Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, Ambassador Percaya, on your assumption of the chairmanship to the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation is well acquainted with you through your highly regarded work in Geneva, and we are pleased that we can once again engage in disarmament efforts under your leadership. We assure you of our utmost cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

For achieving progress in disarmament, it is valuable to reinvigorate our determination each year in the First Committee in light of the year’s developments. With this in mind, if we look back at the twelve months since the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly, we can see there have been a number of advancements and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of them.

In April and May the First Preparatory Committee to the 2015 NPT Review Conference was successfully held in Vienna. This was the first PrepCom since the adoption of the groundbreaking NPT Action Plan in 2010. As an outcome to the Prepcom, both the nuclear- and non-nuclear weapon states gained a common understanding about the necessity of fully implementing the Action Plan towards the 2015 Review Conference.

In order to draw closer to a world without nuclear weapons, it is patently clear that nuclear disarmament efforts by the nuclear-weapon states are of paramount importance. In this context, we would like to welcome again the P5 Conference that was held this June in
Washington D.C. We strongly hope that this P5 process produces tangible outcomes in the future.

In addition, Japan regards the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free-zones as important efforts that contribute to not only the stability of regions but to the entire international community. In this connection, we hope that the nuclear-weapon states sign at an early date the Protocol of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty. We also wish the successful convening of the 2012 Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction which was agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. To that end, we believe that states outside the region can also make contribution to the goal of establishment of such zone in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

Not only are the nuclear-weapon states undertaking disarmament efforts, but the non-nuclear-weapon states are also active in this area. The NPDI, a cross-regional group of countries that includes my own, held its fifth ministerial meeting here in New York last month. Through such meetings, the NPDI is deepening discussions at a high-level with the idea of steadily implementing the 2010 NPT Action Plan and making practical proposals for mid- to long-term nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In particular, the NPDI places emphasis on improving transparency as an indispensable prerequisite for advancing nuclear disarmament, and we intend to carry on our efforts to support confidence-building measures among the nuclear-weapon states.

As a guidepost to these disarmament efforts by all states, this year Japan will submit once again its resolution entitled “United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”. We strongly hope that our resolution gains as many co-sponsors and supporters as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite these positive developments, we are still not satisfied. Specifically, Japan was deeply concerned that this year again the Conference on Disarmament failed to meet the expectations of the international community including the UN General Assembly by its inability to commence substantive work, especially the negotiation of an FMCT. For attaining a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons, Japan recognizes that step-by-step nuclear disarmament efforts are essential and that an FMCT is the next logical step. As a venue for those negotiations, we believe that the CD is the most appropriate place. However, given the lack of movement in the CD, we think it is necessary for this session of the First
Committee to examine ways to overcome the impasse. As such, Japan strongly supports the efforts of Canada, an active NPDI member, to make concrete proposals in order to push forward FMCT negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

Another continuing concern to the international community is the growing risk of nuclear proliferation. Particularly, the continuation of the DPRK’s nuclear and missile development programs, including its uranium enrichment work, is a serious violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. These activities are harmful to the stability and security of not only the Asia region but to the international community as a whole. Japan urges the DPRK to comply with all its international obligations and commitments, including the Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks. We once more strongly urge that it completely abandons in a verifiable and irreversible manner all its nuclear weapon and missile development programs. Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of all countries complying with the relevant Security Council resolutions related to the DPRK. The Iranian nuclear issue is also a grave concern to the whole international community. Japan urges Iran to comply with the demands of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors. Japan also calls upon Iran to immediately take substantive actions to restore the confidence of the international community.

Mr. Chairman,

Disarmament is not limited to nuclear issues, but there are also intensive efforts being directed toward conventional weapons, especially for the realization of an Arms Trade Treaty. In this regard, it was disappointing that the July UN Conference could not adopt a legally-binding instrument. Nonetheless, we are currently at the threshold of achieving a landmark new arms control treaty. Therefore, it is necessary to conclude negotiations at an early date based on the existing draft treaty text. As one of the co-authors of the ATT resolution, Japan will continue to actively and constructively contribute to these negotiations.

With regards to small arms, Japan welcomes the consensus adoption of the Outcome Document at the Second Conference to Review the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. We are confident that this document will become the guideline for concrete actions over the next six years.

Turning our attention now to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, Japan welcomes the adoption of the Final Document at the Review Conference in December last year. As a member of the JACKSNNZ group, Japan will continue to make vigorous efforts
for strengthening the implementation of the convention while focusing on responding to
developments in science and technology and dual-use issues.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to advance disarmament, it is indispensable to deepen understanding on
disarmament and non-proliferation among a wide-range of people regardless of borders or
generations, especially younger people who will be the leaders of tomorrow. To this end,
Japan is continuing its mission to pass on to the next generation its experience of the
devastating consequences of nuclear weapons use. For example, we held in August jointly
with the United Nations University "the Global Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
Education" in the city of Nagasaki. With the firm conviction towards achieving a world
without nuclear weapons, Japan is determined to carry on its efforts for promoting
disarmament and non-proliferation education to its citizens and the world.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.