian initiatives should account for enough nuclear material to make 24,500 nuclear weapons. We and our Russian colleagues have, so to speak, been making extraordinary progress in beating swords into ploughshares.

Improving the U.S.-Russia Strategic Relationship

The United States and Russia are also currently engaged in a broad-ranging strategic security dialogue designed to work out the nature of their strategic relationship after the expiration of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in 2009. The United States hopes to ensure that transparency and confidence-building measures remain an enduring part of the U.S.-Russia relationship. The changes in our relationship since the height of the Cold War have helped make possible our countries’ dramatic reductions in nuclear armaments, and we hope to ensure that our future relationship sustains this progress.
A Security Environment Conducive to Nuclear Disarmament

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT's Preamble makes clear the desire and objective of all NPT Parties to ease international tensions and strengthen trust to create a new environment in which the elimination of nuclear weapons can be achieved. In such an environment it would no longer be necessary for any state to rely upon nuclear weapons. The United States has begun to consider what the global security environment might have to look like if it were to become possible to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. This list is necessarily speculative and incomplete, but to date the United States has suggested six basic elements.

- First, the nations of the world must make further progress in easing tensions and building trust. This would make it possible for all nations to transcend the competitive military dynamics that have encouraged reliance on nuclear weapons.

- Second, there must be confidence that all states will comply fully with nuclear nonproliferation obligations, including those of the NPT.

- Third, there must be confidence that those who engage in or support illicit weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs are fully and finally out of business. Important steps in this direction would be firmer controls on the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technology, and assurance that no state will allow its territory to provide safe haven for the trafficking of WMD and related materials.

- Fourth, pursuit of non-nuclear WMD programs and their delivery systems must be halted and existing programs terminated.

- Fifth, ways need to be found to meet any deterrent requirements remaining after nuclear disarmament in a non-nuclear, non-WMD fashion.

- Sixth, there would need to be assurance against a violator's "breakout" from a disarmament regime. Would-be violators would have to know that if they were to attempt breakout, they would be unable to realize strategic gains from this step, and that the consequences of such a violation would be unacceptable.

Facilitating Disarmament

Mr. Chairman,

The United States has also offered a number of suggestions about the sorts of measures that might help move the world in the direction of disarmament. Because not
every priority identified today will necessarily be appropriate tomorrow, all States Party to the NPT should continuously evaluate developments and circumstances to ensure that disarmament policy priorities reflect the needs of a changing world. In the papers we have circulated, the United States suggests several elements that would help create an environment more conducive to disarmament. This is a complex and sensitive issue, as we all know and we urge all delegates to consult these materials and read them closely. Let me suggest a representative sampling of those elements:

- Developing and implementing transparency and confidence-building measures in the strategic relationships among NPT nuclear weapon states (NWS) in order to facilitate lessening of tension and strengthening of trust.

- Reduction by the NWS of nuclear weapon stockpiles to the lowest possible level consistent with maintenance of their national security and that of their allies.

- Strict compliance by all states with nonproliferation obligations as a means of preventing regional nuclear arms races.

- Observance of a voluntary moratorium on explosive nuclear testing, and effective steps by states possessing nuclear weapons to maximize the safety and security of nuclear weapons in their stockpiles.

- Achievement of a normative FMCT that would prohibit production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and implementation of moratoria on production of such material pending entry into force of an FMCT.

- Prevention by all NPT States Parties of unauthorized transfers of or access to, nuclear weapons-related knowledge, technology, or weapons-usable fissile material. This includes full implementation of UN Security Council 1540 and of obligations under the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 amendment.

- Deployment of ballistic missile and other defenses that can reduce the perceived benefits to additional states of engaging in nuclear weapons development and increase the international community’s confidence that any would-be violators of an eventual ban on nuclear weapons would have difficulty realizing strategic gains from such a violation.

- Continuing efforts by all states to create an environment that promotes universal adherence to the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

Disarmament deserves serious attention during the NPT review cycle. Approaching disarmament seriously means discussing Article VI compliance with a
clear-eyed understanding of what the relevant provisions of the NPT mean, and how the Treaty came to be drafted as it was. It means acknowledging the facts with respect to steps that have already been taken to achieve the goals of the Preamble and Article VI. and understanding the complexities and implications of those that remain to be taken. And it means giving sustained attention to the challenges of creating a security environment in which it will become a realistic possibility to eliminate nuclear weapons entirely.

The United States has an outstanding and unequalled record of compliance with NPT disarmament obligations, a steadfast commitment to achieving the goals of the Treaty, and a vision for how the world can move toward fulfilling these aspirations. The United States invites all States Parties to the NPT to approach disarmament with similar seriousness.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.