Mr. Chair,

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chairman, and express the support of our delegation. We fully support the statement delivered on this matter by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of NAM.

Mr. Chair,

The Cuban delegation reaffirms the sovereign right of States Parties, recognized in Article X, to decide over their withdrawal from NPT.

We object to the attempts to equate the exercise of that legitimate right with a threat to international security. Such approach would grant the UN Security Council an undue prominence in the context of Article X of the NPT, to the detriment of the core role relevant to States Parties.

In the review of the implementation of Article X, objective and balanced review should prevail instead of manipulation based on political interest of certain States. The path forward cannot be the reinterpretation of the provisions stated in Article X of NPT, and threat to apply punitive measures to the States that decide on exercising its sovereign right to withdraw from the Treaty.

Should the letter and spirit of the Treaty are not observed in all its aspects, the incentives for States to stay as Parties of the Treaty will reduce. It is unjustifiable, for instance, that Non-Nuclear States continue to be deprived of unconditional and legally-binding security assurances they will not be threatened or attacked with nuclear weapons by States that possess them. This legitimate demand has been reiterated again and again by Non-Nuclear States in each NPT Conference and other forums with no result whatsoever so far.

The lack of progress in the implementation of Article VI of the NPT, the almost exclusive emphasis of some States on horizontal proliferation and the continuous deferral of the objective
of nuclear disarmament increasingly affect the credibility of the Treaty; therefore, its future relevance is at risk.

The most effective way to prevent future withdrawal from NPT is to work jointly to ensure full implementation of all provisions of the Treaty, with no selectivity or discriminatory approaches.

It is necessary to ensure balance among the three basic pillars of the Treaty. There would be no better deterrent to have a State Party refrain from withdrawing from this instrument.

In our opinion, Mr. Chair, in previous Review Conferences, issues related to the implementation of Article X have been oversized and excessive time of our debate has been devoted to this matter. We acknowledge the importance of Article X; however, the treatment of this matter should not be to the detriment of other issues of top priority for State Parties, in particular nuclear disarmament.

Next Session of this Committee, my delegation will address the strengthening of the review process of the Treaty.

Thank you very much.