Mr Chairman,

Among the working papers submitted by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) to this session of the Preparatory Committee, Australia is pleased to introduce the working paper WP.1 on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The CTBT is intrinsically linked to the goals and objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and in this regard is an invaluable component of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Since its inception, the NPDI has placed great importance on continued advocacy for the universalisation and early entry into force of the CTBT as essential steps to achieve nuclear disarmament. All ten NPDI member States ratified the CTBT within four years of its opening for signature. The NPDI has welcomed the ratification of the CTBT this year by Brunei Darussalam and Chad, bringing the total of ratifications to 159.

But there is clearly more work to do. The 12 February nuclear test by Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which the NPDI has strongly condemned as both a serious violation of Security Council resolutions 1718, 1874 and 2087 and a grave challenge to the NPT, once again underscores the importance of the ratification and entry into force of the CTBT.

We urge all States that have yet to ratify the CTBT to do so without delay, in particular the remaining eight Annex 2 States. Annex 2 States should not wait for other States to ratify the CTBT.

We reiterate that nuclear-weapon States have a particular responsibility, as agreed in Action 10, to encourage ratification of the CTBT and call upon them to take the initiative in this regard. Ratification by nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so would provide further impetus towards entry into force of the CTBT.
As stipulated in Action 11, pending the Treaty’s entry into force, we call upon all States to uphold and maintain a moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions.

In accordance with Action 14, we encourage all NPT States parties to assist the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in its work in anticipation of and preparing for the entry into force of the CTBT. This includes the early completion and provisional operation of the International Monitoring System, which serves as an effective, reliable, participatory and non-discriminatory element of the verification system globally and helps to provide assurance of compliance with the CTBT.

The NPDI commends the paper to the Preparatory Committee.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.