Mr Chairman,

As this is the first time that Finland takes the floor I would like to congratulate you on assuming the important task as Chair of the First Committee and assure you of our full cooperation.

Let me also associate myself fully with the statement made by the European Union. I would like to add the following remarks in national capacity.

Mr Chairman,

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and its three pillars, constitute the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation and arms control regime. We attach great importance to the outcome of 2010 NPT Review Conference and are committed to its full implementation towards 2015 Review Conference.

Working towards a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is a responsibility of all nations. This will require easing of tensions and increased confidence as well as robust implementation of the many existing agreements and regimes. The pivotal role of the NPT remains and must be protected.

The humanitarian initiative adds pressure to step up the efforts in nuclear disarmament. It reflects the genuine concerns of citizens all over the world that as long as those weapons exist there is a real threat of a terrible catastrophe with immeasurable human and humanitarian costs.
To achieve progress in nuclear disarmament, we do need a stronger sense of urgency. That is why we welcome the fact that over 150 countries have joined the statement presented by New Zealand, and 20 countries have signed up to the statement initiated by Australia.

We also need real consensus building, including the nuclear weapons states. Eliminating nuclear weapons is only possible through substantive and constructive engagement with those states which possess nuclear weapons.

That is why we see merit in both of the statements and decided to join both of them. The two statements complement each other. It should be possible to find more common ground in the efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Our decision to join both statements is aimed at underlining the need for a broad and inclusive consensus in taking this vitally important issue further without delay and in a concrete fashion.

Mr Chairman,

We remain committed to start negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. We are pleased to provide our expertise for the proceedings of The Group of Governmental Experts. We are hopeful that the Group's work will lay the ground for future negotiations.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its near universal voluntary moratorium on nuclear weapon tests, is of great importance, but it cannot substitute a legally binding global ban on testing. We reiterate our call on all States that have not yet signed and ratified it, to do so without further delay.

While the implementation of the New START Treaty is on-going, we encourage the Russian Federation and the United States to seek further reductions, also in their tactical nuclear arsenals. These weapons are not under any binding and verifiable international treaty. Their reduction and elimination would strengthen security in Europe, as well as globally.

Security is built on joint efforts and cooperation as well as adhering to our existing commitments. The violation of the Budapest memorandum by the Russian Federation has challenged seriously given commitments. Upholding commitments and norms is vital for the international security and mutual trust.
Mr Chairman,

Since the previous First Committee some important developments have taken place in the preparations for convening of the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The facilitator and the conveners of the Helsinki Conference together with States of the Middle East region have held five informal meetings in Switzerland. Some progress on the arrangements of the Conference has been reached. Continuing determined consultation between the States of the region, willingness to seek solutions acceptable to all and the political will to pave the way for the Conference is now required. Finland as the host Government remains prepared to host the Conference at short notice.

Lack of progress in nuclear disarmament is of serious concern. Same applies to nuclear weapon proliferation. The international community must take appropriate measures in cases of non-compliance in order to preserve the integrity of the non-proliferation regime and the NPT.

We strongly support the on-going efforts to seek a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and the work of the IAEA under the Framework for Cooperation.

I would like to reiterate our long-standing concern about the DPRK’s nuclear programme and the challenge it poses to the international non-proliferation regime.

Finland attaches great importance in combating nuclear terrorism and preventing the risk of nuclear or other radioactive material falling into the hands of terrorists. We will host in June 2015 the next Plenary of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). New partners are warmly welcome to join this initiative and participate in the Plenary in Helsinki.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.