Mr Chairman,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the first Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Let me assure you that you may count on the full support and cooperation of my delegation during this Preparatory Committee.

Latvia associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following remarks in a national capacity.

Mr Chairman,

For Latvia the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. Latvia is strongly committed to the full implementation of the NPT and welcomes the substantial progress made under its three mutually reinforcing pillars.

Latvia shares the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, if our goal is effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament, there can be no shortcuts. In this respect we should be cautious and should refrain from creating parallel processes that might loosen the focus from the strategic importance of NPT.
The road ahead will be complex. Both nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states have to be on board. At the current security juncture it will be of utmost importance to find the right balance between working towards multiple steps that strengthen the NPT and preserving the international order in today’s turbulent world.

The “building blocks” outlined in the Action Plan 2010 are the key for achieving progress in global nuclear disarmament efforts and Latvia urges their continued full and substantive step by step implementation.

I would like to reiterate the call for immediate commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. Latvia welcomes the establishment of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group to help bringing the process back on track.

Latvia also welcomes the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Latvia also places great importance to the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. Recent nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are serious reminders why work towards the entry into force of the CTBT should be high on our agenda. Latvia continues to strongly condemn the illegal nuclear tests and launches of ballistic missiles conducted by the DPRK and urges DPRK to refrain from any further actions that might increase tensions.
Mr Chairman,

During the recent years we have witnessed that international efforts in the field of non-proliferation have brought some tangible results. Latvia welcomes Iran’s efforts in successful implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The continuous full implementation of JCPOA will strengthen global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts in the long-term. In this regard for several years Latvia has made voluntary contributions in support of the JCPOA.

In contrast, Latvia is deeply worried that one party has violated core provisions of the Budapest memorandum on security assurances to Ukraine. Such actions significantly erode the level of trust and undermine nuclear non-proliferation efforts.

It is of paramount importance that disarmament and non-proliferation commitments under existing treaties are honoured. In this regard, we also call on all Parties to ensure the full and verifiable implementation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

Finally, I would like to stress the importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Agency’s safeguards system plays an essential central role in the implementation of the non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. IAEA’s contribution in assistance to the Member States in ensuring the highest levels of safety and security to facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be also underlined.

To conclude, I wish every success in our efforts to achieve best results out of this first NPT Preparatory Committee to have tangible results in 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Thank you!