68th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly
First Committee General Debate

Statement by
H.E. Mr. Pajo Avirovikj
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations

New York, 14 October 2013
Mr. Chairman,

At the beginning, let me congratulate you and the other members of the bureau on the election to head the work of the First Committee, and would like to assure you of my delegations support and cooperation.

Republic of Macedonia aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union.

Mr. Chairman,

After many years of inclusive negotiations, this year the General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty, a milestone in the work of the United Nations. The Treaty which envisages regulating international trade in conventional arms, will prevent these weapons from being used to threaten security, destabilize regions, violate international human rights and humanitarian law, undermine economic and social development, thus reducing human suffering and enhancing human security.

The Republic of Macedonia has been a strong supporter of the adoption of a legally binding international instrument establishing the highest common standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons.

While being a signatory state of the ATT, the Treaty will soon enough be before the Macedonian Parliament for ratification.

Mr. Chairman

The Republic of Macedonia welcomed the launching of the UN Secretary-General’s investigation into the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, its report on the events in Damascus on 21 August, and the adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 of 27 September 2013 on the destruction of the Syria’s chemical weapons, which represents an important achievement as a unified international response to the Syrian crises and as a signal that the international community would not allow the use of the weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

Multilateralism remains the best approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation. It is the best way to secure international peace and ensure human security.

The Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential nuclear disarmament tool. The NPT state parties must fully comply with its provisions, otherwise they seriously undermine non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Universality of the NPT is of great importance, and we continue to voice our expectations that the states that are not party to this Treaty join as non-nuclear weapon states and, pending the accession, adhere to its terms and pledge commitments to non-proliferation and disarmament.

Another crucial document in this area is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. States should pursue its early entry into force and its universalisation. Equally important is the immediate launch of negotiations on a Treaty Banning the production
of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices at the Conference on Disarmament.

Let me in this context underline the importance of our renewed commitment to uphold, implement and strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements, as well as initiatives developed to complement them.

Much remains to be done to strengthen nuclear security, to prevent nuclear accidents and to prevent unauthorized access to nuclear or radiological materials and weapons. In this difficult process we fully support initiatives to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency and its capacity on the challenge of nuclear safety.

Let me conclude by saying that a nuclear weapons-free world is viable. It requires efforts on the part of many stakeholders, including first and foremost the nuclear states. But of no less importance are our collective effort and a strong voice of civil society.

Thank you