Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me add my voice to those congratulating you on the assumption of your office. You have full support of the U.S. Delegation.

Let me also recall what Secretary Kerry said at the opening of this Review Conference, which is that the world must remain united in rejecting the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

After years of deadlock, the P5+1 and Iran are now working intensively to achieve agreement by June 30 on a Joint Comprehensive Program of Action. If successful, such an agreement would close off all possible pathways to the nuclear material required for a nuclear weapon and provide the international community with the confidence it needs to show that Iran’s nuclear program is exclusively peaceful. This deal would advance our shared goals of upholding and promoting the global nonproliferation regime, and pave the way for Iran’s return to compliance with its international nonproliferation obligations under the NPT.

We note that the IAEA will play a vital role in verifying and monitoring the nuclear-related aspects of a JCPOA. We welcome the contributions made by IAEA Member States in support of the current Joint Plan of Action and encourage further support for a JCPOA, if one is agreed. We commend the IAEA for its professional, objective, and diligent approach as it seeks to resolve all outstanding issues regarding Iran’s nuclear program, including those related to its possible military dimensions. We also call on Iran to cooperate with the IAEA to provide credible assurances that Iran’s nuclear program is exclusively peaceful.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to emphasize that the United States remains fully committed to convening a conference on a Middle East weapons of mass destruction free zone,
and we stand by our commitment to work with all states of the region, with the
tireless and talented facilitator, Jaakko Laajava, and with our fellow conveners to
see that this conference is held, based on consensus arrangements freely arrived at
by all states in the region. There can be no other basis for proceeding.

We are disappointed that the conference has yet to be convened, but we also
know that we are closer today than at any time since the last Review Conference.
We remain hopeful that the regional states will continue to work face-to-face and
reach agreement as soon as possible on all necessary arrangements for the
conference.

It is said by some that the process has failed; we disagree. The five regional
consultations held in Switzerland since 2013 have brought us closer to the goal of
convening the conference. Israel has stated clearly its readiness to attend a
conference once the regional states reach consensus on an agenda and key
documents. We understand and share the frustration voiced by some delegations in
these deliberations. But clearly there has been progress, progress we should build
upon and not discard. We should continue work towards convening the conference
as soon as possible. We are open to new ideas, which must take into account the
legitimate interests of all states in the region and operate on the basis of consensus
if they are to succeed.

Mr. Chairman,

It has been nearly four years since the IAEA Board of Governors found
Syria in noncompliance with its safeguards agreement for the clandestine
construction of a nuclear reactor at Dair Alzour. It remains essential that the Asad
regime cooperate fully with the IAEA to remedy its noncompliance, including
providing access to all relevant locations, materials, and persons, as it is required to
do. Until then, Syria’s noncompliance must remain a matter of serious and
continuing concern to the region and the NPT regime.

Mr. Chairman

As emphasized by Secretary Kerry in the opening U.S. statement, the
situation with the DPRK constitutes a fundamental challenge to the NPT, its future,
and to regional and global security. From the Board of Governors’ first finding of
the DPRK’s noncompliance with its safeguards obligations in 1993, to the DPRK’s
announcement of withdrawal from the NPT in 2003 – followed in subsequent years
by three nuclear tests and a standing threat of more to follow – the DPRK’s long
and troubling track record underscores the imperative to address this challenge to
the Treaty and the nonproliferation regime.
In its pursuit of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, the DPRK continues to act in defiance of the international community – heedless of its obligations and of nonproliferation rules. Financed and facilitated by its proliferation activities worldwide, the DPRK continues to advance its nuclear capabilities and seeks to use them as instruments of coercion and a means to hold hostage our common peace and security.

The United States and our partners remain ready to work toward a meaningful diplomatic process, but one premised on the DPRK’s demonstrated commitment to the full implementation of the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and compliance with its UN Security Council obligations. NPT parties should be clear in rejecting the DPRK’s proliferation and illicit pursuits. This is indispensable if we are to convince North Korea to change course. We call on North Korea to abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards, and come into full compliance with its nonproliferation obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

The nuclear threat from the DPRK is not the only challenge confronting regional security. We remain deeply concerned by the dangers posed by the growing number of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems throughout Asia, and continue to encourage restraint with respect to such developments. We do not believe that these weapons enhance regional or global security, and welcome the national moratoria on nuclear testing. We encourage further restraint, and believe that a more stable and economically integrated region would help enormously in laying the foundation for regional and global peace and security, as well as for future progress on nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation, and confidence building measures.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States looks forward to working closely with our fellow NPT parties to build on the progress we have made and respond to these challenges. Only by working together can we uphold this vital instrument and the global nuclear nonproliferation regime that it underpins.

Thank you.