STATEMENT OF GREECE

delivered by Ambassador Mrs. Chryssoula Aliferi, Head of Delegation of Greece
to the Third International Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons,
Vienna, December 8-9, 2014

On behalf of Greece I would like to convey to the Austrian Federal Government our sincere congratulations on convening the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna. We also congratulate all other delegations present, states, NGOs and individuals who shared with us their personal experience.

Greece’s policy is fundamentally based on respect for International Law and the United Nations system as a whole. We also believe that it is in the interest of the very survival of humanity and civilisation that the “historical nightmare” of a nuclear engagement must never occur.

Thus, we consider this Conference as part of the efforts towards strengthening the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, the cornerstone of which is the Treaty on the non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Article VI of the NPT could stand as the base for a negotiated general and complete disarmament arrangement under strict and effective international control.

Incremental steps leading to negotiations for a FMCT (Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty) and to bringing, at last, the CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) into force, would be great signs towards general disarmament. We urge all states that have not yet done so to join the NPT, as non-nuclear weapon states, as well as to join and ratify the CTBT.

It is crucial that all states more resolutely and urgently fulfil their disarmament commitments. Substantive and constructive engagement with those states which possess nuclear weapons is a necessity. The new START Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation is a promising sign of further and rapid disarmament. Convening the Conference on a Middle East Zone free of Nuclear Weapons is long overdue.

The International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) powers of independent inspection, verification and reporting are also of paramount importance.

On the other hand, Greece, as a non-nuclear country, shares concerns about the levels and scope of the peaceful use of nuclear power, be it as part of noble efforts to cure serious illnesses, through controlled radioactivity, or as part of an energy mix.

Even in a world free of nuclear weapons, the possibility of irreversible consequences from a large scale nuclear accident, will continue to bring Nuclear Safety and Security in the locus of mutual trust. Nuclear energy, after all, makes all of us adjacent neighbours in our tiny but beautiful planet.

Thank You