Distinguished Chairperson,

The Maldives delegation congratulates you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee. I would like to assure you of my delegation’s full support in the work ahead. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Angela Kane and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in their efforts to support the work of the Committee.

Mr Chairperson,

The Maldives does not produce any armaments or weaponry of any type nor has it any ambitions to do so. The Maldives may not have the resources to contribute towards strengthening and enforcement of a global non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Yet, the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction is as real to us as to any other country in the world. As a community of nations, we believe every one of us has a moral imperative to do our part to preserve its peace and security.

This is why, every year we come to this Committee and we raise our voice against non-proliferation, stockpiling, arms in outer space and disarmament. This is why we do our part to address issues such as by signing and submitting regular reports to the Non-Proliferation Treat, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and the
Biological Weapons Convention. We highlight the dangers weapons of mass destruction pose. We endeavor to contribute to discussions focused on channeling scarce resources from research and development of weapons towards social development and the eradication of poverty. More importantly, we give moral support to those who stand up against these matters. That is why the Maldives has followed disarmament debates, including nuclear non-proliferation negotiations from their initial phases with keen interest and hope.

Let me pose a few simple questions. Do piles and arsenals of nuclear weapons make the globe more secure? Is there a need for stockpiles of the most destructive weapons? Would not the world be a better place without the existence of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction? I know there are dissenting views to these questions. We hope that the disarmament debates would eventually lead to a consensus towards total elimination of these unwanted weapons from the face of the earth.

Mr Chairperson,

Next is the question of the implicit humanitarian consequences of a nuclear strike. No nation on earth has the ability to deal with the repercussions of the same weapons that they regard as a symbol of pride. The use of nuclear weapons not only causes the gravest humanitarian emergencies, but it also has catastrophic global ramifications on the environment, climate, health, social order, human development and, in worst case scenarios, can lead to the annihilation of an entire nation. The Maldives welcomes the increased attention on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons reflected in the conferences in Oslo last year and Mexico this February. We further welcome Austria's initiative to host the 3rd Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in December. We welcome the designation of 26 September each year as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which was launched a few days ago. No doubt, these initiatives strengthen the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, contributing to the growing momentum to firmly anchor the international efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

Conventional weapons pose an equal threat to humanity. Access to small arms and light weapons in the wrong hands constitute a greater threat in further destabilizing already fragile situations. It increases the risk of escalation to civil wars and large-scale regional and international conflicts. The Arms Trade Treaty that was adopted in April 2013 was a clear demonstration of the global community's resolve to control these conventional weapons. We eagerly await its entry into force in December. The Maldives is in the process of acceding to this treaty in a near future.

The Maldives is well aware of the fundamental importance of compliance with commitments made in the context of disarmament. On a national level, our stringent domestic laws and means of control have ensured that the illicit trade in arms does not occur at all, either within the local population or with other countries. On the international level, the Maldives annually submits its report to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.
Mr Chairperson,

The Maldives has always advocated for regional disarmament in order to ensure peace, security and stability. We have continuously supported the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, since the declaration was adopted by the General Assembly in 1971.

Mr Chairperson,

This Committee has a massive responsibility to address all these issues of disarmament. We keep hearing statement after statement in support of cutting down the number of weapons in order to make the world more safe and secure. Therefore where we stand is clear. We, as a global community, have a moral responsibility towards making headway in this endeavor for the sake of our future generations. My delegation stands ready to work with you all.

Thank you.