Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to take the opportunity that this last session of the Preparatory Committee gives us to briefly express some ideas.

First, to thank you and your team for the excellent job done. It was up to you, in Geneva and The Hague, to restart the NPT Review machinery, after the last Review Conference in 2015. And you did so through a wide-ranging and generous process that included meetings at the regional level, where you could approach the concerns in each region and could feel first-hand its pulse in each case.

Second, it has to do with the nature of the debate both general and specific for each cluster that we have witnessed.

As you pointed out in your observations yesterday, beyond the legitimate differences of opinion on the central issues of the Treaty, no statement has been made to call to question or doubt the validity and force of the NPT. This is very important and encourages us in the face of the challenge that is 2020.
Nevertheless, it is not enough.

Having identified the differences, and made the inventory of our disagreements, we must start, sooner rather than later, to face the harder but indispensable task of narrowing down the many and very important points of agreement, and to begin to build in a visible manner what, ideally, will be the basis, the groundwork for a successful Review Conference in 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

We do not have a naïve or angelical view of the current situation nor of the challenges facing us. They have been explained quite clearly by all the delegations that took the floor and we don’t need to repeat them here. Your fact and precise report reflects them very adequately.

What we need to do, rather, is understand in which way, the conditions of the international reality are to influence our Treaty review process, be it throughout the preparatory phase or at the Conference 2020 itself.

That is why, we need from now on to work in a coordinated and systematic way, to approach this questions with a practical perspective and with the goal of reaching agreements.

We celebrate that yourself, as Chair of the first Preparatory Committee, and Amb. Bujgaski of Poland, Chair-designate of the second, are working in a harmonious and joint manner for the current cycle to progress in the best possible way.
On our part, as you all know, the Latin American and Caribbean Group rapidly endorsed my nomination to the Presidency of the Conference, and that was reiterated here in the statement by the CELAC, that was presented on the first day of our works by the Ambassador of El Salvador. We thank this show of trust by our Group and we hope, as CELAC said, that the necessary steps are completed without further delay to formalize this nomination and allow us to join in the preparatory work and consultations.

With a regional candidate already endorsed, this situation need not continue much longer.

As pointed out in the report, continuity and coordination are very important, in order to channel the consultations with delegations and groups in an orderly and transparent manner.

It is certain that the final success will depend on the political will. But political will is nurtured, among other things, by a comprehensive preparatory work. This, and no other, was the spirit that led us to agree in 1995 and ratify in 2000 a longer review cycle and more inclusive regarding the groups and the responsibilities assigned to it.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we congratulate you on a job well done and we stand ready to work in the way you mentioned yesterday: identifying areas where progress is possible, cooperating to move forward and searching constantly for compromise.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.