Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like address a number of regional challenges to the integrity and authority of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, a treaty which has served the security interests of all states.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States and our E3+3 partners are engaged in a process aimed at peacefully resolving one of the most serious challenges to the integrity and credibility of the global nonproliferation regime: Iran’s nuclear program. The E3+3 and Iran have been meeting intensively since February to discuss all of the issues that must be resolved as part of a long-term comprehensive solution that resolves the international community’s concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear program, verifiably ensures that Iran’s nuclear program is exclusively peaceful, ensures Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon, and returns Iran to full compliance with its NPT and other nonproliferation obligations. These discussions have been useful and constructive, and all sides are showing good faith.

In parallel, the IAEA is continuing its efforts to resolve the outstanding issues regarding Iran’s nuclear program, including its possible military dimensions. We commend the IAEA for the professional, objective, and diligent manner in which it has conducted its efforts. It remains essential and urgent for Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA to address all present and past issues to resolve the international community’s legitimate concerns and advance a comprehensive diplomatic solution.

We look forward to the international community’s continued support for the E3+3’s efforts in the weeks and months ahead, which remains essential as we pursue a comprehensive diplomatic resolution which returns Iran to full compliance with its NPT obligations and would result in Iran being treated in the same manner as any other non-nuclear weapon state party to the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to Syria, it has been nearly three years since the IAEA Board of Governors found Syria in noncompliance with its safeguards agreement. The Asad regime’s continued failure to uphold Syria’s nonproliferation obligations reinforces the international community’s strong concerns regarding the continued potential for covert nuclear activities in Syria. It remains essential that the Asad regime Syria cooperate fully with the IAEA to remedy its noncompliance.
As we have made clear, the instability and violence the regime has wrought against its own people is no excuse for its failure to meet Syria’s international obligations. Its noncompliance with its safeguards agreement remains a matter of serious and continuing concern to the international community. We commend the IAEA’s efforts to resolve Syria’s noncompliance.

Mr. Chairman,

These cases of noncompliance undermine our efforts to achieve the goal of a Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. The United States continues to fully support this goal, and we stand by our commitment to convene a conference [freely arrived at by the states in the region] to discuss the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East.

There is significant progress since last year’s PrepCom meeting. Regional states have participated in three rounds of multilateral consultations in Switzerland, moving closer to consensus on an agenda and modalities for a conference. Direct engagement among the parties in the region is an essential step forward. We encourage the parties to continue discussions and continue the positive tone all parties – both our Arab friends and Israel – have displayed. The fact that three rounds of consultations have been held over a six month period and that statements in the small room in Glion were more positive than what we hear in this hall, is itself a confidence building measure, and one that has helped advance this process considerably.

Ambassador Laajava has proposed additional meetings following this PrepCom meeting and we commend him for his leadership and intensive efforts to bring the parties together. These consultations are an important element of preparation, but do not replace the conference itself. We hope that all states in the region take full advantage of this opportunity, to attend the consultations, to seek solutions in good faith and above all, to do what the states of Africa, the states of Latin America, the states of Southeast Asia, and other regions have done: to take ownership of the process and responsibility for the difficult compromises ahead.

Beyond the conference, actual achievement of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East is a long-term undertaking, and will require that essential conditions be in place in order to achieve it. These conditions include a comprehensive and durable peace in the region, and ensuring full compliance by all regional states with their arms control and nonproliferation obligations.

In addition, Mr. Chairman,

A critical and growing threat to the integrity of the global nonproliferation regime, and to our common peace and security, is North Korea’s continued pursuit of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. Despite consistent calls to correct course, North Korea continues to act in direct defiance of the clear and overwhelming international consensus that the DPRK must abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs – including plutonium production and uranium enrichment – and cease all related activities immediately.
As we have made clear, the United States remains open to a meaningful and authentic diplomatic process to implement the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and to bring North Korea into compliance with its UN Security Council obligations through irreversible steps leading to denuclearization. However, the onus remains on North Korea to make the right choice – its recent actions and threats indicate that it is intent on defiance over denuclearization. Together with our partners in the Six-Party process, we are focused on urging North Korea to take meaningful actions toward verifiable denuclearization and refrain from further provocations.

Our message to North Korea is clear. The international community will not accept North Korea as a nuclear-armed state. We seek its return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards as a non-nuclear weapon state party and to full compliance with its nuclear nonproliferation obligations. We also call on North Korea to make a firm commitment and concrete progress toward complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, and join the community of responsible nations.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States looks forward to continuing to work closely with our fellow NPT parties to address these important challenges and to uphold this vital instrument of global peace and security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.