Mr. Chairman,

The events of September 11, 2001 vividly demonstrated our vulnerability to those prepared to use modern technology for mass murder. Our Committee and other international bodies have responded with fresh determination to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to confront the lethal risks in the legacy of Cold War arsenals and stockpiles of sensitive materials, and to reinforce multilateralism at the core of international action. The G8, which Canada now presides, responded by launching in June a Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Equally important is the universal adoption of the IAEA’s comprehensive safeguards, including the Additional Protocol, and the strengthening of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials.

With all this talk about weapons of mass destruction as a single category, we need always to remember that nuclear weapons are in a class of their own: utterly indiscriminate and indescribably lethal. Canada remains deeply committed to the promise at the heart of the NPT, that non-proliferation and credible progress towards disarmament are fundamentally interdependent. This interdependence was clear in the 13-Step Action Plan agreed at the 2000 Review Conference. Canada has emphasized the reporting requirement outlined in the twelfth step of the Action Plan as a key measure to enhance transparency and accountability to the Treaty. Consonant with our commitment to that Action Plan is our welcoming of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty as a demonstration of US and Russian fidelity to Article VI of the NPT, our co-sponsorship of the CTBT resolution put forward by Mexico, Australia and New Zealand, and our own submission of a resolution on the FMCT, a treaty which has long been a priority for Canada.

I therefore formally present to the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.44 entitled:

"The Conference on Disarmament decision (CD/1547) of 11 August 1998 to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".
This draft resolution is identical to resolution 56/24J of 2001, adopted without a vote by this Committee and the General Assembly. We are all aware of the long history of this proposal and of the fact that complex negotiations lie ahead. The resolution is essentially procedural, anchored firmly in the expectations and current realities of the international community.

It expresses determination that we might all together conclude a multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a treaty is fundamental to both disarmament and non-proliferation. We very much hope that this resolution will be adopted without amendment and without a vote.

Mr. Chairman, the resolution already has a large number of co-sponsors from all regions. We continue to welcome all who wish to join us as co-sponsors in this expression of fundamental security interest.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman