Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Russian delegation allow me to congratulate you, with your election to this responsible post and wish you success in the work ahead.

One of the most urgent tasks today is to overcome stagnation and revitalize the key multilateral disarmament institutions. A positive sign is that all States’ intentions coincide here, which has become evident through the intensive discussions we had in various formats – they aim at finding ways to enhance the efficiency of the multilateral disarmament system and, in particular, resumption of the activities of the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

Of course, we sometimes have different views on how to achieve our shared objectives. But in a matter like multilateral disarmament details are important, and specifics of each state’s approach should be taken into account. This is what we will be dealing with during the next four weeks.
Unfortunately, so far there have been not so many successes in the field of multilateral disarmament. This, however, makes the ones we have even more valuable.

In this context, we welcome the start of the implementation of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. This, we believe, establishes a good foundation for further development of multilateral approaches to disarmament and non-proliferation.

The entry into force of the Treaty between Russia and the United States on measures for the further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms (START) has been a major consolidating and far-reaching event that has taken place this year. The parties have already proceeded to full implementation of their obligations. Later on together with our American colleagues we intend to hold a briefing on this issue here at the First Committee. It is of extreme importance that the Russian-American Treaty is based on the principles of equality, parity, equal and indivisible security of the parties. We are confident that the nuclear arms reductions envisaged in the Treaty will allow to enhance international security and stability, as well as strengthening nuclear non-proliferation regime and expand the process of nuclear disarmament.

Russia remains committed to achieving a noble goal of saving humanity from a nuclear threat and is open to a dialogue on further steps towards nuclear disarmament. However, this issue needs a balanced approach. It is necessary to take into account the whole range of political, economic and military factors affecting international security and strategic stability. These factors, in particular, include the following:

- unilateral intentions to create a global missile defense system;
- unresolved issue of preventing the placement of weapons in outer space;
- lack of progress in pursuing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT);
- increasing imbalances in conventional arms in Europe;
- plans to develop and use strategic offensive arms in non-nuclear configuration under the "prompt global strike" initiative;
- placement of nuclear weapons on the territories of states not possessing them.

Further steps towards nuclear disarmament could be considered and taken only in strict compliance with the principle of equal and indivisible security for all.
Moreover, this process should gradually involve all states — without exception — that possess military nuclear capabilities.

The interdependent nature of contemporary security problems and the interrelationship of various factors affecting strategic stability are reflected in missile defense debates. We believe that these issues are to be most seriously considered by the whole international community, since in this way or another they can affect the interests of all states and regions. The logic behind Russian concerns is simple and clear: if any Party or especially a military alliance promptly and without any limitations builds up its missile defense capabilities, the other Party will inevitably have to fill up the gap by increasing the number of its offensive arms or taking some other asymmetric action. So, the accelerated implementation of missile defense projects without consideration of other States’ interests is seriously undermining strategic stability and international security, and certainly is entirely incompatible with the efforts to create favorable international conditions for further progress towards general and complete disarmament.

Undoubtedly, the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space remains a priority of Russian foreign policy. We intend to move further towards that goal. We expect an intensified common work at the CD on the Russia-China draft Treaty on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space (PPWT). We call on all States concerned to join our efforts in a more active way.

An important element of the PPWT is the development of transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) in outer space activities. Taking into consideration the last year’s UN General Assembly decision to establish a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) for the analysis, compilation and development of TCBMs, it is particularly important to ensure active, purposeful and fruitful work in this area. It is necessary to create favourable conditions for the GGE work and focus it on elaborating practical recommendations on TCBMs.

Considering the fact that the GGE is to begin its work in 2012, at the current session of the First Committee Russia and China will introduce a draft procedural decision on TCBMs providing for the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the next session of the UNGA. We ask everyone to support it.

The international information security issue is gaining particular significance. The consensus adoption by the 65th session of the UNGA of the relevant resolution noting the effective work of the UN Group of governmental experts on international information security and its report demonstrates the readiness of international community to cooperate in this sphere. The Group will be reestablished in 2012. At the current session of the UNGA we count on the support and co-sponsorship of the renewed Russian draft where we propose to adjust the Group’s mandate.
In this context we would like to draw attention to the initiative of Russia, China, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan regarding the elaboration of a document on the “Rules of behavior in the sphere of international information security”. On the 12th of September the relevant draft document was circulated in the UN. We expect it to be discussed with interest and in a constructive manner.

Russia has consistently been in favour of addressing current global and regional challenges to the non-proliferation regime exclusively within the NPT framework. The decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference are a reliable reference point for our future efforts in this area. They provide for a set of practical and balanced measures aimed inter alia at the universalization and strengthening of the Treaty, implementation of high international standards for ensuring safety and preventing leaks of nuclear materials, equipment and relevant technologies as well as ensuring that they are not diverted to military purposes.

We will continue to support the development of the IAEA safeguards system. We call on all NPT Parties that have not yet done so, to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA and to conclude and put into effect Additional Protocols.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of implementing the 2010 NPT RevCon decisions on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (WMDFZ) in the Middle East. We consider convening a conference on this issue in 2012 as one of the priority tasks. We are convinced that the success of this event will depend largely on the willingness of the Middle East states to engage in constructive dialogue. Being a co-sponsor of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and one of the depositaries of the Treaty, Russia is rendering full support to this process within the scope of its obligations and in accordance with the decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We expect that the venue of the Conference and the appointment of a facilitator will be agreed upon in the nearest future.

We stand for the acceleration of the CTBT ratification process in order to ensure its earliest entry into force. We urge all states and primarily those on whom depends the CTBT’s entry into force to sign and ratify it as soon as possible.

We are convinced that the launch of negotiations on Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty at the CD within its balanced program of work would correspond to the interests of all states without exception. We consider the initiatives to start FMCT negotiations outside the CD as counter-productive. On our part, we actively participate in the search for mutually acceptable solutions. We expect the relevant ideas soon to become an official basis for consensus decisions.
We hope that this year we will also be able to see the success in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation at the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). We are to engage in serious efforts on finding compromises. It is no secret that on a number of issues the approaches of the BTWC State Parties are different. But we are convinced that together we will manage to ensure the successful and fruitful outcome of the BTWC Review Conference. Russia looks forward to productive work in cooperation with all the participating states.

Russia stands for the further strengthening of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The Fourth Review Conference of the CCW to be held in November is a significant step in the Convention’s operation. We will actively participate in its work and expect to see important substantive decisions taken aimed at further strengthening of the CCW.

We consider the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) as one of the most successful multilateral mechanisms in disarmament and non-proliferation. We confirm our commitment to the total elimination under international control of all Russia’s chemical weapons stockpiles and undertake maximum effort to complete this task as soon as possible.

In the context of global non-proliferation efforts we note the importance of the UN Security Council Resolution 1540. We stand for the full implementation of its provisions by all countries while taking into account the comprehensive and long-term nature of its tasks.

The UN is to play a central role in addressing the challenges of missile proliferation. We are satisfied with the outcome of the third UN Panel of Governmental Experts and the result achieved. We stand for the continued discussion of this topic within the framework of the UN based on the GGE report.

We view the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) as a first step towards a legally binding multilateral agreement on a global missile non-proliferation regime. In spite of all difficulties with the Code operation, Russia remains committed to its aims and objectives, pursues the policy of constructive interaction with its partners to enhance the efficiency of the HCOC and to help to achieve its genuine universality, first of all, through the accession to the Code by all missile-capable States.

We are interested in the Arms Trade Treaty UN negotiating process to result in the elaboration of a really strong and efficient outcome document that would be feasible and adopted by consensus. We consider its main goal to cut off the channels of illicit arms trafficking.
We view the improved practical effectiveness of the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons (SALW) as the most essential task for preventing illicit trade in these weapons. We are willing to work with all states in order to introduce specific measures to the Programme that would really help to cut off the channels of transfer of SALW to those who use them for criminal purposes and in violation of the UN Security Council embargo. The “best practices” of States, including Russia, could serve as the basis for such measures.

During the work of the First Committee, the Russian delegation is open to a constructive and transparent cooperation, based on mutual respect, with all states and on the entire spectrum of the above-mentioned issues with a view to achieving tangible results.

Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, of our support for your efforts towards an effective organization of the work ahead and readiness to cooperate constructively on the above-mentioned issues with all the delegations.