Mr. Chairman,

I would like to make some remarks on disarmament education.

It should be emphasised that the strengthening of the NPT regime, as well as efforts to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons, all require a continuous developing of new ideas, new insights, practices, and new technologies. We are dealing with - and will be dealing with - complex problems that need innovative solutions.

This means we need to strengthen education on these issues. Advocacy, outreach and critical thinking skills are all important, but I would like to focus on the latter as it receives comparatively little attention.

We need more research, experts with extensive knowledge of history and theory, and a constructive academic debate. This means encouraging the role of academia in nuclear disarmament.

The Netherlands tries to engage the academic community and stimulate their involvement on these issues. We have set up a research program consisting of three PhD spots. We have set up various events stimulating exchanges between researchers and policy officers. At the NPT RevCon, we organised a colloquium for young experts, in order to encourage discussions and foster links between professionals at the start of their careers.

What we have seen is that more can be done to stimulate the crossover of ideas between policy-makers and scholars. We can benefit from one another. In addition, the formation of international networks of academia should be, where possible, encouraged. We should come up with concrete ideas in this context during this current NPT review cycle.