I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The following countries align themselves with this declaration: Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland†, Serbia†, Albania†, Bosnia and Herzegovina†, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

We strongly believe that a multilateral approach to security, disarmament and non-proliferation is the best means of maintaining international peace and security. We strongly support the United Nations and effective multilateralism. The existence of new threats to international security makes it more important than ever to have a properly functioning system. Since we all recognize that today's global security problems require cooperative and multilateral solutions, now is the time to reinforce and revitalize multilateral efforts.

We remain deeply troubled by the on-going stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. The CD, in accordance with its mandate has a crucial role to negotiate multilateral treaties. It is in the hands of all members to reinforce the CD and restore the central role it plays in strengthening the non-proliferation regime and multilateral disarmament. Its revitalization is more urgent than ever.

I would like to reaffirm our strong commitment to the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. At the same time, we are aware that the adoption of a Programme of Work will require sustained political effort. If the current standstill continues, the debate will increasingly focus on other options to allow States to make progress in multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament. We acknowledge the security concerns of all states, but, at the same time we firmly believe that the consensus rule must not be subject to abuse. We therefore appeal to all delegations to the Conference on Disarmament to show flexibility, which is needed by all of us, if we want to overcome the longstanding stalemate.

* Acceding Country Croatia and the Candidate countries former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
† Candidate Country Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.
For us, the immediate commencement of substantive work through the adoption and implementation of a balanced and comprehensive Programme of Work, building on document CD/1864 is the highest priority. The CD needs to resume its work without delay. We urgently need multilateral progress on the crucial issues that have been on our agenda for such a long time and for the CD to do what it was created to do.

We would like to reiterate our longstanding attachment to the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. We underline the importance of continuation of consultations on the expansion of the membership and strongly support appointing a special co-ordinator on the expansion of the CD membership.

We also strongly value close and continuous coordination of the six presidencies, which could considerably contribute to our work.

Consistent with our engagement with civil society, we are also keen to explore ways to strengthen the voice of NGOs and to associate research institutions in the work of the CD.

We take note of the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Switzerland on 24 May 2013 with proposals on a structured process aiming at reviewing the Conference's method of work. We are looking forward to hear more on these ideas, or other ideas CD members might have, as long as they do not become a substitute for the real work that the CD should be doing.

Thank you.