Mr. Chairman,

My delegation aligns with the statement held by Germany on behalf of the European Union. In addition, we have subscribed to a number of working papers. I shall therefore limit myself to a few items of particular importance to my country.

(Safeguards)

The comprehensive safeguards agreement was for a long time the standard for meeting the requirements of Art. III.1 of the NPT. Not only was it the only available standard, it was also perceived as meeting the Treaty's security requirements.

However, the international Community found out to its shock that the system did not enable the IAEA to detect clandestine nuclear activities. In 1995, the IAEA Board of Governors decided that “the safeguards system (...) should be designed to provide for verification by the Agency of the correctness and completeness of States' declarations, so that there is credible assurance of the non-diversion of nuclear material from declared activities and of the absence of undeclared nuclear activities.”

New elements were therefore added to the NPT safeguards system, some of which required additional legal authority to be given to the IAEA. The result was the creation of the Model Additional Protocol in 1997.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference welcomed the Model Additional Protocol in the context of the strengthening of safeguards called for in the 1995 Decision on Principles and Objectives, paragraph 11. The Conference recognised that the original framework of comprehensive safeguards had provided only a "limited level of assurance" and that the Additional Protocol would "provide, in an effective and efficient manner, increased confidence (..).”

Mr. Chairman,
There is and can only be one safeguards system for NPT purposes, which turned out to be a dynamic, living system, subject to improvement where necessary. Parties to the NPT have to adapt their safeguards agreements with the IAEA to keep them in line with the current safeguards system, of which the AP is an integral part.

(Export Controls)

Nuclear export controls are a sovereign right and an obligation for each State party to the NPT. Still, they have been met with a lot of reluctance by many developing States who perceive them as being too stringent, lacking uniformity, transparency and predictability, and hampering the development of nuclear energy.

The creation of an internationally co-ordinated, legally binding common standard has been called for, while the existing export control regimes are regarded with a certain level of mistrust. While harmonisation and predictability of export controls is a legitimate demand, it must also be borne in mind that such an export control standard would have to be high enough to fully meet supplier states' security needs. The existing export control guidelines, developed originally by the Zangger Committee and later on further elaborated and expanded by the Nuclear Suppliers Group, provide valuable guidance for such a standard.

The work of the Zangger Committee has been recognised and welcomed in NPT Review Conferences as an informal, technical group of countries regularly involved in nuclear trade, which functions as a facilitator in the interpretation of the export control provisions of Art. III.2 of the Treaty. States parties have been urged to base their export control policies on the Committee's interpretations. My delegation hopes that the important work of the Zangger Committee will again be recognized and confirmed in this review cycle.

The 1995 Review and Extension Conference agreed to make „full-scope safeguards” the condition for nuclear supplies. This standard was reaffirmed in 2000 and has become an important part of our common understanding of the provisions of the NPT. But since then, the standard has evolved further. With the AP now being part of the safeguards system according to Art. III.1 of the Treaty, also the export control provision in Art. III.2 has to be read as referring to the same standard. We expect that
the 2010 Review Conference will be able to agree to make AP a condition for future nuclear supply

(Multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle)

Another, complementary, not alternative, way forward to further our non-proliferation goal and increase confidence between NPT States parties has been outlined by Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik in her opening statement to this PrepCom meeting: the creation of an international mechanism, with a two-track-approach:

1. Optimize international transparency: All States should declare to the IAEA and to each other all their existing nuclear programmes and future development plans.

2. In parallel, a second track should enable equal access to and control of the most sensitive technologies of the nuclear fuel cycle. This could be achieved by placing all transactions regarding nuclear fuel under the auspices of a Nuclear Fuel Bank.

We have issued a non-paper that outlines our approach, which is available in all languages (Document NPT/CONF.2010/PC.I/7). We would appreciate any comments and we look forward to discussing this issue with interested States.

Mr. Chairman,

In concluding I wish to assure you once more that Austria will continue to contribute constructively to a successful outcome of this Preparatory Committee Meeting.