STATEMENT OF SLOVENIA  
Mr. Boštjan Jerman, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
66th Session of the UNGA First Committee  

Thematic Debate on International Disarmament Machinery

Mr. Chairman,

Slovenia is a staunch supporter of the effective multilateralism and believes in multilateral approach in solving international affairs. In this regards we are not satisfied with the current situation in the area of international disarmament negotiations. As we all know, the International Disarmament Machinery does not serve properly its purpose any more. Two of its main forums, notably the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the UN Disarmament Commission have become dysfunctional. Even the First Committee, which seems to be the only performing body of the international disarmament machinery, has clearly a potential and room for improvements. Our committee’s deliberations could have indeed become less repetitive and could have more strategic and focused discussions on international disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues.

Mr. Chairman,

That is the reason why last year Slovenia warmly welcomed the initiative of the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to organize a High Level meeting on disarmament that took place on 24 September last year here in New York. We have to admit that there was no real progress in the field of international disarmament and arms control for quite some time. Last year, at the High Level Meeting we heard many forward-looking and useful proposals and ideas. We believe that now is a time to move on with substantive follow-up and to start to implement those ideas. The current session of this distinguished Committee is a good opportunity for that.

That is why we co-sponsored a resolution L.39 titled "Forwarding International Disarmament Negotiations," presented by the Netherlands, South Africa and Switzerland. We are convinced that this resolution has an added value and deserves a unanimous support of the Committee. The purpose of this resolution should be to pave the way towards modernization and not only to revitalization, but also to a thorough reform of the International Disarmament Machinery in order to be able adequately respond to the challenges of our time. We are all aware that this cannot happen overnight and that the process that we started last year will be long, demanding and challenging.

In this context, we also support a draft resolution L.21 with the same title, presented by Norway, Austria and Mexico on taking forward multilateral negotiations. This draft resolution opens door to a new avenue that could be pursued in the future, notably at the 66th meeting of this Committee next year. This draft resolution makes important point regarding the valuable asset that international community has in Geneva, where we have skilled disarmament diplomatic corps that could be used for this purpose in case that the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament would
continue. We believe that in the situation that we face now, we should explore all possible ways to move forward international disarmament negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

We agree that we should distinguish between short-term and long-term objectives. We believe that one of short term goals of the international community could be not only revitalize the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, but also its expansion. In this regard we follow the idea enshrined in the final declaration of the First Session of the UNGA Special Session on Disarmament that all nations in the world are responsible for the international peace and security and thus they all have a right to participate in the international disarmament negotiations.

That is why Slovenia calls upon members of the distinguished Conference on Disarmament to start discussion on enlargement and in the beginning the CD 2012 annual session appoint its special rapporteur on enlargement of the Conference.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.