Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that with your outstanding professional skills and experience we shall have successful and fruitful deliberations. In that regard, you can count on the support and full cooperation of my delegation. Allow me also to congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election.

Serbia and Montenegro has aligned itself with the Statement of the Netherlands made on behalf of the European Union. At this point, I would like make the following additional remarks in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

International terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) no doubt pose a most serious security threat of our time. The link between proliferation of these weapons, new forms of terrorism and transnational organized crime undermines global peace and security and requires resolute and timely action by the international community. We cannot afford to fail in this effort since the risk of the weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists could have tragic consequences of unprecedented proportions.

Therefore, the international community should consolidate and step up its efforts to deal successfully with these global threats. In this effort, the United Nations should play a central role in cooperation with relevant regional and sub-regional organizations.

The United Nations has at its disposal appropriate mechanisms to promote international peace and security. In order to achieve that goal, we have to improve the existing disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control instruments. It is particularly important to achieve universality of the existing instruments and enhance their effectiveness by enforcing strict compliance and strengthening verification regimes.
In order to increase confidence among member States and promote peace and stability, we should encourage more transparency and exchange of information in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

In addition, my country attaches particular importance to the strengthening of regional stability and security as well as to the promotion of good-neighborly relations with all States in our region. In that respect, Serbia and Montenegro is very active in regional initiatives such as SEEGROUP, RACVIAC, SEECP and Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. We pay a special attention to the implementation of the Agreement on sub-regional arms control which made a major contribution to the promotion of stability and security in the region of South-Eastern Europe.

Mr. Chairman,

Serbia and Montenegro is fully committed to honoring its obligations undertaken under the international treaties in this field.

My country ratified the Ottawa Convention in September 2003, and the Convention entered into force on 1 March 2004. As a country seriously affected by the problem of landmines, Serbia and Montenegro shares the view on the importance of full implementation of the Ottawa Convention for the promotion of greater security and trust.

Serbia and Montenegro stands ready to honor its obligations under the Convention including the destruction of 1.3 million APM stocks in the forthcoming four year period. However, in order to fulfill this obligation in a timely and proper fashion, we need additional financial resources. I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to NAMSA for its assistance and I would like to invite others to help us in this effort.

Nevertheless, there is another segment of the implementation of the Convention that is equally important and that represents the problem for developing countries and post-conflict societies. The rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of the victims of landmines is an issue that should be addressed in a more effective and concrete manner by the international community.

As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Serbia and Montenegro supports the efforts for achieving its universality and full implementation. We attach great importance to the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, with which we signed the Framework Agreement on Technical Cooperation in 2003.

Serbia and Montenegro has been making continued efforts to improve the protection and security measures for radioactive materials and supports the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

My country deposited the instrument of ratification for the CTBT on 19 May 2004 thus joining 170 States Parties to the Treaty. We favor the early entry into force of the CTBT and in that context we supported the Ministerial Statement on the CTBT in September 2004.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to point once again to the need of a serious action aimed at preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Serbia and Montenegro
supports and is ready to participate in all international efforts aimed at suppressing the spread of this type of weapons. We consider that UN Security Council resolution 1540 is an important step in the right direction. In addition to all international efforts, it is of utmost importance to adopt adequate laws at the national level in order to create conditions for strict arms trade control.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the process of adoption of a new Law on Trade in Arms, Military Equipment and Dual-Purpose Goods is under way and it is expected to be adopted soon.

Serbia and Montenegro fully abides by the provisions of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and supports all efforts aimed at improving the Convention's non-proliferation regime.

My country supports universal and strict implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and it is ready to honor its obligations under Articles 5 and 6 of the Convention. Last July, Serbia and Montenegro organized an international training course for the protection against chemical weapons in Krusevac, with participation of representatives from 16 countries.

Furthermore, as a subscribing State we fully support The Hague Code of Conduct as a very important initiative in dealing with the missile proliferation.

The Government of Serbia and Montenegro also adopted a Declaration undertaking voluntarily to comply with and implement the provisions in the Missile Technology Control Regime documents.

Mr. Chairman,

Unfortunately, my country’s experience has demonstrated the gravity of danger of the spread of illegal small arms and light weapons and the destabilizing effect it can have on social and economic development.

We therefore support the activities of the Working Group to negotiate an international instrument which would enable States to combat more effectively illegal trade in small arms and light weapons. Such an instrument would also enable a greater international cooperation through the adoption of the common standards in marking, record-keeping and exchange of information.

Serbia and Montenegro accepted the amended Article 1 of the CCW Convention and acceded to Additional Protocol IV. We participated in negotiations which led to the adoption of Protocol V on explosive remnants of war.

We continue to support the work of the Group of Government Experts on explosive remnants of war and Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM) and we hope that these negotiations will be brought to a successful close.

Mr. Chairman,

Last, but not least, Serbia and Montenegro is firmly committed to reforming and streamlining the First Committee. We are confident that by working together we can find the ways to improve the work of the First Committee so that it can address more efficiently the threats to international peace and security.

Thank you.