Allow me to speak regarding resolution L.26: “United Action with Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons”.

This resolution widely places nuclear disarmament in the framework created by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the documents adopted by consensus during the NPT Review Conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

This text also recalls that the efforts leading to nuclear disarmament can be carried out only on the basis of the principle of undiminished security for all, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1887.

Moreover, the two next logical and priority steps of nuclear disarmament, i.e. the entry into force of the CTBT and the rapid launch of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT), are mentioned. France notes with satisfaction the introduction of a reference to the work carried out in the framework of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on the FMCT, which enabled the adoption, which I would like to underline, of a final report by consensus.

However, France does observe with concern the development of this text in recent years, which has been further accentuated in 2015.
My country is fully aware of the grave consequences that could result from the use of nuclear weapons. We have all known these consequences for a long time. Nothing has changed in this regard. Moreover, there is no consensus on the fact that this approach underpins efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

It is of the utmost importance for the international community that we all work for the creation of the conditions required for the achievement of the collective goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons, when the strategic context allows. I would like to recall that France considers nuclear weapons to be a deterrent, aimed at the sole protection of our vital interests. France’s strictly defensive deterrent doctrine severely limits the circumstances in which nuclear weapons could be used to extreme circumstances of self-defense consistent with the requirements of the United Nations Charter.

In any case, nuclear disarmament can only move forward through concrete, gradual measures that are fully in line with the security context. France is concerned about the development of an emotional, divisive approach: splitting the international community will not help create the conditions required for nuclear disarmament. Similarly, the development of an approach disconnected from the strategic development, aimed at discrediting the nuclear deterrent, can only weaken support for the NPT, which remains the essential basis of international security, non-proliferation and continued nuclear disarmament, in accordance with its Article VI.

I would like to emphasize, in this regard, that my country is continuing to work on the implementation of the NPT Action Plan adopted by consensus in 2010, which is the last valid reference document.

Furthermore, France gives, for many years, the highest importance to the issue of nuclear security. Nuclear security and disarmament are nevertheless two clearly distinguished topics. Seeking to create a link between the two is artificial regarding the nature and objectives of these two topics. Above all, such a link would present the risk of affecting the efficiency of international efforts toward nuclear security – at the expense of the whole of the international community. In a general manner, nuclear security covers all the nuclear and radioactive technologies.

Given the developments that the resolution has seen this year, including in the form of references to the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, my country has chosen to abstain.

France will continue working for a safer world for all and for the creation of the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the terms of the NPT.

Thank you.