EU Statement by

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Main Committee I

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As delivered
Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Albania*, as well as Ukraine and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union reaffirms EU Member States' commitment to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The EU stresses the need for concrete progress in this field, especially through an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Bearing in mind the current severe security environment, the EU reiterates its unwavering support for all three pillars of the Treaty and to the implementation of all commitments assumed under it or undertaken during previous Review Conferences.

The EU recalls that, in accordance with the 2010 NPT Action Plan, all State Parties are committed to pursue policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

The EU welcomes the considerable reductions made so far taking into account the special responsibility of the States that possess the largest arsenals. In this context, the EU also welcomes their indications of progress in implementing the New START Treaty and strongly encourages them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals, including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons. In this context, the EU notes the proposal made by the United States in June 2013. The EU emphasizes that intermediate steps to achieve the objective of a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the NPT can represent significant increases in security for all.

We emphasize that the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, a landmark arms-control agreement that eliminated an entire class of weapons, including some 3000 nuclear and conventional ballistic missiles, is an important element of the post-Cold War European security architecture and international security and stability, as well as a contribution by the United States, the Russian Federation and other State Parties to the fulfilment of their obligations under Article VI of the NPT.

The EU welcomes and encourages the holding of further P5 Conferences on the follow-up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including confidence-building, transparency, verification activities and discussions on reporting. The EU welcomes the increased transparency shown by some nuclear-weapon States, in particular by the two Members States of the EU, on the nuclear weapons they possess, and calls on others to do likewise.

The EU remains committed to treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control and stresses the need to renew multilateral efforts and revitalize multilateral negotiating bodies, in particular the Conference on Disarmament (CD), looking in this regard into possibilities such as its future enlargement. Its ongoing stalemate, including its persistent failure to agree on a Programme of Work, remains a source for concern.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
The EU reiterates its call for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a Treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein which remains a clear priority. We call on all States that have not yet done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as well as to dismantle or convert for non-explosive use only the facilities dedicated to the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. We welcome the action of those of the five nuclear-weapon States, in particular by the two Member States of the EU, which have declared relevant moratoria and dismantled or converted such facilities.

In this context, the EU also welcomes the constructive discussions at and the successful conclusion of the meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts in 2014 and 2015 and expresses its confidence that their report will lay the ground for future negotiations.

The EU considers the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to be of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and its entry into force remains a top priority for us. We continue to promote this objective through diplomatic and financial engagement, the latter amounting to more than EUR 15.5 million in support of the CTBT Organisation since 2006. Moreover, all EU Member States have demonstrated their commitment to the Treaty by ratifying it and by abiding by its Basic Obligations as stated in Article I. We reiterate the call on all States that have not yet done so, in particular those listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty, to sign and ratify the Treaty. In this context, we welcome the ratification of the Treaty by twelve states including that of Indonesia, which is an Annex 2 country, since the beginning of the Eighth Review Conference. We also call on all States, including the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), to abide by a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion and to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty pending its entry into force. The EU is pleased to note that the CTBT Organization has demonstrated its ability to effectively monitor compliance with the Treaty.

The EU notes the severe consequences associated with nuclear weapons use and emphasizes that all States share the responsibility to prevent such an occurrence from happening. The EU further notes, in this respect, the ongoing discussions on the consequences of nuclear weapons, in the course of which different views are being expressed, including at an international conference, in which not all EU Member States participated, organized by Austria.

The EU recognizes that negative security assurances strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and calls on all nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm existing security assurances noted by UN Security Council Resolution 984 (1995) and recalled in UN Security Council Resolution 1887 (2009).

The EU also recognizes that treaty-based security assurances are available to nuclear weapon free zones and welcomes in this regard the signature by the nuclear-weapon states of the Protocol to the Treaty establishing a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia and its ratification by France and the United Kingdom.
The EU recalls that Russia specifically committed to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 on security assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. The EU reaffirms its commitment to the respect of international law in international relations, including in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.