Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to align my statement with the statement of the European Union (EU), delivered by the European Union Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament, Ambassador Jacek Bylica. I would like to highlight a few points on nuclear disarmament that are important for Slovenia.

Mr. Chairman, as I pointed out in my statement during yesterday's general debate, Slovenia continues to believe in the world free of nuclear weapons. We are convinced that this should not be a distant ideal, but rather an attainable goal for the international community. Slovenia also believes that the NPT should continue to serve as a central point of all international activities in the context of nuclear disarmament. We are convinced that the states in possession of nuclear weapons, whether States Parties to the NPT or not, are particularly responsible for the continuity of the disarmament process and should assume a more active role.

Slovenia commends the United States and the Russian Federation for continuing reducing their stocks of nuclear weapons within the framework of the START Treaty. We encourage them to continue with the implementation of the Treaty and to launch new talks on further reductions. In this context, we warmly welcome the initiative of the US President Obama to address the issue of further reductions of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons together with the Russian Federation. In our view, this would truly contribute to nuclear disarmament. Countries with military nuclear programs that are not States Parties to the NPT also share the responsibility for nuclear disarmament and for the security and safety of our planet. Slovenia urges them not only to accede to the NPT, but also to discontinue the production of fissile materials and join other possessing states in their nuclear disarmament efforts aimed at final and irreversible solutions.

Mr. Chairman, Slovenia is a staunch supporter of treaty-based disarmament and arms control. We see the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) as a first new international legal instrument to be negotiated in the field of nuclear disarmament. We regret that the Conference on Disarmament has been blocked for almost twenty years and thus unable to start negotiations on the FMCT. We see a new opportunity in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE), which met for the first time in Geneva in March this year. We
hope that the final report produced by this group will serve as a basis for future negotiations on the FMCT. We hope for a strong treaty with an effective verification system. We are confident that the FMCT will complement the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Speaking of the CTBT, I would like to seize this opportunity to appeal once again to all Annex II States to ratify the CTBT as soon as possible.

One of the reasons for prolonged multilateral negotiations in the field of nuclear disarmament is the lack of strong and functional international disarmament machinery. This needs to be fixed, and we welcome all initiatives to this end. Allow me to mention the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), which concluded its annual proceedings last week, and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva. Slovenia would like to appeal once again to the members of the Conference on Disarmament to start the process of expansion of its membership. The CD should be open to all states that are concerned with international peace and security and interested in participating in disarmament negotiations. We are convinced that new members will only enrich the Conference on Disarmament.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, allow me to conclude with a few words on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Slovenia recognizes the importance of this initiative. We attended the conferences held in Oslo, Norway, in March last year, and in Nayarit, Mexico, last February. We are well aware of possible devastation and humanitarian catastrophe that could be wrought by a nuclear detonation or proliferation, and we agree that the international community should be better prepared for, and informed on, such circumstances.

Slovenia would like to reiterate that this process could be streamlined in the context of the NPT review process and could lead us forward towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that rhetoric on the immediate and categorical ban of nuclear weapons or weapons linked to nuclear technology is not constructive and will not bring us any closer to nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman, we commend Austria for the initiative to hold the next conference on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons later this year, and plan to attend it.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.