Introduction
by Ray Acheson

Thank you, Ambassador Feruta.

Welcome delegates, to the new and improved civil society segment of the NPT PrepCom!

In an effort to inspire interactivity and creativity in the NPT, the NGOs working on these statements have devised a new format to bring our views and information to the table.

We are going to start with a keynote address by author Ward Wilson. I will introduce him in a moment, but first, I want to layout the rest of the programme. After Mr. Wilson walks you through his dynamic presentation about the myths of nuclear weapons, we’re going to move straight into a panel discussion of several eminent civil society activists. That session will be moderated by Tim Wright of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, who will introduce each of the panelists. We’ll then open the floor for questions, and you the delegates can ask the panelists or Ward anything you want! And we encourage you indeed to comment or ask questions at that point.

And to wrap up the session, we’re going to hear from some key constituents for the nuclear disarmament issue: will hear from a Hibakusha, a survivor of the atomic bombings in Japan; two youth representatives, the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and a parliamentarian from Egypt.

Now, without further ado, I’d like to introduce Ward Wilson. He is a Senior Fellow and director of the Rethinking Nuclear Weapons Project at BASIC, a security think tank. His principal work to date has been researching the foundations of nuclear weapons thinking. His recent book, *Five Myths About Nuclear Weapons*, is a rethinking of nuclear weapons based on recently uncovered and re-analyzed facts from Cold War archives.

Ward has spoken at the U.S. State Department, the Pentagon, the U.K. House of Commons, the UN, the European Parliament, the Brookings Institution, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, the U.S. Naval War College, and universities including Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Georgetown, Hamburg, Stockholm, Pretoria, and many others.

And now Ward, you have the floor.