Statement by Uzbekistan at the First Committee to introduce draft decision on the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, October 21, 2003

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the five Central Asian states, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, I would like to introduce the draft decision on the Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, which is contained in the document A/C.1/58/L.14.

Several UNGA resolutions and decisions have been adopted since the inception of the initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. By adopting these documents by consensus the international community has indicated its unequivocal support for this breakthrough proposal. We thank the delegations that voiced their support for establishment of a Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone during the general debate.

For almost five years since the adoption of the first UNGA resolution on this issue, the states of the region have been able to work out a draft treaty on the establishment of a zone and of a protocol on negative security assurances by nuclear weapon states. We thank the Department for Disarmament of the UN Secretariat and particularly the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for Asia and the Pacific for their valuable support in our work with these documents.

At the time being, the states of the region are in the midst of consultations with nuclear weapon states on these drafts. We very much hope the Central Asian and nuclear weapon states will find an appropriate compromise that will make the creation of a new NWFZ a possibility. Uzbekistan will certainly do its best in this regard.

Taking into consideration the continuing consultations and the need to keep this issue on our agenda, the delegation of Uzbekistan on behalf of all five Central Asian states is pleased to submit for your attention the draft decision which is before you. On behalf of five countries allow me to express our sincere hope that this draft decision will find support of all delegations and will be adopted by consensus.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.