As this is the first time we take the floor, we would like to thank the Chair for the dexterity he has shown in handling the deliberations of the First Committee.

We take the floor at this time to make a statement regarding nuclear safeguards, safety and security.

Greece is a signatory and a strong proponent of the NPT and the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear material, activities and related facilities. At the same time, Greece places particular emphasis on nuclear safety and security. We consider these two areas as intertwined components in the foundations of a country’s legitimate right to peaceful use of nuclear technology.

While both nuclear safety and security are global challenges, Greece would like to point out the need for responsible and transparent national efforts, as well as, strengthened regional cooperation in order to bring power production in all corners of the planet in compliance with the highest international nuclear safety standards.
and the relevant nuclear security guidance and fundamentals developed by the IAEA.

In this spirit Greece has signed and ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel, the Convention of Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and the Protocol for the Amendment of the Convention for the Liability in the Sector of Nuclear Energy.

Furthermore, and in lieu of the direct association between the natural habitat and the environmental impact that the establishment of a nuclear plant could have in a region, Greece signed (1991), and ratified (1998) the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo). We believe that countries that produce nuclear energy, or aspire to do so in the future, must follow transparent operational practices with respect to the Transboundary natural habitat.

Furthermore, during our rotating presidency of the EU, in the first semester of 2014, Greece worked copiously towards reaching an agreement among member states on amending the European Directive on Nuclear Safety (2009/71/EURATOM), which aimed at obliging member states to establish and maintain a national framework for nuclear safety.

Mr. Chairman,
As the Sec. General noted in his opening remarks during the High Level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security (22.9.2011) “the effects of nuclear accidents respect no borders” and as the recent tragedy in Fukushima has taught us, we must continue to take all the necessary measures to ascertain that in the increasingly demanding energy market the necessary international nuclear safety standards and security architecture must be implemented. Protection of people and the environment from ionizing radiation, released by accident (safety) or human intention (security) is of paramount importance to our country.

Regarding nuclear safety, Greece is no stranger to the fallout from nuclear accidents being one of the 13 countries contaminated by the Chernobyl nuclear plant accident in 1986¹. As a consequence Greece is especially sensitive when it comes to the application of the “important elements that help to achieve a strong nuclear safety culture”². Furthermore, with regards to nuclear security, Greece would like to remark that the current fundamental concepts of Nuclear Security were incepted and developed through practical experience gained during the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, which was the first Major Public Event covered by a comprehensive Nuclear Security Plan under an extensive cooperation project between the IAEA, the United States, France and our Government.

The application of internationally developed (IAEA) nuclear safety standards and security measures accompanied by international peer reviews becomes especially paramount in our times. My country is following with great concern current developments and tensions in the political environment, both globally and in particular in its neighbouring region of the Near East and Eastern Europe, which have resulted in the creation of an especially volatile environment that requires additional precautions, especially when it comes to the safety and security of current and future nuclear installations.

Mr. Chairman,

For Greece, nuclear power has not been an option for the national energy grid, but as more and more countries in the region are beginning to express a strong interest in nuclear power, we would like, to reiterate our strong conviction that nuclear safety and security are two sides of the same coin, and we should approach all nuclear technology developments related to energy production in a comprehensive manner by taking all necessary precautions in order to ascertain all three relevant areas of Non-proliferation (Safeguards), Nuclear Safety and Nuclear Security.