Thank you, Mr. Chair,
I am speaking on behalf of the three Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Mr. Chair,
Let me congratulate you on the assumption of the Chairmanship of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference and take this opportunity to thank you for your dedicated efforts to convene this session. Let me also assure you of the strongest support of our delegations.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and disarmament architecture, the only credible path to nuclear disarmament, and the framework for international cooperation in advancing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is our common goal to preserve and strengthen the NPT, and thus we call on all NPT States Parties to work together in the current NPT Review Cycle to implement and strengthen the Treaty, and enhance efforts to achieve its universalization.

Mr. Chair,
Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia’s unprovoked, illegal and unjustified full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine. We also condemn Russia’s unlawful seizure, continued control of, and unacceptable conduct at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Russia’s actions have dramatically increased risks to nuclear safety and security and go directly
against the principles underpinning decades of concerted efforts toward nuclear safety and security.

Let me reiterate: the Russian Federation bears sole responsibility for having put the safety and security of Ukraine’s nuclear facilities at grave risk. By using a nuclear power plant as an instrument of warfare, Russia is undermining the principles of safe and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. We demand Russia to immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its troops, military equipment, and all other personnel, including that of Rosatom, from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also condemn the continued support of Belarus, Iran and the DPRK for this aggression against Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

In February last year, Russia announced the suspension of its participation in the New START Treaty, undermining global nuclear stability. In May 2023, Russia and Belarus signed documents on the stationing of Russia’s non-strategic nuclear weapons in a special storage facility on the territory of Belarus. In November last year, Russia revoked its ratification of the CTBT. In June this year, Russia signed a strategic pact with the DPRK, violating UN Security Council resolutions. In addition, it is assessed that Russia is developing a new satellite carrying a nuclear explosive device. This would violate the Outer Space Treaty and be fundamentally at odds with the aims of the NPT. These are clear signs that Russia is proceeding with the dismantling of the legal framework for nuclear arms control and non-proliferation.

All three Baltic countries – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – share a border with the Russian Federation. Latvia and Lithuania also have a shared border with Belarus, therefore we follow the announced deployment of Russian nuclear weapons and nuclear-capable systems with particular concern. We understand this move as reckless nuclear signaling that escalates the tensions and contradicts
the international commitments of Russia and Belarus under the Budapest Memorandum. This escalatory step further demonstrates Russia’s complete disregard for international security and stability. Moreover – threats to use nuclear force and Russia’s announcement of its readiness to conduct nuclear tests undermine the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. This is a totally unacceptable behaviour for a P5 member, which in January 2022 committed to the principles enshrined in the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear Weapons States.

Let me emphasize that the attempts by Russia and Belarus to compare their deployment of nuclear weapons with NATO’s nuclear sharing are completely misleading. The fundamental purpose of NATO’s nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. NATO’s nuclear arrangements pre-existed the entry into force of the NPT and thus have been agreed to by all NPT States Parties. They continue to be fully consistent and compliant with the NPT. NATO Allies act with full respect of their international commitments.

Mr. Chair,
Taking into account the rapid and extensive build-up of China’s nuclear arsenal, we call on the People’s Republic of China to take immediate measures to improve transparency on its nuclear weapons and doctrine, refrain from further build-up, pursue risk reduction measures, and engage in nuclear arms control discussions. We also call on China to demonstrate its responsible stance as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, by acting in full support of the UN Charter and international law in the context of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. We expect China to cease all forms of material and political support to Russia’s war efforts in Ukraine, urge Russia to stop using reckless nuclear rhetoric, and denounce its decision to deploy nuclear weapons in Belarus.
The DPR Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs continue to threaten international and regional peace and security, and are a matter of grave concern. Therefore we urge the DPRK to return to, and fully comply with the NPT and IAEA safeguards, and to accept repeated offers for dialogue. We fully support the goal of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the DPRK, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. In this context we regret that the extension of the 1718 Committee Panel of Experts was blocked by Russia’s irresponsible use of the veto.

Iran’s continued actions, inconsistent with the JCPOA, have severe and irreversible proliferation implications. We urge Iran to reverse its alarming nuclear trajectory, return to its nuclear non-proliferation commitments, and resume the implementation of all JCPOA-related monitoring and verification measures. Iran must immediately start an effective engagement with the IAEA to resolve all pending safeguards issues, in accordance with its legally binding obligations under the NPT Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. Let me stress once again – production of highly enriched uranium up to 60% has no credible peaceful purpose.

Mr. Chair,
Our delegations are committed to working towards a meaningful outcome of this Review Cycle that would lead Parties to reaffirm the commitment to the NPT and recognise its enduring benefits. We call on all States to do their utmost in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.