Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee, as well as the other members of the Bureau on their election. I am confident that your able leadership will steer us through these month-long deliberations. Taking this opportunity, I would also like to thank Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA) for their strenuous efforts in support of the work of this Committee. Allow me to assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

In recent years, we have taken many positive steps in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Just last year alone, we witnessed the signing of the New START treaty, the Washington Nuclear Security Summit, and the adoption of the final document at the 8th NPT Review Conference. Following such progress, the monumental New START Treaty between the two major nuclear weapon states entered into force this February, adding to the global momentum toward a world free of nuclear weapons. These leaps forward, together with the five-point proposal for nuclear disarmament presented by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the vision for “a world free of nuclear weapons” put forward by President Obama, add up to a long-overdue recognition by the international community of the fact that disarmament and non-proliferation are once again becoming central to the global agenda.
As we assemble here on this global stage today, we must not simply gaze back upon our recent achievements in static self-complacency, but instead compel ourselves to take the next steps forward in our meaningful endeavors. Indeed, we must collectively seize the unique opportunity presented before us. My delegation strongly believes that in order to rekindle global efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, it is of the utmost importance to restore trust and to 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. In particular, it is important to faithfully implement the 64-point conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Our expectation for the revitalization of the CD is now greater than ever. Reflecting the aspiration of the international community, we have observed various efforts made by many delegations this year. Nevertheless, the CD continues to make little progress, thus wearing out the patience of the international community. Moreover, the UNDC also failed to produce any final documents or recommendations since 1999. In fact, the multilateral disarmament machinery is in severe disarray.

We believe that getting the CD back on track is the heart of any solution. With this in mind, and as an ardent supporter of multilateral efforts for disarmament and non-proliferation, the Korean Government joined the request to convene a UNGA debate for the revitalization of the CD in July. In addition, as my delegation proposed several times, it will also be useful to establish an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) under the supervision of the UN Secretary-General to search for solutions to overcome current difficulties in the CD. Recommendations by eminent persons who have expertise and wisdom in the field of international peace and security would be of tremendous value in facilitating the revitalization of the CD. It is my sincere hope that the CD will reach a consensus on the Program of Work at the first plenary session of the CD in 2012, hence enabling it to begin substantive works

Mr. Chairman,

It is clear that the CTBT has both political and practical value for the international community. Today, fifteen years since the Treaty was opened for signature here in New York, the CTBT enjoys near universal support, having been signed by 182 States and ratified by 155. However, the promise of the Treaty will not be fully realized until it enters into force and achieves its universality. The 7th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held on September 23, provided us with a fresh opportunity to renew our commitment to the CTBT and its objectives.
We believe that it is now time to translate declarations into tangible support for the Treaty. We therefore urge all States which have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT, particularly those States listed in Annex 2 whose ratification is necessary, to do so without further delay, with the aim of bringing it into force by 2012. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the international community must continue to reaffirm its commitment to refrain from nuclear explosions and to refrain from acting in a manner that undermines the purpose of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me now turn to current pressing challenges to our collective international non-proliferation efforts.

North Korea'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. In addition to North Korea's two nuclear tests each in 2006 and 2009, it revealed its uranium enrichment facility in Yongbyon last year. This has generated grave concern among the international community as it could open a second path for North Korea to develop nuclear weapons. It goes without saying that North Korea's pursuit of a UEP is a flagrant violation of the UN Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874 requiring North Korea to immediately cease all nuclear activities.

Facing North Korea's repeated acts of defiance, the international community has demonstrated a unified and resolute response against North Korea's nuclear ambitions, particularly with the UEP issue. For instance, last month, the IAEA General Conference unanimously adopted a resolution expressing concern regarding its UEP and the light water reactor construction as well as reaffirming that contrary to the requirements of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, North Korea has not abandoned its existing nuclear programs. Indeed, how to tackle the North Korean nuclear issue remains vital to securing peace and security in Northeast Asia as well as sustaining the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime.

In step with the efforts of the international community, my government will continue to pursue a principled approach in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, faithfully implementing sanctions under the UN Security Council resolutions, while leaving the door to dialogue open. The inter-Korean dialogues which were recently held twice in July and September represent such efforts of ours. We urge North Korea to respond to our calls for demonstrating its willingness and sincerity towards denuclearization through concrete actions so that appropriate conditions for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks could be created. I would like to stress that it is essential and urgent for North Korea to
immediately cease all nuclear activities, in particular its UEP in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. We will continue to work closely with the countries concerned to achieve the goal of the denuclearization of North Korea in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

Mr. Chairman,

We recognize that all state parties to the NPT have the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as long as they are in full compliance with their non-proliferation obligations. At the same time, we believe that given the proliferation potential inherent in sensitive nuclear technologies and fuel cycle activities, those States involved in such technologies and activities, which can be directly diverted into non-peaceful uses, must demonstrate a higher level of commitment to non-proliferation in order to inspire international confidence. It is in this context that we believe all suspicions and concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear intentions should be resolved expeditiously in order for Iran to regain the international community’s trust. Indeed, early and peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue will contribute not only to our efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, but also to the stability in the Middle East.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition to traditional non-proliferation issues, nuclear safety and security is also an issue which warrants special attention from all countries in order to prevent both catastrophic accidents and guard against the continuing threat of nuclear terrorism. In this regard, my delegation is of the view that the tragic accident in Fukushima this March also has significant global implications for nuclear safety and security. My delegation recognizes the increased synergy between nuclear safety and nuclear security and acknowledges that safety and security measures must be designed and implemented in an integrated manner.

In this regard, we must recognize that incidents arising from the unauthorized acquisition, use, transportation or storage of nuclear materials, or attacks on nuclear installations may have similar consequences to those caused by an accidental release of radiation. Given that the possibility of nuclear terrorism is the most extreme threat to global security, my delegation joins the effort to enhance nuclear security through international cooperation. In this regard, we expect that the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Korea will serve as an excellent opportunity to further address the synergy between nuclear security and nuclear safety, review the implementation of the commitments made at the Washington Summit, and explore new and creative ways to further enhance nuclear security. For all those member states who are interested in learning more, Korea will host a side event on the 2012 Nuclear Security
Summit on the margins of this week's General Debate to share information on the status of our preparation for the Summit. The event is scheduled for Friday, 7 October from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in this room.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not the least, the Republic of Korea is of the view that the issue of conventional weapons also warrants the constant attention of the international community. We fully support the goals and principles of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT should reflect well-balanced deliberations in terms of feasibility, scope, and parameters so as to attract the largest possible amount of members. We will do our utmost in bringing fruitful results from the deliberations by the target date.

Mr. Chairman,

With the lead of the United Nations, encouraging gains continues to form in the disarmament community, not only towards nuclear non-proliferation, but also regarding the eventual goal of a nuclear-free world. This goal will take more time and strenuous work, but we must continue on our path and refocus our efforts with a view towards lasting progress. In this regard, my delegation once again pledges our intention and willingness to work tirelessly for the success of the First Committee in this session and beyond, playing a role commensurate with our capacity and national focus on multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation.

Thank you very much. /END/