Mr. Chairman

At the outset, let me express my delegation’s appreciation to the Government of Austria for hosting this Conference and for the hospitality accorded.

As a small island developing state, the prospects of a nuclear detonation whether by design or accident is unimaginable and would decimate the entire region. Jamaica is deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact and the long term consequences on public health, food security, social infrastructure, environmental and psychological well-being of our citizens. The consequences and impact will be irreparable and will not only affect the present generation but will be a haunting legacy that will afflict consecutive generations.

While Jamaica does not possess any nuclear weapons, the issue requires our attention given the devastating potential of these weapons. Our strategic location, porous borders and socio-economic realities are cause for concern, should these weapons be used or illegally transferred in the hands of terrorists.

It is noted that there are no safeguards and emergency mechanisms in place to adequately and effectively respond to a nuclear detonation. It is therefore imperative that we move towards a total elimination of these weapons as a preventative measure.

Jamaica remains steadfast in its support for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and has a keen interest in advancing the goal of general and complete disarmament, in pursuit of international peace and security. Our participation in the Oslo and Nayarit conferences is indicative of the desire to realise progress towards this goal.

Furthermore, Jamaica is pleased to announce that it remains engaged in this process. To this end, Jamaica hosted a regional roundtable from 19th to 21st August 2014, to share thoughts and ideas on how the Caribbean region could contribute towards strengthening the humanitarian initiative of nuclear weapons, with a view to develop the idea of a ban on nuclear weapons.

Jamaica like many other countries welcomed the first commemoration of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on the 26th September 2014, during the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. This recognition, within the multilateral fora serves to generate momentum on this critical issue whilst reaffirming global commitment to total disarmament, in pursuit of international peace and security.
As a State Party to the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we are committed to the pillars of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In addition, as a State Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Jamaica supports the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones in various regions of the world, to bolster international efforts towards peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica is numbered among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to be the first densely populated area in the world to establish and to be declared a nuclear-weapons free zone. Concomitantly, heads of states and governments of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC) have re-affirmed and have designated the region as a Zone of Peace, in January 2014. To this end, it was agreed that conflicts within the regions should be settled through peaceful dialogue and negotiations. The use or threat of war is therefore not an option. This measure augurs well for confidence-building and the maintenance of peace for the region and we encourage other States to adopt a similar approach.

The world is at an increased risk of nuclear terrorism and proliferation and the deficit-of-trust that currently exists globally among countries, does not engender confidence that the use of or the threat of use of nuclear weapons will not be an option. It is therefore with a sense of urgency that we engage in the discourse on nuclear disarmament and move towards a ban on these lethal weapons.

Jamaica is assured that the presentations, as well as the perspectives shared in this setting, have contributed to furthering the discussions and broadening the knowledge base of the international community. It is our hope that these discussions will feed into the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament with a view to achieving progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

I thank you.