Statement

by

H.E. Mr. Märten Grunditz
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

at the

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First Committee

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
Mr. Chairman,

I would like to congratulate you on assuming the important task as Chair of the First Committee and assure you of the full cooperation of the Swedish delegation. Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. I would like to add the following points in a national capacity.

Sweden believes in an approach to disarmament and international security that puts human beings front and centre of policy. In this approach the equal and full participation of both women and men is of key importance in order to attain sustainable peace and security.

The goal before us is to put in place an international framework of mutually reinforcing and complementary treaties, commitments, and institutions in order to ensure that everyone can enjoy the right to be safe and secure.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons contravenes this approach. Any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences unbound by time and space. Nuclear weapons also pose an inherent risk to the continuation of human life on the planet - a risk over which the majority has no say.

It is against this background that Sweden welcomes that the humanitarian dimension has again been put at the forefront of discussions about nuclear disarmament.

Sweden thus supports the statement that will be delivered by New Zealand on this subject.

We look forward to the upcoming conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons to be held in Vienna in December, and we encourage all States, including nuclear weapon states and nuclear weapon possessor states to participate in this conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Sweden firmly believes that the humanitarian perspective can contribute to next year's NPT Review Conference by providing new energy to the debate, impetus to accelerate disarmament and information to the new generations on the dangers of nuclear weapons.

The 2015 NPT Review Conference will be held in the year that marks 70 years since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; 45 years since the entry into force of the NPT and 20 years since its indefinite extension. The NPT was based on the realization that the terrible destructiveness of nuclear weapons has to be contained and eliminated.
This goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is shared by most, if not all, but results have not met our standards. Work is progressing slowly – if at all in some multilateral fora. Cold war postures remain in place and we do not see enough concrete steps to eliminate nuclear weapons.

The NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Hard work is needed by all States Parties on the three pillars of the NPT – disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy – in order to reach a successful outcome at next year’s review conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Sustainable security is built through cooperation, rather than in isolation against an adversary.

Russian acts of aggression, and the illegal annexation of Ukrainian territory, constitute serious breaches of international law, are in complete contradiction with Russian obligations under the Budapest memorandum, and pose a serious challenge to the security situation in Europe and beyond. These developments underscore the urgency of strengthening treaties and commitments and of making deep cuts in all nuclear arsenals.

Sweden is particularly concerned about the continued existence of tactical nuclear weapons in our own vicinity, and urges all parties concerned to take steps to reduce and eliminate these weapons.

Just as nuclear weapons should be seen as a relic of a bygone era, power politics should have no place in today’s world, in which successful nations focus on progress and freedom.

Mr. Chairman,

Disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. There remain unacceptable proliferation and non-compliance concerns. Non-state actors have to be prevented from acquiring WMD – any other scenario would be catastrophic.

Sweden has always been in the forefront of efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles. The IAEA’s Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, together with the Additional Protocol, constitute the verification standard. States that have not done so should bring into force Additional Protocols without delay.

The Nuclear Security Summit processes and the Global Partnership are instrumental in securing vulnerable nuclear material worldwide and minimizing the use of highly-enriched
uranium. We look forward to working with partners to promote bio security and avert the threat from bioterrorism through the Global Partnership and the Global Health Security Agenda process. We are also ready to continue working with others in order to strengthen the BTWC.

Mr. Chairman,

The use of chemical weapons in the Syrian conflict is abhorrent and unacceptable. Such weapons are prohibited under the UN Security Council Resolution 2118 and the Chemical Weapons Convention, and any such use represents a serious crime under humanitarian law.

Sweden is pleased to having contributed to the United Nations investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons led by Dr. Åke Sellström, and to the joint UN/OPCW mission to oversee the dismantlement of Syria's declared stockpile of chemical weapons. Sweden condemns the continued use of chemical weapons in the form of chlorine gas in the conflict, and supports the UN Secretary General's call for the perpetrators to be brought to justice

Mr. Chairman,

On a day-to-day basis the biggest threat to human safety and security stems from the use of small arms and light weapons and their illicit proliferation. The entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty later this year will be a major achievement. The Treaty will encourage more responsible trade in conventional arms and help eradicate the unregulated and illicit trade in these arms.

The fact that the ATT also addresses gender-based violence is important, but much more needs to be done to reduce and eliminate gender-based violence in armed conflicts.

Sweden attaches the greatest importance to the wide adherence and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. We look forward to help build a functional and effective Treaty. It is in that spirit that we have nominated Ambassador Paul Beijer to the position of Head of the future ATT Secretariat.

Mr. Chairman,

The work to attain sustainable safety and security for all reaches beyond Earth. A growing number of human endeavours are dependent on infrastructure based in space. These activities are rapidly increasing in number and scope, and have contributed tremendously to the development and welfare of societies around the world.
With increased use of outer space follows the need for common rules of conduct, so that even more people can benefit from space-related services and in order to ensure that activities are conducted in a sustainable manner. Last year’s GGE-report and consensus resolution on TCBMs in Outer Space provided a much needed breakthrough in this respect.

Building on the recommendations in that resolution, a series of consultations have taken place on an International Code of Conduct for Activities in Outer Space. The ICoC will provide voluntary “rules of conduct” to address the pressing issue of space debris and to help preventing conflicts in outer space. Sweden strongly supports efforts to commence negotiations on such an International Code of Conduct.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.