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Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the
State Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Cluster III issues

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Mr Chairman,

Since this is the first time Hungary takes the floor during the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee let me begin by warmly congratulating you on your election and assuring you of our full support. Hungary associates itself with the statements of the European Union, the Statement of the Vienna Group of 10 delivered by Australia and the Statement on the Importance of Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education delivered by Japan.

Allow me to start by touching upon two international treaties of key importance and relevance to our work though strictly speaking they are not Cluster III issues. First, a treaty that does not exist yet. We are convinced that a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices would be a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and negotiations on such a treaty should begin without any further delay. We hope that the deliberations in the Group of Governmental Experts to be set up in 2014 will result in recommendations that will pave the way for the early conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. Hungary will submit its views on the various aspects of an FMCT to the UN Secretary General, as a contribution to the development of a common understanding in the lead-up to the GGE process.

Second, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the entry into force of which would also significantly contribute to alleviating many of today’s concerns. Given the number of States Signatories, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty represents a nearly universal norm. Nevertheless, after 15 years, the entry into force of the Treaty still remains a key element of our endeavours. This has motivated us to express our readiness to perform the duties of one of the two Article XIV co-ordinators between 2013-15.

Turning to Cluster III issues I would like to emphasise that Hungary acknowledges the right of all states to benefit from the peaceful use of nuclear energy, provided that adherence to and compliance with NPT non-proliferation and verification requirements are upheld. That is why we put special emphasis on the Third Part of the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference, which addresses the safe and secure development of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technical co-operation programmes of the IAEA.
Hungary is a country with an active peaceful nuclear program and has concrete plans to further expand it and related capacities as well. Last year, following a parliamentary decision on the construction of two new units at the Paks Nuclear Power Plant the Hungarian Government established a Commission to accelerate the preparatory work of the construction. Last December the licence for the extension of the operating lifetime of Paks NPP’s first unit for an additional 20-year period was also issued.

Hungary applies the IAEA safety standards, which provide a complex system of fundamental principles, requirements and guides for guaranteeing nuclear safety. We have a keen interest in ensuring that all actors maintain or work towards the highest possible standards in all aspects of nuclear energy. These high standards, which we are fully committed to, can only be maintained by ensuring the highest level of nuclear safety worldwide.

We are therefore ready to provide assistance and cooperate with interested partners. We note with satisfaction the interest expressed by a number of states in the Hungarian experience and know-how in the area of NPP maintenance.

We believe that a highly professional staff of maintenance and operation experts at all levels is a key to the safe and reliable operation of nuclear power plants all over the world. In an effort to contribute to this generally recognised goal, last year we started a training programme with more than 100 participants from Vietnam. The programme includes a comprehensive training course on the safe operation of a (new) NPP.

We also organised a practical training course for Iranian NPP operators last November. The workshop was carried out under IAEA’s TC Project for Iran, and was approved by the Board of Governors in 2011. The Paks Maintenance and Training Centre was selected by the IAEA for holding this training to contribute to the safe operation of the Bushehr NPP.

High quality nuclear education and awareness raising are also a key requirement in the field of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear safety. Despite the fact that there is a vast amount of literature covering these issues, little has been published in Hungarian. In order to bring these topics more accessible and closer to the general public and students, a comprehensive non-proliferation handbook in Hungarian language will be published this summer.

It is essential to create synergies between the interlinked areas of nuclear safety and security. Therefore, we commend the initiative of IAEA Director General Amano, to organize an International Conference on Nuclear Security: “Enhancing Global Efforts” in Vienna between 1 and 5 July this summer. The conference aims at bringing about practical results that would also serve as a significant contribution to the IAEA’s 2014-2017 Nuclear Security Plan. Let me take this opportunity to underline the importance of the ministerial segment of the conference. The ministerial declaration to be issued will give us an opportunity to assess the current situation, and to provide a vision for the future in the field of nuclear security. Therefore, it is a particular honour for us that the Foreign Minister of Hungary will be chairing this conference. This event is open to all States and we would like to encourage all State Parties to take part at ministerial level, which would send a strong political message concerning the importance attached to nuclear security.