Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on assuming this important office. I am confident that under your able leadership the First session of the Preparatory Committee will be a success story. Please be assured of Ukraine’s full support in your endeavors.

Distinguished delegates,

I am addressing the session as the representative of a state which 18 years ago made unprecedented step and voluntarily renounced its inherited nuclear arsenal – the world’s third largest at the time. In 1994 Ukraine joined the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon state and since then has been consistently undertaking steps aimed at making nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation work. We remain strongly convinced that nuclear weapons do not strengthen security, but rather create more tensions and risks for states who strive to acquire them.

It is widely recognized that Ukraine’s action enhanced the NPT regime, had a beneficial impact on international security and strategic stability, and created favorable conditions for further steps to reduce nuclear arsenals.

Our decision, which can serve as an example for the others, has been made with clear understanding that relevant political security assurances, which Ukraine received in 1994 through the Budapest Memorandum, constitute an integral part of our nuclear disarmament move. It is our strong position that the security assurances for the states which renounced their nuclear arsenals, as well as for the states which are non-members of any military alliances, have to be reflected in a legally binding international document. It is also important that the basic right of states to choose for themselves means for providing national security and national interests should be duly taken into account in the process of elaboration of international and regional security structures.

The decisions of the 2010 Washington and 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit have repeatedly underlined the importance of nuclear security as an integral part of the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The same consideration is contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, where the Action 61 of the Recommendations explicitly encourage states concerned, on a voluntary basis, to further minimize highly enriched uranium in civilian stocks and use, where technically and economically feasible.

After careful consideration in Ukraine we became convinced that modern nuclear science can move painlessly towards abolition of the use of highly enriched nuclear materials with making no harm to the research process itself.

In line with our analysis and as the next contribution of Ukraine to the course of non-proliferation and disarmament the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych in 2010 has announced our decision to get rid of all national stocks of highly enriched uranium by 2012, provided there is sufficient international assistance. We have already fulfilled entirely our
pledge and removed all of our HEU stock for its downgrading to the low enriched uranium to be used by the Ukrainian nuclear research facilities. The meaning of our voluntary step is crystal clear – Ukraine remains consistent, predictable and reliable member of international community, makes an active contribution to combating nuclear terrorism and focus its efforts on strengthening the physical protection of nuclear materials. We expect that our example will serve as a pattern for the others. Our decision is also another proof of our commitment to the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1887(2009).

Turning to the Treaty itself, I would like to emphasize that it is not only an essential basis for pursuing nuclear disarmament. It is a mirror of global political reality. For forty years the Treaty has been at the core of international efforts aimed at containing spread of nuclear weapons. Likewise, for forty years states have been taking steps to reach this goal. A lot has been achieved, indeed.

Yet, although it seems that the fear of global nuclear war has receded irrevocably, two major challenges are still in place. First, despite all reduction efforts, existing nuclear arsenals are striking. Second, a number of gaps in the nuclear non-proliferation regime remain. Both pose a threat to world peace and security.

Recent events give us hope that states realize the dramatic importance of these challenges and are committed to address them resolutely. Washington and Seoul Summits on Nuclear Security and the new START Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation are the milestone undertakings, which set the tone for further activities.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine firmly stands for comprehensive disarmament under effective international control. We attach paramount importance to achieving universality of and strict compliance with the NPT. No need to say that the NPT system has been under severe strain in recent years while the International Atomic Energy Agency has been struggling with verification, compliance and enforcement challenges. This Preparatory Committee’s session should pay proper attention to the implementation of non-proliferation commitments. Failure to do so may result in further erosion of the regime and will seriously affect international security.

In 2010 the State parties of the NPT reaffirmed that the IAEA, and in particular its safeguards system, remains an essential tool for the effective implementation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, play an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty and help to create an environment conducive to nuclear co-operation.

According to Article III of the NPT the acceptance of safeguards is of paramount importance in ensuring nuclear non-proliferation and providing effective control over sensitive materials and activities. I believe that an increased number of countries which have brought into force the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol over the past year is a positive sign in development of the culture of non-proliferation.

In this regard, I would like to stress that every country should work hard to receive the broader conclusion by the IAEA on the implementation of the safeguards obligations. In 2010 according to the Safeguards Implementation Report of the IAEA my own country Ukraine has received such a conclusion for the first time. And starting from the 1 May 2012 Ukraine will receive a state level integrated safeguards approach.

Distinguished colleagues,

The Treaty requires a more efficient mechanism of adequate response to today’s challenges. In our view, one of the measures that will strengthen the Treaty is the elaboration of the modalities under which states can implement Article X of the NPT.

Having said this, we would also like to underline the importance of strict compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions on the prevention of black market supply networks, trafficking and acquisition of nuclear materials by non-state actors.
We also underscore the importance of strengthening physical protection of nuclear material and facilities given the increased risk of nuclear terrorism. There is a strong need for adherence to existing legal instruments, especially to the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the amended Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Another important element of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament is the Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty. Ukraine deeply regrets the continuing slow mood of the Conference on Disarmament on this issue.

We also strongly hope that the renewed commitment of key states regarding the ratification of the CTBT will allow us to finally realize the long standing goal of its entry into force.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the outcomes of the High-level meeting “Kyiv Summit on Safe and Innovative Use of Nuclear Energy” held on 26th April 2011 in Ukraine has become the recognition by its participants of the necessity to secure adequate level of nuclear safety and security, as a key priority, throughout each and every stage of nuclear energy production.

Ukraine considers peaceful uses of nuclear energy as an equally important NPT pillar. We underscore the vital need for peaceful nuclear technology for sustainable development of nations, provided that nuclear activities are subject to full scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Given the rising international demand for nuclear energy, we acknowledge a number of initiatives, which can facilitate multilateral solutions for the expanding need for nuclear fuel and services, while minimizing the risk of proliferation. Their proper implementation can provide the interested countries with the necessary back-up mechanisms.

It is along with these lines that we in Ukraine also positively view the establishment of the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank (LEU Bank). This fuel bank is an important contribution to the future equitable and sustainable international nuclear fuel cycle regime.

Finally, talking about the NPT review process itself, it would be relevant, in our view, to evaluate carefully the implementation of the 1995 and 2000 decisions on improving its effectiveness. As of now, we have on the table some very promising proposals to streamline the NPT review process. We fully support these initiatives and urge all delegations to consider them carefully in the coming weeks.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates,

The year 2010 was an important milestone in the NPT review process. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference member states have reaffirmed that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy worldwide.

The results of the 2010 NPT Review Conference backed up with the picture of the failure of previous review cycle sent a clear signal that the credibility of the NPT could be fostered. The consensus outcome of the last NPT Review Conference was a balanced Final Document, which has set a practical agenda with the Action Plan covering all three pillars of the Treaty. The tangible substantive results reached by that Conference on the forward-looking Action Plan proved that co-operative, multilateral non-proliferation efforts could work if there is a necessary political will. We call on all delegations at this session of the Preparatory Committee to pursue this course.

Thank you.