Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of your duties as the President of the 10th NPT Review Conference. Please accept my most sincere appreciation for the highly diligent and constructive way in which you led the preparatory process of this Conference under the difficult circumstances generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. I also extend my gratitude to the members of the Bureau and the representatives of the UNODA who have supported you in the fulfillment of your responsibilities.

Romania fully associates itself with the statement which will be delivered on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore limit myself to a few points in my national capacity.

On the 5th of March 2020, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT. For over half a century, the Treaty has contributed to strengthening international peace, security and prosperity. The NPT is a historic success and continues to represent our best tool for the global efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

We are meeting today in a fundamentally altered security environment, marked by increased tensions and new global challenges and threats. While the past year offered some glimmers of hope, with the extension of the New START Treaty, the establishment of the US-Russia Strategic Stability Dialogue and the P5 joint statement that a nuclear
war cannot be won and must never be fought, the Russian illegal, unprovoked and unjustified ongoing military aggression against Ukraine has reversed this progress.

Russia’s aggressive actions undermined the very foundation of international relations and the rules-based international order, and heavily impacted all three pillars of the NPT regime.

Russia has blatantly violated its commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994. The loss of credibility of a nuclear weapon State that is not respecting its security assurances threatens to undermine the NPT and the entire disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

Moreover, the indiscriminate attacks of the Russian military at and around Ukrainian nuclear facilities have increased the risk of a nuclear accident, with potentially severe consequences for human health and the environment.

We urge the immediate withdrawal by the Russian Federation of its military and other personnel from the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant so that Ukrainian authorities can resume their sovereign responsibilities and that the legitimate operating staff can conduct their duties without pressure or interference.

We express our full support for the work of the IAEA and its Director General to assist Ukraine in the area of nuclear safety and security and ensure safeguards implementation. This year, Romania facilitated the transit and provided support for IAEA DG and the IAEA inspectors on their way to Ukraine in the midst of the disturbing events putting the nuclear facilities in Ukraine at risk following the Russian invasion.

We call on Russia to stop its illegal war, to cease its nuclear brinkmanship, to uphold its international commitments, to recommit to the principles enshrined in the P5 Leaders’ statement, and to engage constructively in genuine dialogue at this conference.

Mr. President,

I take this opportunity to briefly emphasize some of the most notable national contributions to the Review Conference and to the implementation of the Treaty undertaken by my country:

In 2019, Romania chaired the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee) during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. In this capacity,
Romania acted as an honest broker, including on matters directly related to the implementation and strengthening of the NPT.

In 2020, Romania organized and hosted, in a virtual format, the NATO Conference on Weapons of Mass Destruction, Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. With more than 150 participants from over 50 countries, the Conference provided the opportunity for a fruitful exchange of ideas and opinions between nuclear-weapon States, non-nuclear-weapon States and representatives of international organizations, non-governmental organizations and academia in preparation for this Review Conference.

I also underline Romania’s efforts – as co-presidency, together with Panama – for a successful ICONS 2020 – the High Level International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening Efforts, that took place in Vienna. The adoption by consensus of the Ministerial Declaration with that occasion, a concise, politically driven and forward-looking document, offered the IAEA Member States the opportunity to reaffirm the common goals of nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. President,

Romania remains fully committed to a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the objectives of the Treaty and advocates a gradual and pragmatic process of nuclear disarmament, based on a step-by-step approach, ensuring undiminished security for all parties. Advancing towards this ultimate goal must take into account the global security environment, which has been further aggravated by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

My country continues to believe that the main objectives to be pursued in the field of nuclear disarmament remain the universality of the NPT, the entry into force of the CTBT, and the negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Moreover, Romania welcomed and actively participated in the initiative launched by the United States of America, “Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament”. We also recognize the added value that other initiatives, such as the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and the Stockholm Initiative, have brought to the debate.

Romania acknowledges the decline in nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War, mostly due to bilateral efforts by the two nuclear powers with the largest arsenals.
Nevertheless, we stress the need to preserve and further advance arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation processes. As China’s nuclear arsenal is rapidly increasing, we take this opportunity to call on China to uphold its international commitments under the NPT and join in good faith negotiations with the US and Russia on limitations on nuclear weapons and on measures to reduce risks and build confidence.

Mr. President,

The persistence of proliferation challenges and threats to international peace and security must be addressed in a resolute way in order to maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the NPT regime. NPT Parties cannot ignore or remain silent on current proliferation challenges, such as those from the DPRK, Syria, and Iran. Besides, the change in Belarus’s non-nuclear status is another worrying development. While the RevCon is not the place to solve these challenges, it is essential to take stock of them so that we can work together to render the nonproliferation regime resilient against future challenges of non-compliance with or withdrawal from the NPT.

We reiterate our full and continued support to the IAEA in implementing the Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols, in promoting the benefits of peaceful uses and in verifying States’ compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. Developments and events over the past several years have underscored the critical role of the implementation of the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocol. We stress that these constitute the current verification standard under the NPT, and we call for their universalisation without delay.

Romania is one of the countries that developed a wide spectrum of activities in the field of the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology, recognizing their major role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ranging from R&D of radiopharmaceutical technologies to the preservation of cultural heritage.

As a country with a relevant civilian nuclear program, Romania remains committed to strengthening global nuclear safety and security and highlights the importance of cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In November 2021, the Romanian President Klaus Iohannis together with the US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry, announced Romania’s intent to build a first-of-a-kind U.S. Small Modular Reactor. By deploying US innovative clean technology, Romania is taking a bold step in advancing climate action and ensuring clean energy access throughout a critical part of Europe and the world.
Romania has a tradition of robust engagement in international cooperation projects and reaffirms its readiness to share its own expertise and experience in the field of nuclear security and safety.

Mr. President,

The success of this Review Conference depends on us – the States Parties to the NPT. We genuinely hope that all delegations have come to New York prepared to find common ground, engage meaningfully, listen to each other and be ready to compromise. Despite our differences of opinion, it is important not to lose track of the significance of finding agreement on the future implementation of the Treaty. Romania stands ready to work with its partners towards a successful 10th Review Conference and reaffirms its full support to achieving a comprehensive and balanced outcome, which will allow progress on all three pillars, which are equally important and mutually reinforcing.

I thank you, Mr. President!