Mr President,

Let me first congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the 1st States Parties meeting of the TPNW. We all share the aim of a world without nuclear weapons.

Some of the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons are to be found at the Kola-peninsula, just 100 km from the Norwegian border. Given our geographical location, we have a good understanding of the danger of these weapons.

Mr President,

Russia’s unprovoked and ruthless military attack on Ukraine has made disarmament efforts even more arduous. And it has fundamentally altered the European security landscape. Russia’s rhetoric on nuclear weapons is reckless and dangerous. It is worth recalling that just a few weeks before the invasion, Russia signed a joint statement of the P5 countries affirming that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

Mr President,

Norway is attending this conference as an observer. This is not a step towards signing the TPNW, which would be incompatible with our NATO obligations. Norway stands fully behind NATO’s nuclear posture.

However, we acknowledge that the TPNW has entered into force, and we recognise that 86 countries have signed it. We seek a constructive
dialogue between all states to advance nuclear disarmament and counter polarisation in this area, even though we may have choose different paths and tools to move towards zero.

Mr President,

Norway has actively promoted nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for decades. The Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of our efforts. The full implementation of the Treaty is our goal.

The current challenges to nuclear disarmament are numerous. We must nevertheless persist in our efforts. We must continue to prepare the ground for future binding arms control and disarmament agreements. The agreements must be mutual, balanced, verifiable, and irreversible, and include possessor states.

There are a number of important steps that can be taken by all countries to move nuclear disarmament forward. We call for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and we urge all remaining states to ratify it. Progress must also be made on the negotiation and conclusion of a verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). The IAEA plays an instrumental role in overseeing the non-proliferation of nuclear materials. The conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols is key to enabling the IAEA to carry out its work effectively. We call on all states to sign and implement these instruments.

Norway will continue to play a leading role in promoting nuclear disarmament verification. We have also initiated a new effort with the UK, on irreversibility in nuclear disarmament. Through the Stockholm initiative we are seeking to promote multilateral cooperation on reducing the risk of use of nuclear weapons. Dialogue on arms control is as important as ever for global security and stability.

Work to draw attention to humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons is important for nuclear disarmament, as highlighted by the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. This moves the
focus from the strategic domain to the catastrophic consequences that any use of nuclear weapons would entail for people and the environment. Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and people living in the vicinity of the test sites, can testify to this.

We need to update our insights and are seeking to establish a fact-based understanding of the effects of a nuclear detonation. This includes both immediate and long-term effects on human health, critical infrastructure, the environment, soil, and air. The conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons (HINW) yesterday was a crucial contribution in this respect.

Norway will also continue its efforts to promote gender equality and diverse participation in disarmament processes, and support initiatives to involve the younger generation in this work.

We look forward to observing deliberations of this meeting over the next two days.

Thank you.