Mr. President,

I would like to address the proposals for reconfigured meetings and for enhanced civil society participation as set out in our Working Paper #39 entitled "Achieving Pernurance with Accountability". I addressed the "Reporting" aspect of this Working Paper in my statement yesterday on Nuclear Disarmament and the 13 Steps.

We believe that most of those who have experienced the existing PrepCom process are dissatisfied with their results or, more often, their non-results. This stems, we think, from their sub-ordinate, participatory status and inability to take decisions in their own right with the associated tendency to kick the can down the road any serious issue until the next Review Conference. Having the States Parties exercise their decision-making functions only once in five years is inadequate to the importance of this Treaty and the real world challenges it faces. The time has come to elevate and empower the nature of our meetings by arranging for an annual Conference of States Parties, while remaining within the existing six-week time envelope currently devoted to our Treaty gatherings.

Accordingly we suggest the following text for adoption by this Conference:

"Recalling earlier Review Conference decisions on strengthening the Treaty review process, States Parties recognize the need to have a capacity to consider, in a more authoritative and frequent manner, the state of the Treaty’s implementation and to respond promptly to challenges to its fundamental purposes."

The States Parties agree to meet annually in a one-week Conference of States Parties to consider and decide on any issues covered by the Treaty.

In the two years immediately preceding a Review Conference, the Annual Conference will be extended by one week to carry out the function of a Preparatory Committee. The Preparatory Committee will finalize the procedural arrangements and make every effort to produce a consensus report containing recommendations for the Review Conference."
States Parties also agree to establish a standing five-person bureau of the Treaty comprised of the President of the Review Conference and the Chairs of each of the Annual Conferences. This bureau to be elected at the end of each Review Conference with a mandate extending until the subsequent Review Conference. The membership of this bureau will reflect an equitable basis the UN’s regional groups. The standing bureau will provide continuity and oversight of the Treaty on behalf of its members and empower it to convene, pursuant to a consensus decision of its own, extraordinary sessions of the Conference of States Parties when situations arise that threaten the integrity or viability of the Treaty. Such an extraordinary Conference will be convened within two weeks of a State Party having submitted a notification of intent to withdraw from the Treaty.  

This language is proposed as a draft decision on which we would welcome receiving suggestions and rectifications from other delegations in the interest of advancing this objective.

Mr. President,

Another dimension of our work which we believe should be enhanced is the participation of civil society in the NPT enterprise. Civil society obviously has a lot at stake in the successful implementation of the NPT and should be viewed as a vital partner in sustaining the NPT regime. Civil society also has a crucial role to play in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education. In this regard, we have suggested a text in section 3 of Working Paper # 39 for an eventual outcome document of this Conference giving an appropriate expression of support for the effective participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations in NPT proceedings.

Thank you.