I thank Global Zero and -- in particular its young leaders -- for your passion and commitment to help build a world free of nuclear weapons.

We share a dream to live in a world which is no longer shadowed by nuclear terror and where these inhumane and indiscriminate weapons no longer exist. Regrettably, that dream of nuclear disarmament -- so strong less than five years ago -- has grown more distant.

Geostrategic developments -- including the return of East-West tensions, endless turmoil in the Middle East, strategic competition in Asia and the rise of new threats such as cyber warfare -- have placed a strain on nuclear disarmament and the NPT regime that supports it.

I applaud the nuclear-weapon States, particularly the United States and Russia, for the real cuts they have previously made to deployed nuclear arsenals and for their efforts to make nuclear doctrines and policies more transparent.

But I am deeply concerned by the retreat to Cold War mentalities, deepened support for doctrines of nuclear deterrence, modernisation programmes that will entrench nuclear weapons in security postures for decades to come, and accusations of non-compliance with arms control agreements.

The disarmament process has stalled. The chasm between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States over the pace of nuclear disarmament is wider than ever. This fissure weakens the Treaty and the collective security benefits it provides for all States parties.
Passion and commitment are easy when times are good. They are much harder to sustain when faced with seemingly intractable challenges.

In the case of nuclear disarmament, I perceive a general apathy among the citizens of the world about the dangers posed by these weapons. I have no doubt there is broad support for the abolition of nuclear weapons, but I fear there is too little appreciation for the real and urgent threats that they pose.

That is why I am so pleased by the launch of your Action Corps.

I urge you to develop innovative and fresh ideas for engaging populations and mobilizing your peers.

Now is the time to shoulder the responsibility of nuclear disarmament – a problem not of your making, but one that will continue to haunt you and generations to come without determined action.

You have my full support.