Statement by

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General Debate

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Mr Chairman,

Allow me first to congratulate you on your assumption of the chair and let me assure you of the full support of my delegation. We thank you for your outreach, including your consultations in Geneva and the transparent way in which you and the bureau have organised the work so far.

We align ourselves with the statement of the European Union and would in addition like to make the following remarks.

The Netherlands considers it indeed very good news that so far 121 States have signed the Arms Trade Treaty and 53 States have already ratified it, allowing for an early entry into force of this landmark Treaty by Christmas this year. This Treaty will set the standard for the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms. The Netherlands has almost finished the ratification process, and expects to be able to conclude this procedure as soon as possible.

We would like to thank Mexico for their excellent leadership in the lead up to the first Meeting of States Parties. We made a lot of progress during the first preparatory meeting and look forward to return to Mexico for the MSP itself. We hope further progress can be made during the second preparatory meeting that will be held in Berlin, especially concerning our roadmap towards 1MSP.

The Netherlands is fully committed to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. For us, the NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes.

We will continue to promote the full implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, which is our common roadmap towards the 2015 Review Conference. We share the concern expressed by many in this room that the implementation of the Actions under the nuclear disarmament pillar are lagging behind.

We do not agree that the international strategic situation is a reason to stop nuclear disarmament efforts, as is claimed by some. Even in these troubling times we should redouble our efforts to find common ground and to make progress in this regard.

We look forward to next year's NPT Review Conference and we are committed to working with all states towards a successful conclusion and substantial outcome of this conference. With our partners of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative we have submitted 12 working papers and will come up with further concrete proposals to contribute to a positive outcome.

The issue of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons will be further discussed at the Vienna Conference in December this year. For us the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapons detonation underpins all of our efforts to further the cause of nuclear disarmament. We cannot however, ignore the security dimension in this discussion. In this respect we hope that the Vienna Conference will contribute to a successful outcome of the NPT Review Conference.

The start and conclusion of an FMCT remains a priority for the Netherlands. In this regard we welcome the two positive meetings of the GGE FMCT in which a Dutch expert is participating. We hope that the work of the group can give a positive contribution to the early start of negotiations of an FMCT.
The **Nuclear Security Summit**, hosted by the Netherlands in March of this year, led to substantial results with regard to reducing the amount of civil nuclear material in the world, improving the security of this material and of radioactive sources and improved international cooperation. One of the remaining tasks will be to further strengthen the security of all civil and military nuclear materials and to create a robust nuclear security architecture for the years to come. We look forward to the final Summit in Chicago.

On **Syria** the international community last year acted promptly to destroy Syria's declared chemical weapons stockpile. The joint UN/OPCW mission lead by the Dutch Special Representative Sigrid Kaag worked effectively to the complete and irreversible dismantling of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. We also see this as a success of international diplomacy and the UN.

However, the second report of the OPCW fact finding mission presented convincing evidence that toxic chemicals have been used systematically and repeatedly since last April. According to the report helicopters were used for the delivery of these chemicals; a capability that only the Syrian regime possesses.

The Netherlands condemns in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime against its own population. Syria must ensure that its chemical weapons programme is completely and irreversibly dismantled.

Today **Small Arms and Light Weapons** are still responsible for the biggest part of arms-related casualties worldwide. In practice, they remain the real weapons of mass destruction. Although BMS-5 in May was a success, we should not lose sight of the continuing importance of the implementation of the Programme of Action. Much more work needs to be done with regard to tracing and tracking as well as with regard to a strong connection with the ATT.

The **Anti-Personnel Land-mine Treaty** was already a success story and continues to be so. During this year's review conference in Maputo all States Parties agreed to the political commitment to clear all anti-personnel mines before 2025 thereby effectively ending the threat from these horrible weapons for once and for all. We will now have to work together to assist countries with mine fields to be able to live up to this commitment.

In 2015 the first review conference of the **Convention on Cluster Munitions** will take place in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Its universalization and strengthening of the norm are the main challenges for this successful Treaty. We therefore call upon all States, who have not yet done so, to accede to this Treaty.

Both in the CD and during this First Committee much attention was en is given to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Recent discussions in the CD underlined again that this is an acute problem that demands a speedy solution as more players are active in outer space.

In the long run, the Netherlands sees benefits in a Treaty on PAROS. But negotiating a Treaty takes time, while we think we should act now. The EU Code of Conduct, which is widely supported, should for the moment be our starting point as it can be implemented immediately.

**Mr Chairman,**

We will further elaborate on these elements during the thematic debates.

Thank you.