Mr. Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

Hungary shares the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, a noble objective, which is at the heart of the United Nations disarmament activities. We do our utmost to contribute to the efforts aimed at reaching ‘global zero’, as well as to preserve and further strengthen existing achievements.

We view the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the fundamental framework to pursue multilateral nuclear disarmament. The Treaty, by its prohibition norm, already constitutes a de facto ban provision for 185 non-nuclear weapon states. It is our strong conviction that moving further on this path is only possible through substantial involvement and engagement with those beyond that 185 – namely nuclear weapon states.

Since at this moment we can’t see consensus behind any comprehensive instrument, nor any urging major hiatus in the legal framework, we are of the view that the only realistic way to progress leads through an incremental and inclusive process of taking concrete and practical steps which fully engage nuclear weapon states and, at the same time, preserve international security and stability.

The next logical step would be starting negotiations on a treaty verifiably banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. By limiting the amount of direct use materials, a non-discriminatory, multilateral, internationally and effectively verifiable FMCT would contribute to the implementation of NPT Article VI obligations. With the establishment of the high-level preparatory group by the UNGA last year, an opportunity of a renewed FMCT process has opened up. In our view, while building on the 2015 GGE Report, it has the potential to prepare the ground to achieve tangible progress, while not replacing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Therefore, we call on participants to actively and constructively engage in the Group’s work.

Another concrete step should be the long overdue entry into force of the CTBT establishing a comprehensive and de iure ban on nuclear tests. In accordance with the latest Security Council Resolution on the importance of the CTBT, we attach great importance to the further promotion of its universalization and to convincing still hesitant Annex II States to join and ratify. For this reason, four years ago Hungary, together with Indonesia, chose to undertake the duties of Article XIV Co-Coordinator of the Treaty. We ask all participants of this Preparatory Committee to make efforts in order to push this process forward.
Besides multilateral legal instruments, agreements of bilateral or plurilateral nature also constitute important measures contributing to nuclear disarmament. In the past such agreements have played an important role in significantly reducing existing nuclear arsenals. These, together with many other practical steps, including, among others, measures to decrease alert levels of existing arsenals, transparency measures including P5 reporting, the universalization of existing treaties, enhancing implementation of S/RES/1540, have the potential to reduce the risk of any accidental event and bring us closer to reaching the so-called “minimisation point”. In this context, we welcome the UNGA Resolutions on Dealerting and also that on Nuclear Disarmament Verification providing for the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts. Both of those contribute to building broader support behind these practical steps.

Mr. Chair,

Taking into account geopolitical realities, we have to acknowledge that the present security environment still poses a number of threats and challenges, not allowing for the simple and instant removal of nuclear deterrence without viable political and defense guarantees. Therefore, political will on the desired elimination of nuclear weapons is not only up to a simple moral decision. It should be based on the careful evaluation of relevant humanitarian, political, security and economic factors. Without this context taken duly into consideration and without substantial engagement of nuclear weapons states, any new treaty, including the one being currently negotiated in New York, would not give anything to its proponents in addition to the already existing NPT regime and would not eliminate a single nuclear weapon. It would only constitute an unnecessary duplication resulting in legal uncertainty and thus, in the long run, erode the authority of the NPT and running the risk of losing even what we already have. In sum, it is our strong conviction that there is no fast track in this area, only an incremental and progressive approach can produce tangible results.

I thank you.