STATEMENT by the Head of the delegation of Ukraine at the First session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference

Nuclear disarmament and security assurances (cluster 1)

Mr Chairman,

As it is the first time I am taking the floor, let me congratulate you sincerely on your election as the Chair of the First session of the Preparatory Committee. Ukraine hopes that under your skilful chairmanship this session will lay a solid ground for progress towards a resultful 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Mr Chairman,

Ukraine attaches great importance to this session. We look forward to in-depth discussion on achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear-weapons, as well as on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

Ukraine's historic decision to renounce nuclear weapons and become a non-nuclear weapon state has accorded Ukraine a position in the forefront of the international community’s quest to abolish nuclear weapons. We consistently stand for global reduction of nuclear arsenals, stopping the modernization of nuclear weapons, and overall decrease of nuclear weapons' role in military and strategic doctrines of states.

In this light, we call on all states, possessing nuclear weapons, to apply the principles of irreversibility and verifiability to disarmament process. Ukraine believes that such states have to commit themselves to reducing the role of nuclear weapons in their national security strategies.

Mr Chairman,

Ukraine strongly supports full and effective implementation and strengthening of the legal and institutional multilateral mechanisms to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons, related materials, equipment and technologies as essential for nuclear disarmament.

Making very significant contributions to the international goals of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, Ukraine removed all highly enriched uranium stocks from its territory and renounced huge arsenals of nuclear weapons inherited from the Soviet Union. The amounts of these deadly weapons were outstanding - over 222 units of strategic armaments on its territory (176 intercontinental ballistic missiles, 46 heavy bombers as well as relevant nuclear equipment - 2000 nuclear charges that composed approximately 10 % of carriers and 20 % of charges). This arsenal was the third largest in the world, bigger than that of Britain, China, and France combined. Ukraine's accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear state was accompanied by receipt of security assurances stipulated by the
**Budapest Memorandum.** It was a key component of Ukraine’s accession process that guaranteed the country’s **security, political independence and territorial integrity within the existing borders.** However, two decades after signing the Budapest Memorandum its **provisions have been flagrantly breached by the Russian Federation**, one of the State-guarantors, through an armed invasion into the Ukrainian territory, attempted annexation of the Crimean peninsula and fuelling the conflict in the Donbas region of Ukraine.

As these serious violations have been committed, I underline, by the state-guarantor, **they have broader international repercussions in terms of undermining global disarmament and, especially, non-proliferation. Therefore, it remains critically important to maintain international solidarity and unity in seeking restoration of full respect by Russia for Ukraine’s sovereignty, political unity and internationally recognized frontiers as a matter of restoration of respect for basic norms of international law and credibility of security assurances.**

My country continues to consider the **NPT to be the cornerstone of the process of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.** Based on the national experience, Ukraine is convinced that **the credibility of security assurances must be upgraded to an international legally binding instrument** which would significantly enhance the nuclear non-proliferation regime, improve mutual trust and overall stability.

The **nuclear disarmament should be approached through embracing in good faith the following steps:**
- entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT);
- verifiable and non-discriminatory treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices - **Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT);**
- commencement of negotiations on a post-New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START);
- strengthening existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and creating new nuclear-weapon-free zones and WMD free zones;
- promoting full implementation of the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material;
- strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system.

We also believe that against the backdrop of different positions on the means to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons, identifying and developing practical and effective measures of nuclear disarmament verification and monitoring will foster confidence and contribute to the efforts to attaining the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

**Thank you, Mr Chairman**