Opening statement by H.E. Mr. Cornel Feruta, Chairman of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Geneva, 22 April 2013

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As you all know, I have conducted extensive consultations before this session. Over the last 4 months, I engaged intensively with States Parties, NGOs, academia, here in Geneva, but also in New York, Vienna and in different conferences. I am grateful to all of you for supporting this effort and assisting me to accomplish an important objective, namely assessing the context for this important session, and most importantly identifying the challenges ahead.

It is unanimously acknowledged that the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime; it is an essential instrument of our collective security. The three interconnected pillars of the Treaty continue to play an essential role for preserving and strengthening the international peace and security.

This session comes at the mid-point in the 2015 NPT review process. At this stage, we are at the optimal juncture to look both in retrospect and forward in our current cycle. As we look forward to commence our work during the next 10 days, we need to ensure that we set the context of today’s debates correctly and with a clear sense of realism. Our work in this regard rests on the solid foundation reflected in the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions – the so-called Action Plan – adopted by consensus at the 2010 Review Conference. We are now three years down the road from that auspicious development. At the same time, we are 2 years away from the next Review Conference in 2015.
It is my hope that in our debates over the next two weeks, the work of States Parties will move from reaffirmation of their joint undertakings to an effective evaluation of the accomplishments – or setbacks – we have experienced to date. However, upholding the credibility and relevance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is a shared responsibility; further engagement is needed in order to continue to achieve concrete results.

In taking stock of the developments since the last PrepCom, I hope that all delegations will use this opportunity to continue their dialogue constructively and work collectively to identify areas in which further progress is needed.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen

I wish to recall that the primary task of the Preparatory Committee is to consider principles, objectives and ways to promote the full implementation of the Treaty and its universality. We also need to make the necessary procedural preparations for the 2015 Review Conference.

It is natural that States Parties echo the lofty expectations they have from the review process. As the Chairperson of this session, I will continue the effort to facilitate a positive discussion on how to carry forward our shared goals.

Toward this end, I look forward to receiving your support and cooperation as we embark on what I hope to be a fruitful session devoted to the substance of the issues at hand. My encouragement to all of us would be that while we address the challenges ahead, we preserve what has been achieved so far and strengthen the NPT regime. The indicative timetable we have in front of us will be a good guide in this regard.

I have defined the preparatory phase of this session in three parts: the first was to diagnose the context and challenges; the second involves debates – and we are still in this phase; the third one is delivering – and that’s what’s expected from us at the end of the session. I will continue to listen to you. At the same time, I encourage all States Parties to also listen one to
another. I know there are complex and sensitive issues to be tackled, but I also know they can be addressed in a constructive and open manner and as Chair I will do whatever it takes to ensure a fair and open debate of all of them.

At the end of my statement, I would like to reiterate what I conveyed throughout my pre-session consultations: I continue to promote the open eye, open ear and open door policy. Any delegation wishing to approach me is encouraged to do so. It is worth investing energy in any effort that would facilitate a good understanding and build trust. Therefore, throughout this period, I continue to be available and at your disposal.

Thank you.