Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement already delivered on behalf of the European Union on this cluster.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal reaffirms its staunch commitment to effective multilateralism, centered in the United Nations, in the vital domains of disarmament and non-proliferation. The UN integrated structure of bodies aiming at pursuing multilateral international efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control remains crucial and irreplaceable.

The components of this UN disarmament machinery, originated in the First Special Session of the General Assembly dedicated to Disarmament (SSOD-I), must be inclusive. This is as true today as it was in 1978, that – and I quote - “Since the process of disarmament affects the vital security interests of all States, they must all contribute to the measures of disarmament – therefore the role and responsibility of the UN must be strengthened”.

Delivered by Mrs. Cristina Pucarinho
Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

New York 27 of October 2016
The actual and emerging complex security challenges require an effective UN disarmament machinery. The General Assembly’s First Committee, the UN Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament should work in mutually reinforcing ways, in accordance with their respective mandates.

It is in our opinion regretful that the UN disarmament machinery has been unable, for the past decades, to fulfill its respective mandate and to deliver as it should. This long standing stalemate can only be overcome with the necessary political will to move the UN disarmament machinery forward and achieve tangible results.

Mr. Chairman,

It is deplorable that the Conference on Disarmament, despite many efforts, did not succeed in agreeing on its annual Programme of Work. Procedural aspects, formalities or the complex international situation do not serve as valid excuses for the Conference’s failure to adapt itself to new circumstances and to accomplish even its immediate procedural tasks.

While Portugal, as a matter of principle, does not support circumventing existing bodies, these must provide for effective responses to the challenges they are mandated to effectively address. This is not being the case.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal has a longstanding commitment to effective inclusive multilateralism and urges the Conference on Disarmament to address the matter of its enlargement in a serious manner. One of the more fundamental UN principles, notably the right assisting all interested States to become part of all UN mechanisms dedicated to global concerns, is being ignored for the last 17 years. Ever since,
the door remained closed to the admission of other States, like mine, which throughout the years reaffirmed their interest in becoming full Parties to the Conference.

As CD’s agenda encompasses global concerns, it should be more representative of the UN membership. 65 members are not, in our opinion, sufficiently representative. Enlargement modalities of the CD should be promptly examined and, in this regard, Portugal strongly supports the appointment of a special coordinator for continuing consultations on the expansion of its membership.

Mr. Chairman,

On the **Commission for Disarmament** - the crucial UN General Assembly deliberative body on disarmament -, it is critical to enhance and revitalize its role. We are regrettably still expecting progress on the improvement of its working methods and more constructive deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal supports the immediate commencement of the negotiations of a verifiable and non-discriminatory **Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices**, following the mandate contained in the document CD/1299. A moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should be observed meanwhile. We therefore support the draft resolution submitted by Canada, Germany and the Netherlands on this important issue.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman,

Taking concrete steps to preserve the leading role of the UN disarmament machinery, including by acting on the enlargement of
the Conference on Disarmament, would contribute to address the challenges we face and provide fresh impetus to disarmament diplomacy.