Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At this year’s First Committee session, the United States is once again sponsoring its traditional resolution on “Compliance with non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament agreements and commitments.” I have asked for the floor today to introduce L.45 under agenda item 96(b), “General and Complete Disarmament.” We believe this resolution can make a useful contribution in signaling the commitment of the international community to acting together to strengthen such compliance.

The priority of advancing such compliance is shared by all of the resolution’s sponsors. Of particular note from the U.S. perspective, I recall that in Prague in April 2009, President Obama called on all states to comply with their obligations and to hold other states accountable for their actions. He emphasized specifically that “Rules must be binding. Violations must be punished. Words must mean something.” Those words reinforce a broad consensus that compliance with multilateral and international treaties, agreements and other obligations and commitments undertaken by UN Member States to prevent the further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems and to regulate and/or reduce armaments is a central element of the international security architecture and a requirement for continued progress towards disarmament.

Further, there is broad recognition of the importance of building national, regional, and international capacity for effective verification of compliance with multilateral
nonproliferation obligations, and of the need for enforcement measures to respond to violations of those obligations, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations. As NPT States Party prepare for the 2015 Review Conference, I wish to cite the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, in which Actions 26 and 27 underscore the importance of complying with nonproliferation obligations and addressing all cases of safeguards noncompliance and calls upon IAEA Member States to extend their full cooperation to the Agency.

The key objective in sponsoring this measure again this year is to broaden and deepen the international consensus that compliance is a vital element of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman, let me say a word about the resolution that the United States and our co-sponsors are proposing. It would update and only slightly revise the Compliance Resolution that the UN General Assembly adopted in 2011.

L.45 would continue to draw upon language contained in the 2002 Compliance Resolution (57/86), which was adopted by consensus, to emphasize the importance of cooperation in increasing confidence in compliance.

In this regard, I would like to recall that the United States and many of the resolution co-sponsors continue to work with and assist others, including through the relevant multilateral bodies, to meet their relevant arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament commitments.

Mr. Chairman, like its predecessors, L.45 would acknowledge the widespread recognition within the international community of the impact of noncompliance challenges on international peace and stability and of diplomacy as a tool to encourage a return to compliance by states not currently in compliance. Its adoption would be another concrete example of the international community’s determination to use diplomacy to advance compliance.

Regarding some relatively minor substantive edits to this year’s text, we would like to emphasize that this resolution is focused on holding states accountable for failing to comply with the nonproliferation, arms limitation and disarmament agreements and commitments they have freely undertaken. Doing so will help to maintain the integrity of such agreements and commitments, more effectively address threats to international peace and security, and set the stage for further progress. To achieve these important objectives, there first must be confidence
that existing bilateral and multilateral agreements and commitments are being complied with.

Without that confidence and unless we hold states accountable for their willful noncompliance, the authority and benefits of relevant agreements and commitments are undermined, making the world a more dangerous place.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has no illusions that advancing compliance will be easy. We know that sometimes progress will be slow and setbacks will occur. And often there are no easy answers to noncompliance issues that we face. However, we also know that advancing this cause together is the only way we can succeed.

It is in this spirit that we hope all nations represented here will join in supporting L.45. After all, supporting what should be the universally accepted principle of compliance with treaties, agreements, obligations, and commitments freely undertaken is something we should all be able to endorse.

L.45 is open for co-sponsorship, and we would welcome even more co-sponsors than the 72 that this resolution currently enjoys. Those delegations which have not yet been approached about co-sponsorship, and who wish to do so, should contact any member of the U.S. delegation. We hope that this year we can once again return to consensus adoption of this important resolution.

Thank you for your attention.