Mr. Chairman,

I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. Allow me to assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation for your able leadership.

Mr. Chairman,

In recent years, we have witnessed encouraging developments in the nuclear arena. Among them are the historic signing of a new START treaty by the two major nuclear powers, two groundbreaking Nuclear Security Summits in Washington and Seoul, and the unanimous adoption of the final document at the 8th NPT Review Conference in 2010. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also presented his five-point proposal for nuclear disarmament in 2008. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain central to the global agenda.

However, these positive trends have seemed to stall over the last two years. My delegation strongly believes that in order to rekindle global efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, it is critical to restore trust and to nurture a spirit of cooperation between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. The non-nuclear weapons states must faithfully observe their commitment to non-proliferation, while the nuclear weapons states must do their part by making true progress in nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the NPT, the Republic of Korea recognizes that all state parties have the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as long as they are in full compliance with their non-proliferation obligations.
However, there is also an inherent proliferation potential in nuclear fuel cycle technologies. States taking advantage of such technologies, which can be directly diverted into non-peaceful uses, must demonstrate a higher level of commitment to non-proliferation and full implementation of safeguards obligations in order to assure international confidence.

We believe that all outstanding issues and concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear programme should be resolved expeditiously and diplomatically in order for Iran to regain the trust of international community. Early and peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue is crucial not only for the nuclear non-proliferation regime, but also for the overall stability in an increasingly volatile Middle East. My delegation hopes that the upcoming nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East conference in Finland this December will prove to be a resolute success.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear terrorism has emerged as one of the most challenging threats to global security. Preventing nuclear proliferation not only to states but also to the non-State actors is of the utmost importance.

Concerted efforts by the international community are important to prevent nuclear terrorism. The United Nations should function as the main arena for these efforts. And the IAEA, together with the UN, should continue to play a leading role in facilitating international cooperation and providing assistance and strengthening safeguards.

The High-Level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism, convened two weeks ago during the UN General Assembly, has provided a new momentum to push forward the efforts of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit this year. At the Seoul Summit, fifty-eight global leaders declared a collective international commitment towards a peaceful world free of nuclear terrorism, adopting the “Seoul Communiqué.” The Summit served as an excellent opportunity to remind us that sustained efforts are required to address the issue of nuclear safety and security in a coherent manner. My delegation expects that we can explore newer and more creative ways to further enhance nuclear safety and security in the next Nuclear Security Summit to be held in the Netherlands in 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

It is clear that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has both political and practical importance for the international community. My delegation welcomes the most recent achievements, which include the ratification by Indonesia and Guatemala, as well as the signature of the Treaty by Niue.

However, the promise of the Treaty will not be fully realized until it enters into force and achieves its universality. My delegation urges all States, particularly the States listed in Annex 2, which have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT to do so without further delay. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, states must refrain from acting in a manner that undermines the purpose of the Treaty.
Mr. Chairman,

There have been increasing concerns over the past decade regarding the inactivity of the Conference of Disarmament (CD). My government still adheres to the hope that the CD plays its central role as the premier forum for disarmament, and will do its due part to ignite the CD process into motion. We once again call upon all CD members to first cooperate in kick-starting substantive work on the FMCT, and then continue work on all other longstanding CD issues.

Coming on the heels of the high-level meeting organized by the OPCW last week, the Republic of Korea recognizes the critical role of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). My delegation would like to urge all states not party to the Convention, especially those states believed to possess chemical weapons capabilities including the DPRK, to join the Convention without further delay. Chemical weapons must not, under any circumstances, be actually used or even be used for the purpose of threatening. This is unacceptable under international law and goes against global humanitarian principles.

Conventional weapons have the potential to destabilize entire countries and regions and their human toll is vast. As has been noted many times before, these weapons are indeed the real weapons of mass destruction. The Republic of Korea fully supports the goals and principles of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT should reflect well-balanced deliberations in terms of feasibility, implementability, and effectiveness, with a view to encourage the full participation of all Member States. It is disappointing that the meeting held in New York in July of this year failed to bear fruit. However, the ATT is too important to simply give up. We look forward to the effective deliberations in the First Committee for constructive alternatives.

Mr. Chairman,

The 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.

In addition to its two nuclear tests each in 2006 and 2009, and the revelation of its uranium enrichment facility in Yongbyon in 2010, the DPRK launched a long-range missile in April of this year. This is a clear violation of UN Security Council resolution 1874, which prohibits any launch using ballistic missile technology. In response to this provocative action, the UN Security Council reaffirmed, through a firm and resolute Presidential Statement, that the international community will not tolerate the DPRK’s continued pursuit of its nuclear and missile programs.

Nonetheless, the DPRK is continuing to defy its obligations by pursuing its nuclear programs, including its uranium enrichment program and construction of a light water reactor. The existence of a uranium enrichment program should be of grave concern to us all as it opens another path for them to develop further its nuclear weapons capabilities.

Recently, the DPRK has repeatedly expressed its intention to expand its nuclear capabilities, while referring to itself as a nuclear-weapon state. In response, the international community sent a unified and resolute message last month at the IAEA General Conference by adopting a resolution unanimously. In the resolution, the international community reaffirmed that North
Korea cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon state in accordance with the NPT, as clearly stressed in the Final Document of 2010 NPT Review Conference and UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874. The DPRK should abide by its international commitments and obligations under UN Security Council resolutions and the September 19 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

In step with the efforts of the international community, my Government will continue to pursue a principled approach to resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, faithfully implementing sanctions in line with the UN Security Council resolutions, while simultaneously leaving the door open to dialogue.

We urge the DPRK to immediately cease all nuclear activities and take concrete measures aimed at denuclearization. This would also open an avenue to improving the livelihood of its people. We will continue to work closely with the countries concerned to achieve the goal of a denuclearized North Korea in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner.

Mr. Chairman,

During this session, the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Government of Australia will table a resolution on “Preventing and Combating Illicit Brokering Activities.” The Republic of Korea, as the Chair of the Hague Code of Conduct in the year of 2012-13, will also table a resolution on “the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.” My delegation requests the co-sponsorship and full support of all delegations.

The disarmament community, through the lead of the United Nations, has continued to make encouraging gains, not only towards nuclear non-proliferation, but also the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons. 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.

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.