STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JORGE VALERO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

THEMATIC DEBATE OF THE FIRST
COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

67° Session of the General
Assembly of the United Nations

Please check upon delivery

New York, October 18th, 2012
Mr. President,

For my delegation, the lack of urgency surrounding the issue of nuclear disarmament is a source of deep bewilderment.

We live in a world plagued by rising tensions and confrontations. The system of international relations that attempts to regulate the behavior of States is under constant threat. Are interventions are carried out, outside the Security Council and the cardinal principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The ambitions of world domination are on the agenda and undermine the possibilities of moving towards a multipolar world, balanced, peaceful and without nuclear weapons. New conceptions of permanent war are created to justify the maintenance and modernization of nuclear arsenals; for example, the possibility of the so-called rogue States obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Two decades after the end of the Cold War, arsenals with the ability to destroy the planet several times still exist. Around 20,500 nuclear warheads persist in the world, more than 5,000 are deployed and ready for use, and 2,000 of them are under high alert. Due to technological developments, an important number of them yield between 8 and 100 times greater than the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The process of modernization of nuclear weapons is rapidly progressing and there is the risk that it is expanded into outer space.

Along with this fast and frightening process of modernization and expansion, there are few signs that we are walking the path of total elimination of nuclear weapons. The large military-nuclear complex of national security, considered a Cold War phenomenon, persists and it is strengthen in some countries.

It seems like we are entering a phase of normalization of nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War context. The risk of a new Cold War, accompanied by a new arms race, is real and imminent.
Many will argue that the production and modernization of nuclear weapons needs not to lead to a nuclear confrontation and that, on the contrary, it contributes to deterrence and peaceful coexistence between nuclear States. They see the threat of the use of nuclear weapons as morally defensible and claim that their purpose is precisely to avoid a military-nuclear confrontation. It is presumed that a military-nuclear exchange will never happen.

Given these positions, progress in reducing nuclear arsenals, below the threshold of total and complete annihilation of the enemy, humanity, and the environment, is not foreseen in the near future. The serious thing is that there does not exist a real guarantee that a nuclear war will not happen. The doctrine of deterrence is just that, a doctrine, a hope. The future of humanity can no longer rest on the false confidence of a few States.

For these reasons, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela considers that the adoption of multilateral agreements in the field of disarmament is a priority for mankind. Therefore, we must devote ourselves to negotiate substantial on disarmament, within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament – the multilateral forum par excellence – aimed at the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

It corresponds, to the nuclear powers, the primary responsibility in the inevitable fulfillment of their commitments in the areas of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, made under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in order to strengthen international peace and security; as well as to ensure the survival of the human species.

I thank you, Mr. President.