Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Let me first congratulate you on assuming this position and we assure you of our full support in your efforts to achieve a successful outcome in this very important session.

Aligning ourselves fully with the statement made by the European Union, we would like to highlight some specific issues to which Estonia attaches particular importance at this year's session of the First Committee.

Mr Chairman, Estonia shares the view of the overwhelming majority of UN Member States that consider the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) an extremely important instrument in curbing illicit and illegal transfers of conventional arms to conflict zones or parties of armed conflict. We are also very pleased to see that far more than half of the UN Member States have already signed and more than fifty countries have ratified the Treaty. By doing so, they have secured its entry into force on 24 December this year. This is a major achievement for the international community! We would like to encourage the States that haven't yet signed the Treaty to do so before its entry into force.

As a next step, the international community has to focus on the implementation and universalization of the Treaty. My country is strongly committed to the implementation of the ATT both on a national and international level.

The entry into force of the ATT reminds us of the previous time the international community was able to make progress in concluding a universal treaty of disarmament and non-proliferation. Unfortunately today, 17 years later, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force. We urge the States, particularly those whose adherence is required for the CTBT to enter into force, to sign and ratify the treaty without further delay.
Mr Chairman, for Estonia, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We reaffirm our full support to all three pillars of the Treaty and to the implementation of all commitments assumed under it or undertaken during previous Review Conferences. Estonia will continue to promote full implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, which includes concrete steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and which is our common roadmap towards the 2015 Review Conference when the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan across all three pillars will be assessed. Ensuring the implementation of the 64 actions in the Action Plan is a collective responsibility shared by all States Parties to the NPT without exception.

‘Its ongoing stalemate remains deeply troubling’- this judgment, constantly repeated over the years, has already become the unofficial slogan of the Conference on Disarmament. This year is not an exception. The CD’s agenda encompasses global concerns and we believe that those concerns should be negotiated on a non-discriminatory, transparent and multilateral basis, with the wider participation of interested states. At this point, I would like to reiterate Estonia’s request to participate fully and equally in the disarmament discussions as a full member of the CD. We also reiterate our call for the early nomination of a Special Rapporteur to review the issue of membership. In this respect, we underline the importance of continuing consultations on the expansion of the membership of the CD and welcome the nomination of the Ambassador of Albania as a Friend of the CD President on Enlargement at the CD plenary on 17 June 2014. This is indeed a progressive and forward-looking step, which enhances consultations on the expansion as required by the Rules of Procedure, as well as by the Resolution on the CD. It is unfortunate that such a factual mention was not made in the CD report or in the Resolution on the CD to the UN General Assembly. We nevertheless would like to reaffirm our strong commitment to the CD as a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Given the universal nature of the United Nations, we do not see any reason or moral justification why an interested State should not be allowed to participate fully and equally in the disarmament discussions and negotiations and to contribute to its aims.

Mr Chairman, we welcome several positive developments over the twelve months that have taken place in the extraordinary effort to eliminate Syria’s chemical weapons programme in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118 and the OPCW Executive Council Decision of 27 September 2013. These developments constitute significant steps towards the complete dismantling of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. All this has been achieved safely and without harming the environment and represents a considerable success for the international
community and a remarkable example of international cooperation. However we note with deep concern that the Fact-Finding Mission, established by the OPCW Director-General, has brought us the compelling confirmation that a toxic chemical was used as a weapon, systematically and repeatedly in Syria. The Fact-Finding Mission also reported on new allegations continuing to be made, therefore we welcome the decision by the Executive Council of the OPCW to have the Fact-Finding Mission continue its work and firmly believe that all perpetrators of war crimes in Syria, including the use of chemical weapons, must be held accountable. In order to support the OPCW in implementing its decision on Syria, Estonia provided a voluntary financial contribution to the OPCW special trust fund installed to serve that very purpose.

We note with concern, that ballistic missiles and related technologies are still used around the world as operational weapons. We do believe that the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) plays a central role to prevent missile proliferation. This is exactly why my country, following its initial candidature 11 years ago, recently presented a renewal of the technical dossier to the MTCR. We do believe that Estonia’s membership in the MTCR will serve the regime well. It will extend the territory of MTCR specific controls, add expertise on UAV and space technologies, enlarge the circle for intelligence sharing and information exchange on law enforcement, and as such, support the non-proliferation efforts of the MTCR. We also strongly speak for the membership of all EU Member States in the MTCR, since they all meet the highest standards and criteria of the MTCR, given the fact that they are part of the EU single market.

Mr Chairman, Estonia attaches great importance to bio-safety and bio-security. The recent Ebola outbreak in Africa illustrates the potential impact of biological pathogens in a globalised world and constitutes a threat to international peace and security. We would like to emphasize the need for a rapid response to the situation by the international community so that the situation will not continue to deteriorate. Estonia has supported efforts to stop the spread of Ebola with a total of 100 000 euros – through the Ebola Response Fund established by the UN and supporting activities of the World Health Organization (WHO) to prevent the further spread of Ebola, particularly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where the situation is most serious. An Estonian doctor is also currently in Monrovia Liberia, participating as a member of the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) mission.
Supporting mine clearance activities remains essential for the stabilisation processes of post-conflict states and the safe return of refugees. My country is determined to support humanitarian demining and mine action; we increased our contributions over the past few years and we continue to do so. This includes financial support to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), as well as to the clean-up of various explosive remnants of war and mine-clearance activities under several bilateral and international humanitarian projects. We also urge all States who have not done so, to join the Mine Ban Treaty.

Finally, Mr Chairman, cyber security is an issue we cannot take lightly. As each connection in the Internet means more targets and potential vulnerabilities and brings new risks that challenge defenders to provide enhanced levels of protection, we will most probably never be able to build a perfect system, but what we need is a better understanding of cyber security issues. The UN, including its 1st committee, is an important forum for sharing information on efforts taken at the national level to strengthen cyber security. The 2013 UN Group of Governmental Experts report, which specifies, that international law applies in cyberspace, was truly a landmark agreement that has changed the political landscape. The application of international law to cyber security, finding agreements on norms of responsible state behaviour and identifying areas in the cyber field, where we can be more transparent, is something we believe needs to receive more attention. Although we can’t take security lightly, security cannot be used as an excuse to limit internet freedom. Cyber security and internet freedom are intrinsically linked and in no way incompatible.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.