Statement by Ambassador Susan F. Burk
Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation
Department of State
United States of America

Cluster 2 Specific Issue: Regional Issues
Including with Respect to the Middle East and Implementation
Of the 1995 Middle East Resolution

First Session of the Preparatory Committee
2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
May 8, 2012
Mr. Chairman, NPT PrepComs allow NPT Parties to come together and address important regional issues that present challenges to the NPT, and to our collective security. The United States continues to support universal adherence to the Treaty, and we continue to work towards strengthening and upholding it, consistent with the vision President Obama outlined in his April 2009 speech in Prague. The United States delegation spoke this morning about issues regarding the Middle East. I would now like to say a few words about two additional regions of the world, Northeast Asia and South Asia.

NORTHEAST ASIA

Mr. Chairman, the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula remains an essential objective for safeguarding peace and security in Northeast Asia and preserving the integrity of the global nonproliferation regime. The United States has consistently called on North Korea to take concrete steps toward that objective by complying with its international obligations and fulfilling its
commitments. We strongly condemn North Korea’s April 13 launch, which was a violation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874, and contravened the commitments it made during February 23-24 U.S.-DPRK talks in Beijing. By revoking in such short order – by word and deed – its own undertakings, North Korea has demonstrated bad faith and called into serious question its commitment to denuclearization.

North Korea’s continued development of its nuclear program, including its uranium enrichment program, is a matter of serious concern for the international community. These activities are clear violations of the DPRK’s obligations under UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874, and of its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement, and must cease immediately. We urge North Korea to refrain from further provocations, including any nuclear tests, abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, and return, at an early date, to the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

As President Obama has made clear, the United States has no hostile intent toward the DPRK and is prepared to take steps to improve relations. However, as he has emphasized, North Korea must live up to its own commitments, adhere to its international obligations and deal peacefully with its neighbors. The path to
reintegration with the international community and greater security remains open to North Korea, should it choose to uphold — rather than undermine — the global nonproliferation regime, and advance — rather than endanger — international peace and security.

SOUTH ASIA

Permit me, Mr. Chairman, to also say a few words about the current situation in South Asia.

We remain deeply concerned by the dangers posed by nuclear weapons and their delivery systems in South Asia, and we do not believe that these weapons enhance regional security. Consistent with our shared vision of a world without nuclear weapons, the United States has repeatedly called on India and Pakistan to restrain their nuclear and missile programs; end the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons; and support the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. In that regard, it is with concern and deep disappointment that we note Pakistan’s reluctance to support the start of such negotiations.
We also welcome further trust- and confidence-building between these nuclear-armed states, and hope the countries involved in the region will continue to find ways to reduce regional tensions and diminish the risk that nuclear weapons could be used, either intentionally or accidentally, in a crisis.

We furthermore continue to encourage both India and Pakistan to play a positive role in the global nonproliferation community and take steps to prevent proliferation, including bringing their strategic trade controls in line with the guidelines of the multilateral supplier regimes, and we support, in a phased manner, India's goal of joining the four multilateral export control regimes.

Finally, let me stress that we remain cognizant of our nonproliferation commitments and objectives when considering how to conduct our bilateral relations with any country. Our activities with both India and Pakistan continue to be consistent with our NPT obligations and with our commitment as members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

CONCLUSION

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The United States remains committed to working with all countries in a concerted effort to resolve these important regional
challenges, in order to uphold the integrity and credibility of the global nuclear nonproliferation regime.