Statement by Mr. Anuar Tanalinov
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of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations
at the Thematic Debate of the First Committee “Disarmament Machinery”

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Mr. Chairman,

I thank you for the discussion on the most critical subject of disarmament machinery which needs to be revitalized if it is to remain effective and relevant to the challenges and threats of the twenty-first century. I will briefly touch upon each of the entities- Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission, the First Committee, the Regional Disarmament Branches and UNIDIR.

The increasing frustration of the international community over the Conference on Disarmament is expressed loud and clear. Analysis shows that nuclear weapons are tied up with the security perceptions of so many States, whether they possessed those weapons or not. Any disarmament forum, therefore, must be multilateral, and take decisions by consensus and the CD is at the heart of this process. Kazakhstan urges members to engage constructively and make a concerted effort towards progress. A fully functional Conference is fundamental, and the disarmament community represents a unique cluster of expertise on vast range of issues. The CD must move beyond the initial step of establishing an Informal Working Group to consider taking action on other proposals made by Mr. Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev, then Secretary-General of the Conference.

The proposal to establish a subsidiary organ to improve the CD’s effective functioning is critical to make consensus-building easier. The way the Conference approaches its programme of work requires a thorough scrutiny. Dissociating the adoption of the work programme from the specific mandate of issues on the agenda could contribute to putting an end to the current situation. Enlarging the membership and increasing civil society participation and all other proposals by Member States are worthy options.

The second entity, the Disarmament Commission, with its focus on just two agenda items, notwithstanding new unprecedented political developments, is a cause of concern. The UNDC needs to follow up on resolutions passed in the First Committee and address more critically the alarming threats to peace and security witnessed today. Kazakhstan would like to express sincere appreciation to Ambassador Drobnjak, Chair of the 2014 UNDC for his very insightful and painstaking set of recommendations to reinvigorate the Commission which need to be implemented with political will and commitment.

In the past 10 years, several measures had been taken to rationalize the working methods of the First Committee. Aimed at achieving efficiency and effectiveness, the Committee had streamlined its work, resolutions had been “biennialized or triennialized”, and reports had been consolidated, among other efficiency-driven measures. And yet, the effectiveness, authority and results are questioned. More importantly, improvements have not led to progress on substance or forward movement. Much time is still spent on voting on a large number of outdated resolutions when geopolitical circumstances have altered dramatically.
We also record with satisfaction the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on multilateral disarmament negotiations which has adhered to the principles of openness, transparency and inclusiveness. While Kazakhstan has supported the resolution “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations” it is strongly believes that all recommendations of the OEWG must be considered in the CD.

My delegation would like to recognize with appreciation the work of UNIDIR with its special responsibility as an independent body and mandate tailored to meet the needs of Member States, whom we call upon to support with their political will and funding. We also acknowledge the contribution of Regional Branches of Peace and Security in Asia, Africa and CELAC region and call on Member States to support their activities with greater political will and funding.

The ATT is an indication of what multilateralism can achieve, as well as the recent success with the Governmental Group of Experts on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. These are success stories and go to prove that we can still accomplish much through diplomacy and global cooperation. These give a great hope and confidence for the future. Going optimistically, Kazakhstan is committed to engage fully with the international community in strengthening the disarmament machinery to contribute to peace and security.

Thank you.