Mr. Chairman,

1. At the outset, the delegation of the Republic of Korea wishes to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee, as well as the other distinguished members of the Bureau on their elections. I am confident that the wisdom, experience and capability will enable you to successfully lead the work of the First Committee. I assure you of my delegation’s support and cooperation.

2. Nuclear disarmament is crucial in reducing the threat of nuclear war and ensuring that such unthinkable power is never again used for destructive purposes against mankind. Considering this, there have been a considerable number of initiatives which have sought to make progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. A key example has been UN Secretary-General’s efforts to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world through his 2008 Five-Point Proposal.

3. In the last few years, the world has seen significant progress in the disarmament and non-proliferation arena. Last year, the Nuclear Security Summit was held in Washington D.C. A month later, at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the Final Document was successfully adopted by consensus for the first time in a decade. The New START Treaty between the two major nuclear weapon states entered into force this February.
4. However, given that a wide gap in perception still exists between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states, it would be hard to assert that nuclear disarmament has been as successful as we have hoped. To narrow this perception gap, we believe that nuclear weapon states must demonstrate a higher standard of compliance through sustainable nuclear disarmament measures. We firmly believe that deeper voluntary cuts by nuclear weapon states will grant them greater moral authority and political legitimacy to call on non-nuclear weapon states to join them in strengthening non-proliferation regime.

5. My delegation also strongly believes that in order to rekindle global efforts for nuclear disarmament, it is of the utmost importance to restore trust and nurture a spirit of cooperation between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. The latter must faithfully observe their commitment to non-proliferation, while the former must do their part by making real progress on nuclear disarmament. Bearing this in mind, we hope the expressed political will of the major nuclear powers on nuclear disarmament will be translated into real and tangible action in the field.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Republic of Korea welcomes the results of the 8th NPT Review Conference and affirms that the NPT should continue to function as a cornerstone of global peace and security. Its three pillars (nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy) should be bolstered in a mutually reinforcing manner. Especially, it is important to faithfully implement the 64-point conclusions and recommendations in the final document which condensed the goals and wishes of all the countries to realize a world free of nuclear weapons.

7. In our common effort to prevent the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and finally to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world, it is imperative that we ensure the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). We call upon those States that have not yet ratified it, in particular the remaining Annex II States, to do so immediately. We would also like to stress the importance of maintaining a moratorium on nuclear testing until the entry into force of the CTBT.

8. In addition, an FMCT is indispensable not only for nuclear non-proliferation, but also for nuclear disarmament. We believe that the time is ripe for the commencement of negotiations on an FMCT in the CD. My delegation calls upon all the CD members to show more flexibility and political will so that negotiations can begin at the earliest possible date. Any meaningful progress in the pace of negotiations for the conclusion of an FMCT will serve as a locomotive for revitalizing the entire disarmament regime. In this context, my delegation takes note of U.N. Secretary General’s recommendation to the CD to immediately begin an informal process before the CD members agree on formal negotiations on an FMCT within the CD.

Mr. Chairman,
9. Nuclear security is an issue that requires the common efforts of all the countries in the world. As a non-nuclear weapon state with an active civilian nuclear program in full compliance with non-proliferation obligations, the Republic of Korea has much to contribute to the global efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism and enhance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Against this backdrop, the Republic of Korea will host the next Nuclear Security Summit in 2012. We believe that the Summit will be a great opportunity to highlight the threats of nuclear terrorism, demonstrate the achievements made by the international community, and guide the direction toward a better and safer world.

Mr. Chairman,

10. As stated in the Republic of Korea’s keynote address, DPRK’s nuclear programs continue to pose a dire threat to regional peace and security as well as an unprecedented challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. It goes without saying that DPRK’s pursuit of a uranium enrichment program (UEP) is a clear and flagrant violation of the UN Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874 requiring DPRK to immediately cease all nuclear activities.

11. Last month, the international community has once again demonstrated a unified and resolute response against DPRK’s nuclear programs at the IAEA General Conference where a resolution expressing concern regarding its UEP and the light water reactor construction was unanimously adopted. The resolution also reaffirmed that contrary to the requirements of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, DPRK has not abandoned its existing nuclear programs. Indeed, how to tackle the DPRK’s nuclear issue remains vital to securing peace and security in Northeast Asia as well as sustaining the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime.

12. The Republic of Korea also shares the concerns of the international community about the outstanding questions regarding the nuclear program of Iran and Syria. Iran's continued enrichment activities and lack of cooperation with the IAEA are sources of profound concern. Syria still refuses to allow IAEA's access to its entire nuclear activities and sites. We urge Iran and Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding questions about their nuclear programs.

Mr. Chairman,

13. In order to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament, it is necessary for all of us to reflect upon the evolution of the international situation and to find a practical path toward a world free of nuclear weapons. What we need at this moment is the wise and balanced combination of being ambitious but realistic.

Thank you. /END/