Mr Chairman,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you and members of the bureau on your appointments. My delegation looks forward to working with you as we go through the remaining weeks of the First Committee.

2 Singapore is heartened by the many positive developments in the disarmament agenda last year. In particular, significant gains were made in the field of nuclear disarmament with the signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the US and Russia in April and the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in May. More recently, efforts were expended to bring forward the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Singapore remains firmly committed to the goal of disarmament, thus we encourage all actors and players to leverage on the positive momentum generated by these events to continue charting concrete gains on disarmament. There is much work to do to rally political will for the goal of disarmament.

3 At the same time, we must also carry on the concurrent fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). In today’s inter-connected world, the high volume of trade and increased facility of information flows have provided more options and flexibility for proliferators to obtain WMD, their delivery systems and related materials. In its nuclear security report issued in August, the IAEA disclosed that more than 200 cases of illicit trafficking, losses and thefts of nuclear and radioactive material were reported in the past year. Should these materials land in the hands of terrorists, the consequences would be unthinkable. Singapore has thus consistently supported non-proliferation treaty regimes such as the NPT, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
(CTBT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC).

Mr Chairman,

4 We must not forget the critical importance for these regimes to be accompanied by effective national implementation. As a global transhipment hub located at the juncture of key lines of communication, Singapore recognises that we have a practical and important part to play in preventing the proliferation of WMD, their delivery systems and related materials. We place particular emphasis in two key areas. First, we continually review and enhance our exports control regime, which is backed by strong national legislative and enforcement measures. Our Strategic Goods Control Act, which was implemented in 2003 with a partial control list to govern the export and transhipment of goods and technology with potential WMD application, was subsequently expanded and updated in 2008, in order to ensure that our exports control system remains robust and in line with international best practices.

5 Second, we also participate actively in multilateral counter-proliferation efforts. One such example is the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which aims to encourage international cooperation in the interdiction of WMD-related material shipments, in accordance with relevant international law as well as national legislation. As a committed PSI member, we regularly host PSI exercises and activities, the most recent of which was Exercise Deep Sabre II in October 2009.

6 At the regional level, Singapore also actively contributes to efforts complementing key multilateral counter-proliferation initiatives. We are co-hosting with China and the US a series of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Intersessional Meetings (ISM) on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, centred around the three pillars of the NPT, namely non-proliferation, disarmament and the right to peaceful uses of nuclear technology. By allowing ARF countries to exchange views and develop practical cooperation on non-proliferation and disarmament, the ISM provides a useful forum to facilitate regional capacity-building in this area. This July, Singapore hosted the second ISM focused on the third pillar of the NPT, following Beijing’s hosting of the inaugural ISM last year. The US will also be hosting the third ISM next year.

Mr Chairman,

7 As the threat of proliferation grows more complex and multi-faceted, a collective effort is urgently required from the international community to implement effective and useful disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. In this era of increasing interdependence, it is critical that we continue to work together towards bringing about a more peaceful world environment. Thank you.