Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Nakane, on your assumption of the Chairmanship of this Committee. My delegation assures you of our full support and cooperation in working towards consensus on the issues before the Committee. My delegation associates itself with the statement of the NAM delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt.

The Philippines reaffirms the inalienable right of NPT States Parties to the development, research, production and use of nuclear energy without discrimination as embodied in Article IV of the Treaty and in conformity with Articles I and II of the same.

We view the IAEA’s technical cooperation programme as the primary vehicle in implementing Article IV. It also contributes in a meaningful way towards helping countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

In this regard, we welcome the announcement by the United States of the launching of the “Peaceful Uses Initiative” and its contribution of 50 million dollars as additional extra-budgetary contribution to the IAEA technical cooperation programme for the next five years. We join the United States in
encouraging other countries to make additional contributions to this initiative. We also support Japan’s working paper containing proposed elements on strengthening the IAEA’s technical cooperation program, particularly its recognition of the importance of nuclear knowledge sharing and the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries.

The right embodied in Article IV comes with responsibilities. It is imperative that States Parties to the NPT strictly comply with their obligations on non-proliferation and that the IAEA’s capacities and capabilities in this regard be strengthened, particularly with the increasing risk of nuclear proliferation as a result of the global nuclear renaissance. We support the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards and verification regime to enhance confidence in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Safety and security are essential enabling factors and are integral to the continued development and enjoyment of the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We reiterate that nuclear security is the primary responsibility of States. As we see increased activity in the development of nuclear power programmes we appreciate the benefit of regional cooperation and welcome regional networks and initiatives in nuclear safety and nuclear security, and view their work as complementary to the work of the IAEA.

As one of the countries considering the inclusion of nuclear power in its energy mix, the Philippines recognizes the critical importance of nuclear security. The Philippines also recognizes the key role of the IAEA in supporting its Member States in strengthening their national capacities in this area. The amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials is a critical instrument in ensuring nuclear security. The Philippines is in the process of undertaking domestic legal procedures on the ratification of the amended Convention. We urge other countries, particularly, newcomer states to do the same. The Philippines also welcomes the convening by the United States of the Nuclear Security Summit in April 2010 which reinforces the commitment of States in addressing nuclear security.

The issue of nuclear safety is of critical concern to the Philippines, as it was a major factor in our decision to mothball our nuclear power program more than twenty years ago. We note with satisfaction that since then, international cooperation, particularly through the IAEA, has continued to advance efforts
towards improving nuclear safety and has made available a number of important tools, including safety standards and guidelines, self-assessment mechanisms, peer reviews and advisory services. While we recognize the dramatic developments in this area, there is still widespread caution and skepticism on the use of nuclear power. Therefore, efforts to strengthen the nuclear safety regime and to educate the public about it should be sustained. We also recognize the importance of signing and ratifying the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management as part of the strengthening of the global nuclear safety regime.

The Philippines reiterates its support for a multilateral approach to the nuclear fuel cycle with the IAEA having a central role. We believe that a multilateral framework would benefit States by providing options for the assurance of supply and services for their nuclear facilities, while serving as an important tool for strengthening the non-proliferation regime. We believe that the consultation process should continue to help clarify issues and address outstanding concerns, and wish to reiterate the importance of addressing this issue in a transparent and open-ended manner. It is important that the resulting mechanism or mechanisms should ensure that equal access to nuclear fuel should be guaranteed and that these will not unnecessarily lead to a monopolistic control by any Member State or group of states over nuclear fuel supply. In this regard, we note that most of the proposals that have been submitted so far relate to the front end of the fuel cycle. We, therefore, encourage states to likewise submit proposals relating to the back end of the fuel cycle in view of the importance of dealing with the issue of spent fuel management and the proper storage and disposal of nuclear and radioactive waste materials.

Thank you, Mister Chairman.