Statement by Mr. Eugen MIHUT, Deputy Permanent Representative of Romania, in the thematic debate on „Nuclear Weapons“

Mr. Chairman,

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, let me congratulate you on the assumption of this position and assure you of the entire readiness of our side to support you in accomplishing your tasks.

Mr. Chairman,

Our current debate on nuclear issues should take into account that it occurs almost at one and half years after a successful NPT Review Conference and little over six months prior to the first PrepCom for the next RevCon. Thus, we consider it is high time to take stock of what has been achieved in implementing the Plan of Action and identify areas that we have to focus on in the short term.

We should start by reiterating once more that the NPT remains the corner stone of the global nuclear non-proliferation system, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with its Article VI and an important element in the further development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Its core objectives are even more valid under the current proliferation risks and have to be preserved and further strengthened.

Romania welcomes the most recent and relevant developments that took place in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Thus, the "Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative" (NPDI) took an important shape with the Berlin Statement of 30 April 2011, which contains concrete measures to be taken in the near future. Moreover, the active engagement towards Global Zero was once more acknowledged by the third NPDI ministerial meeting organized in New York on September 21.

Another major event that occurred this year is the Follow-up Meeting to the 2010 NPT RevCon by the five nuclear weapon states held in Paris, on 30 June-1 July. We highly value that the P5 reaffirmed the determination to implement their commitments made at this Conference and achieve further progress on the objectives of the NPT.

As an European Union member state, Romania took an active part in the seminar organized by the EU, in Brussels, last July, in preparation for the planned 2012 Conference on the establishment of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Bearing in mind the delicate process in the lead up to the next year, we would nevertheless encourage all parties to work towards a fruitful Conference.

As we all know, the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means represents the landmark of the debates at the current General Assembly session. Inspired by this, we profiled Romania as a mediator in some of the debates that the international community had this year as far as nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are concerned.

A first example is the Romanian Presidency of the 55th regular session of the IAEA General Conference, held in Vienna, from 19 to 23 September. A shared assessment of the delegates at the Conference was that the debates benefited from a positive and constructive atmosphere that made possible the adoption of several decisions relevant for the Agency’s future activities, such as the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, the IAEA’s Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 and a number of resolutions.
As a country with a relevant civilian nuclear program, Romania demonstrated once more its respect for each nation's right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, under the conditions that non-proliferation, safety and security conditions are entirely met.

Another concrete action was the 2011 National Data Centers (NDCs) Evaluation Workshop, jointly organized by the Romanian Government and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, in Bucharest, from 3 to 7 October. The Executive Secretary of the PrepCom CTBTO attended the opening of the workshop, on October 4, and on that occasion, he also had talks with high ranking Romanian officials on the implementation of the Treaty.

The workshop provided the opportunity for the NDC experts to share experience in fulfilling their verification responsibilities and to provide NDC feedback to the PTS on all aspects of the data, products, services and support NDCs in their work. We benefited of the presence of dozens of experts from 32 states signatories of the CTBT. That showed us the fact that the CTBTO verification regime is already operational, nevertheless the Treaty's entry into force is still pending.

In concluding my remarks, let me state again that Romania's immediate priority in the realm of nuclear weapons remains the negotiation, in line with agreed documents in the Conference on Disarmament, of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT), including verification provisions as a means to enhancing disarmament and non-proliferation. We still maintain the connection between the launch of FMCT negotiations and the revival of the activity of the Conference on Disarmament, where the deadlock has unjustifiably been maintained over the last 15 years.

I thank you for your attention.