Mr President,

May I start by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference and by joining others in thanking you for the energy and consultative approach you are bringing to your role. You have Australia’s support.

Mr President,

Australia welcomes your efforts to continue seeking and encouraging a program of work which will allow the Conference to return to substantive work. Australia has taken the floor a number of times during the current session to underline the importance we attach to implementation of the elements of the 2010 NPT Action Plan relating to the Conference and to ensuring the Conference is doing real work.

We hold no illusions about the complexity of your task. The Conference has already had three attempts at a program of work during the current session and we believe that if it is clear that no consensus is emerging at this time, there may be benefit in pausing to reflect rather than pushing ahead.

In this context, we consider that there may be merit in your pursuit of a parallel track – the establishment of an informal working group on producing a program of work on the basis of Secretary-General Tokayev’s proposal to the Conference on 18 June. We consider that refreshing the manner in which the Conference works towards a program of work but still within the rules of procedure could help the Conference. We also agree that any such informal working group should be mandated beyond the current CD session in order to provide the necessary time for exchange and reflection.

I again wish you well and look forward to working with you and your delegation during your Presidency.

I thank you, Mr President.