STATEMENT

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Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Nigeria joins others who have spoken earlier to congratulate you on your election as chairman of this Session. We have no doubt that our work will benefit from your tremendous experience, expertise and commitment. We assure you of our full support and cooperation. Nigeria aligns itself with the Statement of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Indonesia and that of the African Group read by Her Excellency, Ambassador U. Joy Ogwu of Nigeria.

Mr. Chairman,

At the 68th Session, Nigeria joined other Member States to highlight a number of daunting challenges confronting our world. Today and sadly too, little has changed to provide confidence and reduce the enormous challenges to global peace and security. In fact, the quandaries we face today justify the need to re-double efforts and to stridently provide attention than we did one year ago. In this regard, building the right multilateral environment involves concerted effort and a new plan of action to confront these challenges. The goals are two-fold: the elimination of nuclear weapons and regulation of conventional weapons, including the non-militarization of outer space.

In 2013, my delegation highlighted the astronomical proportion of global defence budgets, the maintenance and upgrading of nuclear arsenal systems by nuclear weapons states, as well as unfettered access to array of conventional weapons by unauthorized non-state actors. From Africa to the Middle East, the unprecedented carnage and bloodshed unleashed by terrorists have left cities and communities destroyed or deserted, including the loss of precious lives, property and livelihood. These mindless forms of aggression are largely enabled and effectively supported by illicitly purchased arms sold to non-state actors.

Most telling is the fact that, access to the acquisition of a these wide range of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons and their ammunitions, is often denied to sovereign States under any guise or unfounded allegation. Sadly, these same weapons are illicitly procured and indiscriminately used.
by terrorists and other bandits to unleash mayhem and unprecedented massacre of innocent civilians, including women and children.

On 24th December 2014, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) will effectively enter into force. Nigeria signed and ratified the treaty more than a year ago on 12th August 2013, in the hope that its robust, effective and indiscriminate implementation would become an efficient tool in regulating global transfer of conventional weapons. While encouraging further universal and broad ratifications of the Treaty by Member States, we must highlight the need to protect the Treaty’s integrity, by ensuring that the interests of all States are protected and not just those of major international producing and exporting States.

Mr. Chairman,

We are living witnesses to the fact that small arms and light weapons in the hands of criminal gangs, terrorists and armed groups are responsible for more than 1,000 deaths each day. They undermine peace, security, stability and acts of violence they cause destroy livelihoods, wantonly displaces communities and hampers socio-economic development. It is for this reason that my delegation welcomes the successful convening of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS 5) on UN PoA on SALWs in 2014 and congratulates the Chair of the Meeting, H. E. Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan.

The world must rise in unison against terrorism and other violent acts by groups that care less about indiscriminate killing of civilians. This should be done by denying them access to weapons and stifle them of funds and sponsorship. In this regard, there is need for enhanced international cooperation and assistance as a sine qua non for a full and successful implementation of the Programme of Action.

In today’s environment fraught with accidents and numerous cases of terrorism, my delegation re-affirms that nuclear weapons remain the ultimate weapons of mass destruction and their total elimination should be the final objective of all disarmament processes within the spectrum of goals pursued by the United Nations. Nuclear safety and security now constitute significant aspects of our work, in view of the possibility of the these weapons falling into hands that may not hesitate to deploy their use. In this regard, my delegation continues to restate opposition to modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types new weapons of mass destruction, including all chemical and biological weapons.

Nuclear weapons offer no credible defence against other enemies possessing similar weapons, and they pose an existential threat to those who do not possess them at all. If the overarching goal of nuclear disarmament is a world free of nuclear weapons;
then the world could, at least, demonstrate that the possession and retention of over 17,000 warheads in the arsenals of nuclear weapons states remain not only unacceptable, but should be repudiated. Compliance with the NPT in our view, should go hand in hand with the willingness of nuclear weapons states to disarm and disavow the continued possession of such weapons.

In the same vein, my delegation reiterates its grave concern at the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons for humanity the ecosystems and calls on all States, particularly the Nuclear Weapons States, to consider the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of these inhumane weapons. Voluntary measures must be taken regarding their renunciation and dismantling. In this context, my delegation joins several States in welcoming the last two international conferences on the humanitarian impact and consequences of nuclear weapons held in Norway and Mexico respectively, while looking forward to the third Meeting in Austria in December 2014. The overriding consideration and moral watershed is and should be, the development of a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation looks forward to the forthcoming IXth (Ninth) NPT Review Conference in 2015. As we prepare for the Conference, however, let us seize the momentum to deepen our commitment to the realization of the overall goal of the NPT and the objective of the Review Conference, even as concerted efforts are made towards the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan.

My delegation will continue to support the call for effective assurances to all Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by Nuclear Weapons States (NWS). In this regard, we stress the necessity of the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on Negative Security Assurances to all Non-Nuclear Weapons States.

In the overall contest of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)and negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) are dual issues that must be stridently addressed. We commend the on-going efforts by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, as demonstrated in their diligent efforts during first two sessions held in March and August this year, including the vital participation and contribution of a member of my delegation. As we urge the Annex 2 States to do the needful to ensure the entry into force of the CTBT, we also believe the Meetings of the GGE on FMCT remains another essential step to ensure the launch of negotiations on a treaty banning the production and retention of fissile materials.
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation shall therefore continue to work constructively in this Committee and all other fora towards achieving the goal of disarmament.

I thank you.