STATEMENT

by

the representative of the delegation of Ukraine

at

the First committee of the 69th session of the General Assembly
of the United Nations

New York, 10 October 2014
Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and other members of the Bureau on your election.

Mr. Chair,
My delegation considers the issue of disarmament to be crucial to global peace, security and development.

Ukraine consistently supports a multilateral approach to the disarmament and international security agenda. While recognizing the difficulties in the implementation of existing international treaties and in bringing new ones into force, as well as the deadlock in the disarmament negotiations, we fully reaffirm our commitment to maintaining and strengthening the current disarmament machinery and international cooperation in order to reinforce existing international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Mr. Chair,
We share the view that the use of nuclear weapons is the most serious threat that humankind faces nowadays. Ukraine for many years has been consistent in its call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that it is essential to strengthen international cooperation in order to reinforce existing international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Pursuing this goal my country has demonstrated a proactive approach and set a pattern to follow by abandoning its nuclear capability and acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in November 1994, as well as by taking concrete steps to eliminate the use of highly enriched uranium for civilian purposes through the removal of all of its existing stocks from our national territory in March 2012.

Ukraine regards the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and renders comprehensive support to its effective implementation, further strengthening and universalization.

20 years ago – on 14 January 1994 in Moscow the Presidents of Ukraine, the United States of America and the Russian Federation signed a Trilateral Statement, where the arrangements on practical realization of the decision of Ukraine to renounce nuclear weapons and become a non-nuclear-weapon state were envisaged. At the same time the 20th anniversary of Ukraine's decision to renounce nuclear weapons took place against the background of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, occupation and annexation of its territory in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and destabilization of the situation in the south-eastern regions of Ukraine. Such actions of the Russian Federation is a grave violation of the imperative norms of international law, the Charter of the United
Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements, which ensured the territorial integrity of Ukraine, inviolability of its borders and non-interference in the domestic affairs.

Such actions were especially cynical as they were committed by the state-guarantor of the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine under the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine’s Accession to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed in Budapest, on December 5, 1994.

In particular, the State-signatories to the Memorandum «reaffirmed their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations».

We deem necessary to emphasize that the aforementioned Memorandum was signed in connection with Ukraine’s adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon state and in pursuance of its commitments to eliminate all nuclear weapons from its territory within the specified period of time and duly implemented by the Ukrainian side.

Since the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum have been totally neglected and brutally violated by the Russian Federation as one of its States-signatories, we call on the Conference on Disarmament to urgently develop and conclude a multilateral legally binding instrument in order to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

Let me also express Ukraine’s concern about unilateral actions of the Russian Federation to denounce the Agreement between Ukraine and the Russian Federation on status and conditions of deployment of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine of May 28, 1997.

Under provisions of the Article 5 of the Agreement «the Russian Federation is obliged not to have nuclear weapons in formation of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, which is stationed on the territory of Ukraine». As a result of these unprecedented events and taking into consideration strategic location of Crimea in the region, we cannot exclude the deployment of nuclear forces of the Russian Federation on the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which constitutes a serious challenge to the existing non-proliferation regime and must be tackled by the international community.

Mr. Chair,

While emphasizing the importance of the implementation of the 2010 NPT RevCon decisions, Ukraine would also like to render its support to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We consider convening a conference on this issue as one of the priority tasks, successful implementation of which will increase the level of regional and international security and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime.
In this context we also encourage the universalization of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty's (CTBT) with a view that its entry into force will constitute a tangible stride in attaining the noble objective of a safe and peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. It is of the greatest importance that the integrity of the norms set out by the CTBT is respected. As the current voluntary moratoriums on nuclear weapon tests are valuable, they are no substitute for a binding global ban. In this regard, we call on the relevant Member States to urgently ratify the CTBT.

Ukraine continues to support the development of the IAEA safeguards system and calls on all NPT Parties that have not yet done so, to conclude and strictly implement comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA and to conclude and put into effect Additional Protocols.

We also continue to insist that negotiating and concluding the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) will be essential both to constrain nuclear proliferation and to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chair,

However, we must admit that the total elimination of nuclear weapons cannot be achieved in a short period of time. It therefore requires a long-term approach with practical steps and effective disarmament measures to be taken by the international community in a transparent, non-discriminatory, verifiable and irreversible manner, building a system of mutually reinforcing instruments for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

From this perspective we supported the adoption of the UNGA resolution A/RES/67/56 on establishment of the Open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations (OEWG). Ukraine has consistently supported discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons held in Oslo in 2013 and Nayarit in 2014, which once again demonstrated the need to exert all efforts for these weapons never be used again.

At the same time we proceed from the understanding that the only way to protect world from nuclear proliferation is to make Ukrainian refusal from the nuclear weapons a success story. Otherwise it will become much more difficult to convince any country to refuse from national nuclear program.

Mr. Chair,

The issue of the negative security assurances (NSAs) is one of the veritable priorities of the international disarmament agenda and is widely supported by the vast majority of members. Numerous consultations in various international fora have repeatedly acknowledged an urgent need to conclude the relevant binding instrument and demonstrated ripeness of this issue for negotiations.

We recall UN Security Council resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995), containing the relevant unilateral statements of the nuclear-weapon states, in which they gave conditional or unconditional security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the NPT, as well as the good practices of non-nuclear-weapon states demonstrated in this field regarding the nuclear-weapon-free zones by signing and ratifying “non-use” protocols to respective treaties.
As a country which declared non-nuclear-weapon status, Ukraine continues to insist on granting of the non-nuclear-weapon states with the legally-binding security assurances. This issue remains to be of particular importance while some states still refuse to give up the development of new types of weapons and the upgrade of the existing nuclear arsenals.

The elaboration of a draft legal international agreement on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will represent an achievable step towards fulfillment of the commitments undertaken under Action 7 of the 2010 NPT Action Plan and will strongly promote further non-proliferation agenda.

UN Member States should utilize all existing institutional mechanisms, including the Conference on Disarmament, to promote the consideration of this issue.

We believe that the convocation of the international conference under the auspices of the United Nations as well as the establishment of the UN Group of Governmental Experts to conduct a relevant thematic study would contribute to the elaboration of the mutually acceptable solution for the provision of security assurances to non-nuclear states.

Moreover, we are of the opinion that in order to provide pertinent support to the entire process of disarmament and to overcome the persistent discords, there is a need for conducting parallel negotiations of NSAs and FMCT. Consideration of both disarmament and non-proliferation objectives on an equal footing and granting them the same level of our attention will contribute to confidence building and mutually reinforce each other, building a new quality of regional and global security.

Mr. Chair,

The revitalization of the multilateral disarmament institutions and negotiations are among the ultimate tasks of the international community.

It is my please to inform you that on September 23, Ukraine have signed the Arms Trade Treaty, which sets new international standards as well as provides a forum for transparency and accountability in the conventional arms trade.

Ukraine welcomes the entry into force officially this December the ATT, and calls on all countries who have not done so to become a signatories and state parties to the Treaty.

Thank you.