Mr. Chairman,

I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Committee during its 69th session. I assure you of the Republic of Korea’s full support for the work of the Committee, and look forward to a productive session under your leadership.

Mr. Chairman,

This year, the First Committee meets at an important juncture where our renewed political will and united efforts will be vital to take us further forward in our disarmament agenda.

As the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) approaches its 45th anniversary, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain at the center of our efforts to realize a world free of nuclear weapons.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference was an encouraging breakthrough, as the States Parties overcame their differences to agree on a concrete Action Plan. Based on a balanced approach among the three pillars of the NPT, the Action Plan provided a
sound roadmap for further steps to be taken in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

However, as the discussions at this year's Preparatory Committee session have revealed, significant challenges remain with regard to its implementation. With the 2015 Review process coming to its final stage, we should step up our efforts to translate the Action Plan into tangible accomplishments, looking forward to a successful Review Conference next year.

In the meantime, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) remain two urgent, long-overdue tasks that we all need to tackle together.

The Republic of Korea urges the remaining eight States whose ratification is required for the CTBT's entry into force to do so at the earliest possible time. We also reiterate our longstanding position calling for the commencement of negotiations on an FMCT at the Conference on Disarmament without further delay. We hope that the ongoing work of the Government Group of Experts (GGE) on FMCT will help pave the way.

Mr. Chairman,

In today's new security environment, nuclear security, together with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, constitutes an essential element in our pursuit of a nuclear weapon-free world. Despite our efforts in recent years, the possibility of nuclear terrorism remains a grave threat to international peace and security.

Building upon the landmark Washington and Seoul Summits, the 2014 Hague Nuclear Security Summit was a crucial step forward in the international community's joint efforts
to prevent nuclear terrorism. The Republic of Korea, as the host of the 2012 Summit, will continue to work with other countries and organizations for the establishment of enduring and robust nuclear security architecture.

As Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stressed in his address to the Hague Summit, the UN also has an important role to play for enhancing nuclear security. In particular, having just commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Security Council resolution 1540, designed to prevent transfer of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to terrorist groups, Member States should step up their efforts to achieve its full and universal implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

In the regional context, the horror of the atrocities perpetrated in Ghouta, Syria, on August 21 last year led to an unprecedented international coalition to rid Syria of chemical weapons. Despite many difficulties, our joint efforts have successfully accomplished the removal of the declared chemical weapon stockpile from Syria. We need to complete our work by addressing all the remaining issues and ensuring that Syria complies with all its obligations under resolution 2118 and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Regarding Iran, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its firm support for the ongoing negotiations between P5+1 and Iran. We hope that an agreement can be reached soon on a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that will address all outstanding issues and ensure the exclusively-peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the gravest threats to the international peace and security today is the DPRK's continued development of nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs.
The DPRK is the only country in the world that conducted nuclear tests in the 21st century. Notwithstanding the efforts of the international community to stop it, the DPRK has continued to develop nuclear weapons over the last two decades. They are still working on further developing its nuclear capabilities, including by restarting the 5MW graphite-moderated reactor, expanding the uranium enrichment facilities and building a light water reactor in Yongbyon. They are now threatening a new form of nuclear test. The DPRK also continued ballistic missile launches this year, which were condemned as clear violations of the UN Security Council resolutions.

We must send a clear and united message to the DPRK that it cannot have the status of a nuclear weapon state in any circumstances, and that another nuclear test will be met with the most serious consequences. The Republic of Korea urges the DPRK to fully comply with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions and to abandon all nuclear weapons and programs, including its uranium enrichment program, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to lastly touch upon some of the new developments in disarmament and non-proliferation. Following the historic adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) last year, the Republic of Korea is pleased to note that its fiftieth instrument of ratification was deposited on September 25, triggering its entry into force just one and a half years after it was opened for signature. The ROK government reaffirms its firm commitment to the ATT.

In the area of space security, the importance of peaceful use outer space, as well as mitigation of risks posed by space debris, has been increasingly highlighted over the years.
The Republic of Korea welcomes and supports the recent initiatives to enhance transparency and confidence building measures (TCBM) in outer space, such as the adoption of the final report by the UN Government Group of Experts last year and the ongoing work to establish an International Code of Conduct (ICOC) on outer space activities. We hope that these efforts will effectively complement the existing regime on outer space, and contribute to further strengthening of space security and safety.

Mr. Chairman,

During this year's session, Australia and the Republic of Korea will jointly table a resolution on “Preventing and Combating Illicit Brokering Activities.” This biennial resolution that has been tabled since 2010 is the sole international document that comprehensively addresses the threat posed by illicit brokering of weapons, including WMDs.

The Republic of Korea hopes that through this year's resolution, we can renew our collective commitment and move further forward in our efforts to combat illegal arms trade. My delegation would like to request the co-sponsorship and full support of all delegations.

The Republic of Korea once again pledges its full cooperation in working for the success of this year’s First Committee and beyond.

Thank you.