Mr Chairman,

International security, disarmament and non-proliferation have always been on the top of the international agenda because finding adequate and long-lasting solutions to these issues is a key to everything we can only imagine: peace, stability, development, well-being and finally to the very existence of humankind. This might be one of the reasons why the international community allocated these issues to the First Committee of the General Assembly. First by matter of importance, First by matter of responsibility.

Speaking today on these issues, Belarus would like to focus on one of the most sensitive and difficult-to-tackle – elimination of nuclear as well as other weapons of mass destruction. Let’s take stock of what we have achieved and what we yet are to do.

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entered into force 44 years ago. Given the complexity of all interests involved, in today’s world the NPT remains a cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation. At the same time we have to be honest – this regime faces a number of challenges making overall efforts of international community ineffective.

Firstly, Belarus is speaking about a need for universal adherence to the NPT. Without those states that are not yet members of the Treaty the NPT is far from reaching the goal of providing universal nuclear non-proliferation.

Secondly, up to now the NPT implementation has shown little progress. On the eve of 2015 NPT Review Conference we have to regretfully admit a lack of real implementation of the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan recommendations.
Getting ourselves ready for the 2015 NPT Review Conference we have to be clear that its outcome agreement should not be a vague compromise in a form of mere reprint of 2010 document. We have to be courageous in our expectations. A decision on a launch of negotiations on a comprehensive Convention on Nuclear Weapons to prohibit their possession, development, acquisition, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction within a specified framework of time might be a real step forward.

Moratorium on nuclear tests

The international community has just recently observed the International Day against Nuclear Tests. Moratorium is undoubtedly the step forward. But it has a voluntarily, de-facto nature making moratorium mechanism extremely fragile. These voluntary undertakings for no reason are substituting the legally-binding prohibition that could be achieved through the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

To make the world once and forever legally-based free from the nuclear tests the CTBT needs to be joined by those states which current non-participation in the Treaty is significantly questioning its effectiveness.

Non-proliferation and refrain from nuclear tests are unequivocally the steps in the right direction. But we have to realize that they are not an end in itself. The only ultimate goal is total irreversible elimination of nuclear as well as other weapons of mass destruction.

Belarus strongly believes that when it comes to anything that is associated with nuclear weapons this should be nothing else but the path to comprehensive and irreversible zero, which includes:

- zero nuclear weapons research;
- zero nuclear arms race;
- zero nuclear tests;
- and, finally, zero tolerance to the very existence of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Belarus on the path to zero over two decades.

By joining the NPT in July 1993 as a non-nuclear-weapon state Belarus has become the first state in the post-Soviet area to renounce voluntarily and without any preconditions possession of operational nuclear weapons deployed on its territory.

In November 1996, ahead of the schedule the last intercontinental ballistic missile of 81 that had been based on the territory of Belarus, was finally withdrawn.

In the mid-1990s Belarus was the first to announce the idea of establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in Central and Eastern Europe.
Belarus is the country that for decades has been advocating in the United Nations the prohibition of development and manufacturing of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

At the 69th session of the General Assembly Belarus will table the traditional resolution titled «Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament».

The current level of technological development makes it feasible not only to advance existing weapons but also to develop totally new types of weapons, including weapons of mass destruction.

The draft resolution to be tabled by Belarus:

- will contain an element of political commitment of Member-States and confirm their determination to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction;
- will suggest a ready-to-react mechanism by asking Conference on Disarmament to monitor the situation with a view to making recommendations on specific negotiations on the new types of WMDs whenever and wherever they are identified.

Belarus invites all United Nations Member-States to join on the path to zero and support this resolution.

Thank you, Mister Chairman.