As this is the first time Finland takes the floor during the current Session let me welcome your election, Mr. Ambassador, as Chairperson, and assure you of our support in your important function.

Finland fully aligns itself with the Cluster 1 statement made by the European Union, and would like to add a couple of remarks from a national point of view.
The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be a cornerstone of the international non-proliferation and arms control regime. Finland attaches great importance to the outcome of 2010 NPT Review Conference and is committed to its full implementation towards the 2015 Review Conference. All the three pillars of the Treaty are necessary and important.

Working towards a world free of nuclear weapons is a responsibility of all nations. Even though we might sometimes disagree on the best ways to achieve this goal, the final aim is nevertheless common for us all. Therefore, we believe, it is possible to find common ground for practical work together. Finland is keen on supporting this cause by any means useful.

Last year Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja participated at the General Assembly High Level meeting on Nuclear Disarmament. He joined to those who argued for intensification of multilateral nuclear disarmament efforts. Finland also took part at the Open Ended Working Group that met in Geneva last year.

Twenty countries, including Finland, have submitted a working paper with the title Building blocks for a world without nuclear weapons. These countries emphasise that we should not focus on differences but on common ground by identifying concrete and practical “building blocks” in order to move forward in nuclear disarmament.

The New Agenda Coalition Working Paper on Article VI of the NPT lays out different options, namely a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention, a simple Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty, a framework arrangement and a hybrid arrangement.

My government is open to these and other possible options to move towards a world without nuclear weapons. On the other hand, none of them would bring much added value if States that actually possess nuclear weapons are not involved from the beginning.

Mr Chairperson,

We expect the Nuclear Weapon States to fully carry out their responsibilities in nuclear disarmament. It has been encouraging to hear President Barack Obama to launch several initiatives during his presidency. It is vital that the owners of largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons, the US and Russia, show leadership. The New START Treaty has been an important step forward.

However, further reductions are needed in all categories of nuclear weapons. The P5 cooperation between the Nuclear Weapon States is of course highly welcome and their recent joint communique is a sign of further transparency. Their common efforts should pave the way for enhanced efforts in global nuclear disarmament.

In addition to addressing strategic arms, reductions in tactical – or non-strategic - nuclear arsenals are needed. The inclusion of these weapons in a legally binding, verifiable international treaty system is still lacking. Today there are no treaty arrangements to limit tactical nuclear weapons. Their reduction and elimination would strengthen security in Europe and in the world as a whole. The first steps could include transparency and information exchanges, as well as other confidence building measures, such as withdrawal of weapons from forward emplacements. Finland is certainly ready to work with interested delegations in order to bring this issue to the attention of the 2015 Review Conference.

For Finland one of the first steps forward in nuclear disarmament is a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). The Group of Governmental Experts working on a FMCT has started its work in Geneva under the able leadership of Ambassador Elissa Golberg of Canada. We are pleased that Finland can
provide expertise to the group. We are hopeful that the work will show the Conference on Disarmament a path towards Treaty negotiations as soon as possible. It is also crucial to continue the voluntary moratorium on fissile material production for weapons purposes.

The **Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty** shows how a treaty, even before its entry into force, can underpin a voluntary moratorium that has become de facto international norm. Once again we call on all states to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Mr Chairperson,

Finland participated in the Oslo and Nayarit conferences on **Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons**.

The humanitarian impact discussions have reminded us how difficult it would be for our societies and international community to respond to any nuclear weapon explosion. We need to face these facts once again and do everything we can to prevent any such disaster of happening.

The question remains on what is the best way forward. What next? The Chair of the Nayarit Conference in February added to his closing summary some of his own suggestions on ways to reach new international standards and norms on the basis of humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. It is indeed useful to separate between his widely accepted description of the debate in Nayarit and, on the other hand, the Chair’s own reflections.

For Finland the NPT is well placed to address the humanitarian impact issue. We should aim at enforcing the NPT non-proliferation and disarmament regime by the humanitarian impact discourse. Working papers and statements in this issue are welcome and serve as discussion points forward. We want to recognize the particularly balanced and constructive input by the Ministerial meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative in its recent meeting in Hiroshima.

The Nuclear Weapon States, in their joint statement after meeting in Beijing also a few weeks ago, refer to severe consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and to their resolve to avoid such contingencies. In the same statement they also refer to step by step nuclear disarmament as the path to a world without nuclear weapons. Individual Nuclear Weapon States have here in this session made remarks that relate to the ongoing debate on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. We hope that these contributions signal increasing readiness to engage in dialogue about all aspects of nuclear disarmament.

The New Agenda Coalition as well as the Government of Austria have both submitted Working Papers on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons to this PrepCom. In these papers the humanitarian impact is portrayed as an underlying rationale behind the NPT Treaty. We are encouraged by Austria’s declared intention to prepare the Vienna Conference inclusively with all partners. We further welcome the host country’s aim to strengthen the NPT through the Vienna event and to bring the results to the NPT Review Conference in 2015.

Mr. Chairperson,

I have mentioned some contributions to the debate on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in order to show that different goals and discourses are not exclusive. Through dialogue and with open mind we will extend the common ground.

Thank you very much.