Statement by H.E. Ambassador KWON Haeryong,
Head of Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament
to First Committee of the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman,

1. The delegation of the Republic of Korea wishes to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee, as well as the other distinguished members of the Bureau on their elections. I assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation.

2. Since nuclear weapons continue to pose the most destructive threat to mankind, nuclear disarmament is crucial for avoiding a potential nuclear war and the unimaginable consequences that would follow. We recognize that some progress has been made, especially by the two major nuclear powers in reducing their nuclear arsenals.

3. However, a wide gap in perception still exists between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. We emphasize the importance of narrowing this gap. My delegation believes that nuclear weapon states should maintain the momentum in disarmament by further fulfilling their obligations under the NPT. We believe that implementing the disarmament obligation by nuclear weapon states under the NPT is critical in encouraging non-nuclear weapon states to remain committed to carrying out their nuclear non-proliferation duty under the same treaty. As a country faithfully abiding by the nonproliferation obligation, the Republic of Korea urges all nuclear weapon states to carry on their part of disarmament duty with a view to realizing a world without nuclear weapons, and supports such visions as the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s Five-Point Proposal in 2008.
Mr. Chairman,

4. In our common efforts to prevent the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, with the end goal of arriving at a nuclear-weapons-free world, it is imperative for us to ensure the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). In this regard, we welcome Indonesia and Guatemala's ratification of the CTBT this year and call upon those states that have not yet ratified this Treaty, in particular, the remaining eight Annex II states, to ratify it without delay. We stress the importance of maintaining a moratorium on nuclear testing until the CTBT enters into force.

5. In addition, the FMCT is indispensable not only for nuclear non-proliferation, but also for nuclear disarmament. We believe that the time is ripe for the commencement of negotiations on the FMCT in the CD. My delegation calls upon all the CD members to show more flexibility and political will so that negotiations can begin at the earliest possible date. Any meaningful progress in the pace of negotiations for the conclusion of the FMCT will serve as a locomotive for revitalizing the entire disarmament regime.

6. In May the first Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference provided the basis on which we could prepare for the 2013 Preparatory Committee. It is our responsibility to translate the Action Plans in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference into tangible actions, and share those actions at the second Preparatory Committee.

7. In March at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, many states made concerted efforts to address the threats of nuclear terrorism and further enhance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in general. Nuclear security is an issue that requires the common efforts of all countries as we progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. It is our hope that the trust built in Seoul will lead to further progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the future.

Mr. Chairman,

8. As addressed in the Republic of Korea's general statement, the DPRK's nuclear programs continue to pose a grave challenge to the international non-proliferation regime and the peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and the region. In particular, the DPRK's pursuit of its uranium enrichment program and light water reactor construction represent the DPRK's ongoing defiance of its obligations under relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to immediately cease all related activities.