Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Russian delegation allow me to congratulate you with your election to this responsible post and wish you as well as all those present here success in the difficult work ahead.

First of all, I would like to reaffirm Russia's commitment to the multilateral disarmament mechanisms functioning under the aegis of the UN, including the Geneva Conference on Disarmament (CD), our current forum – the UNGA First Committee, and the UN Disarmament Commission.

We certainly share the international community's concern with the fact that this "triad" has not yielded any real contribution to the bank of achievements in the field of multilateral disarmament for many years. However, there are serious divergences between us and those who think that this situation is the result of the alleged "imperfection" of the UN mechanisms and propose to "reform" them. We fundamentally disagree with such an approach. "Reforming" experiments could break down the existing structures, but there is no guarantee, that they would help building something new and more efficient than the existing "triad".

It is evident to us that the reason for the stagnation of the disarmament process is not the alleged "imperfection" of some structures. The stagnation is in fact caused by political factors. First of all, they have to do with the atmosphere of strategic uncertainty that has recently characterized international relations.
Turbulence instead of stability in international affairs, widely practiced double standards, and forceful acts in circumvention of the UN Security Council hardly contribute to the atmosphere favorable for any tangible progress in the field of disarmament. As a result, States' concepts about the ways to ensure national, regional and international security and the role of disarmament mechanisms in this process often substantially differ. No organizational innovations could solve this fundamental problem. What we need is to search meticulously for common points in our positions and carry out dialogue based on mutual respect.

In this regard the Russian Federation calls upon all states to approach pragmatically to the solution of the existing problems and to agree without any excessive political ambition on the beginning of a substantial work on all four key agenda items simultaneously in working groups on the basis of the discussion mandate. In our view it is the only possible way out, which may be accepted by all CD participant states. Such pragmatic decision could give impetus to the process and open the door for possible more serious steps in future.

Mr. Chairman,

The indisputable priority for all of us is to strengthen the NPT regime and to implement the Programme of Action adopted in 2010. We are strongly convinced that all current risks and threats to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime may and should be eliminated on the basis of the NPT. Under this Treaty there is a solid network of effective mechanisms restricting the spread both of nuclear weapons as such and sensitive nuclear materials that may fall into the hands of terrorists and may be used for military purposes.

It is necessary to ensure success of the regular NPT review process. In this respect one of the most important tasks is to carry out the instruction to convene this year a conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (WMDFZ) in the Middle East. We together with the USA, UK and the UN General Secretary received that instruction at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Much work has already been done. We together with other "co-conveners" deal with organizational matters and seek to provide discussion topics for the Conference. We call for taking consensus decisions. The countries of the region should primarily reaffirm their political will to establish the WMDFZ and demonstrate their ability to come to an agreement. Nobody, except for themselves, will be able to solve these tasks. One of the vital tasks is to ensure all Middle East States participation in the Conference. We urge again the countries, which have not done it yet, to confirm their participation in that major event. We also call upon all interested states to take maximum efforts for the Conference to be held this December and to bring positive results.
We support the establishment of a Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). We are ready to sign the corresponding Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty with our traditional reservations, which provide for our own national security interests.

We support Mongolian efforts to consolidate its non-nuclear status. We have made a significant contribution, i.e. acceded to the Joint Declaration of the five NWS on Mongolia's non-nuclear status that was signed here on the sidelines of the 67th UN General Assembly.

It is important to complete the process of NWFZ establishment in Central Asia. We consider that it is necessary to intensify consultations so that the protocol to the corresponding Treaty could be signed by the nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Among the few really significant arms control achievements attained in the last decade there were the signing, entry into force and beginning of implementation of the Russia-US START Treaty. Now it is considered to be a "gold standard" of disarmament arrangements based on the principles of equal and indivisible security.

Some people say that "this is not enough". However, Russia and the United States have in fact done everything possible in the field of strategic offensive arms as yet. Now our task is to meet the commitments envisaged in the START Treaty in full.

The signing of this Treaty raised hopes for an early agreement on further steps in the field of nuclear disarmament. Sharing aspirations to achieve a nuclear-free world, Russia understands and welcomes such expectations. In reality, however, the prospects of new agreements are becoming more and more illusive. Strategic stability is affected by tectonic shifts ensuing from hasty implementation of unilateral plans to develop a global ballistic missile defense (BMD) system. In essence, this is an attempt to ensure one's own security at the expense of security of others in contravention of fundamental principles of European and international security. Not all States are aware of pernicious consequences of such steps yet, but there is actually a trend which may soon ruin any hope for disarmament. Moreover, unilateral deployment of BMD systems without any limitation or regard for general international context and legitimate interests of other States will inevitably entail counter-measures, thereby creating dangerous prerequisites for confrontation and, perhaps, even a new round of the arms race. Our foremost priority is to prevent such developments.

In general in this field we should take into account the global nature of missile proliferation challenges and address them jointly. Under certain conditions missile defense may become a response tool. Importantly, it should
be proportionate to real rather than supposed threats and should not lead to even
greater imbalance in international relations. Each country or a group of
countries has a right to choose their own most effective ways to ensure security,
but this should not be done to the detriment of neighbours' security.

The Russian Federation remains open to a missile defense dialogue. The
priority should be given to the joint development of a missile defense
architecture which is apt to adequately respond to current missile challenges and
will not be a matter of concern to any side. We are ready for this work.

Another priority for us is prevention of an arms race in outer space. We
believe this issue to be the most relevant and best prepared to be discussed at the
CD. We intend to seek further consolidation of the international community's
efforts to address this issue and expect a practical team work on the Russia–
China draft treaty on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space
(PPWT) to be started as soon as possible. In our view, the CD is the best forum
for it. We call upon all States concerned to actively contribute to a substantive
discussion of the draft treaty.

As the first step towards the PPWT, we call upon all responsible outer
space faring Nations to follow Russia and other CSTO countries' example by
reinforcing their willingness to ensure security of their outer space activities
with a political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space.

An integral part of the global effort on the PPWT is the development of
transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. We
welcome the launch of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on TCBMs
established to explore the issue in detail and make recommendations on how
these measures might be incorporated in international practices by the next
session of the UNGA. In case of international support, we do not rule out the
possibility to go forward by making some TCBMs legally binding, which would
contribute to a greater responsibility of States for their outer space activities.

We call upon all interested countries to make collective, progressive and
sustained efforts to create a favorable environment for further progress of
multilateral disarmament. The Russian Federation is ready for this work,
including during this session of the UNGA First Committee.