Mr. Chairman,

France fully agrees with the statement made on behalf of the European Union on this chapter.

I would like to add a few items from a national standpoint to this statement.

Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery is a major threat to international security and peace; it is also a threat to affected regions which must be resolutely opposed.

All the goals which we are pursuing as part of the Treaty are threatened by the severe proliferation crises which we are currently facing: non-proliferation, disarmament, the promotion of civil nuclear energy, the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East.

It is therefore especially important that the international community demonstrates its capacity to act quickly and decisively in response to these challenges, as many countries have confirmed their desire to have access to nuclear energy to meet fast-growing energy needs.

Nuclear proliferation is also likely to slow down efforts at nuclear disarmament, which we all aspire to.

The fight against proliferation is therefore essential for our collective security. It must be led on three fronts: providing a firm response to proliferation crises; strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation system; stepping up concrete efforts to prevent and curb proliferation.

The Iranian crisis, first of all. For too many years now, Iran has pursued an enrichment programme without credible civilian purposes, in violation of the resolutions by the United Nations Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors. As indicated in the latest IAEA reports, the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate: enrichment activities have been stepped up, in particular to 20% on the Fordoo site, which was kept hidden from the international community for some time; the installation of the first new-generation centrifuges at Natanz; continued activities linked to heavy water; a refusal to cooperate to clarify outstanding issues linked to the possible military dimensions of the Iranian nuclear programme, highlighted in the annex of the IAEA report of November 2011.
France remains determined to find a long-term diplomatic solution. Along with our partners in the group of Six, we once again met with the Iranian authorities in Almaty at the end of February and the start of April. New proposals were made to Iran, which unfortunately it was not prepared to accept. The considerable gap between the stances of the group of the Six and Iran meant another meeting could not be organized. Once again, we call on Iran to take immediate and concrete action to establish trust and allow more time to find a long-term diplomatic solution based on the full implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors.

For the North Korean crisis, the situation remains extremely worrying. North Korea is continuing to act in violation of its international obligations: after the launch of a long-range rocket on 12 December 2012, it conducted a third nuclear test on 12 February 2013. These serious actions were unanimously condemned by the international community, in particular with the adoption of resolutions 2087 and 2094 by the United Nations Security Council. The recent threatening declarations from Pyongyang, including those related to the restart of their nuclear complex at the Yongbyon site and its uranium enrichment programme, discovered in November 2010, have only increased our worries concerning the North Korean nuclear programme. This attitude is unacceptable: it constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, and a major challenge for the international non-proliferation regime. The time has come for this country to return to the road to cooperation and full compliance with the law by conducting the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of its nuclear programme, as required by resolutions 1695, 1718, 1874, 2087 and 2094 of the United Nations Security Council. Pyongyang must immediately allow IAEA inspectors to return to the country, providing them with access to all nuclear facilities, cease all proliferating activity and abstain from any further action which could increase the tensions in the region.

Finally, regarding Syria, further to the resolution adopted by the Board of Governors in June 2011, based on the IAEA report, France continues to call for Syria to shed light on its past and present nuclear activities, while taking into account the development of the political situation in Syria. We continue to fully support the Director-General of the IAEA in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

The IAEA holds an essential role within the international non-proliferation regime, and in order to strengthen this, as a priority we must support the efforts of the Agency so that its safeguards system remains fully effective and credible.

To achieve this, we must call for the universal application and strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system.

In order to fulfil the goals of article III.1 of the NPT, France believes that the verification standard should see the combined implementation of a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. The universal application of these two legal instruments therefore remains a priority. Under the particularly restricted current economic and financial conditions, our efforts must above all focus on strengthening the authority of the Agency, with constant competence, through a better use of existing means. In particular, we must encourage the IAEA to go on with the evolution of the safeguards implementation towards the objective use of all relevant sources of information, enabling the most accurate conclusions possible on each State.
Furthermore, we encourage IAEA Member States to **implement the full consequences in cases where a country has been declared to be non-compliant with its international obligations in terms of non-proliferation**: suspension of access to the Agency’s programme of technical cooperation and assistance in the relevant areas, reaffirmation of the role of the United Nations Security Council, implementation by the State at fault of voluntary transparency measures in order to restore the trust of the international community as soon as possible.

France will continue to help strengthen the resources of the IAEA, in particular human and technical resources, through the provision of skills and expertise as part of its National Safeguards Support Programme.

Mr. Chairman,

Past investigations by the IAEA have uncovered the existence of a vast international network trafficking sensitive technology, which has not been fully exposed.

The implementation of rigorous and universal control of exports of the most sensitive nuclear technologies, equipment and materials is a condition essential to the development of the nuclear trade.

The Zangger committee must continue its work to implement universal principles for export controls. Furthermore, France is working within the Nuclear Suppliers Group to ensure export control rules are consistent with the other obligations of the Treaty.

Finally, the fight against proliferation requires us to step up concrete efforts to prevent and curb this threat. We must better control exports, supervise access to the most sensitive training, curb proliferating trafficking, punish proliferating activities and cut out their financing. We must also strive to better implement resolution 1540, both to strengthen our national systems and to provide countries with the support they need to do so.

To finish, I would like to mention the persistent concerns of the international community concerning the risks of proliferation which could result from **withdrawal from the Treaty**. Let us be clear. Withdrawal from the Treaty is a sovereign right, which we do not call into question. However, this right cannot be exercised under just any conditions, and to guarantee the integrity of the Treaty, and the long-term nature of our work to fight nuclear proliferation, we must prevent abuses of this right. I will have the opportunity to come back to this issue later.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.