Statement by

Ambassador Bogusław Winid

Permanent Representative
to the United Nations

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General Debate on All Disarmament and International Security Agenda Items

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Let me congratulate Your Excellency, Ambassador Karel van Oosterom, on assuming the Chairmanship of the First Committee for the 70th session of the General Assembly. I want to assure you of Polish Delegation’s full support and cooperation in fulfilling your mandate.

Poland fully associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. Building upon it I would like to point out a couple of issues particularly important for my government.

Mr Chairman,

70 years ago the United Nations were established to prevent future tragedies as those of both World Wars. As the president of the Republic of Poland mentioned in his remarks in the General Assembly two weeks ago: “Peace and law: these are the two key words which allow us to realize and appreciate the importance of the United Nations in the last 70 years of the world’s history”. As the security situation deteriorates in a number of regions of the world, here in the First Committee – if we want to guarantee a more secure world – we need to reaffirm our respect for international law, and commitment to implement our obligations. We hope this session will serve to build bridges among growing political divergences. We see a number of issues which require our particular attention in the coming weeks.
Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee should confirm continued support for the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament commitments we took upon ourselves. This is particularly relevant this year as the NPT Review Conference fell short of reaching an agreement on way ahead for further implementation of the treaty.

In our view, NPT remains a cornerstone of the international system of nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It keeps us on the right course towards complete nuclear disarmament, maintaining a high level of countries’ engagement in nuclear non-proliferation efforts, and at the same time assuring peaceful access to the nuclear energy. We see no shortcuts, no simple solutions, no alternatives to that forum.

Full implementation of the NPT requires efforts by all of us in this room. Particularly, with regard to nuclear disarmament, any discussion has to be inclusive and pragmatic. And it has to respect sovereignty, security concerns and commitments of all states.

We believe that the historic agreement of 14 July on a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in conformity with the principles of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), will strengthen the Treaty.
At the same time we cannot ignore the fact that last year we witnessed events that are in contradiction with the spirit and letter of international commitments in the sphere of nuclear weapons. We continue to condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity and illegal annexation of Crimea. These actions are in clear breach of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, as well as specific commitments under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994.

Mr. Chairman,

We remain equally concerned by the challenges for the implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Any use of chemical weapons constitutes a violation of international law, a war crime, and a crime against humanity. The reports on repeated uses of chemical weapons in Syria add urgency to calls for universal application of disarmament commitments stemming from the Convention. We expect that the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism will allow for clarification of those reports.

As in the previous years, Poland introduces in the United Nations General Assembly a Draft Resolution on the CWC Implementation. The resolution underlines the exceptional role of the CWC in the area of disarmament, preventing re-emergence of chemical weapons, international cooperation and protection against chemical weapons. We hope it will gain support of this forum.
Mr. Chairman,

Poland has served as the President of the last year's meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The Convention provides a unique forum to gather diplomatic, legal and military expertise, and to address emerging issues, such as lethal autonomous weapons systems. A forward looking and focused discussion on this issue held in April this year has proved the relevance of the CCW and its ability to tackle this subjects. We welcome the comprehensive report of the Chair of the meeting of experts. We hope that the work on this issue will continue next year.

As an outgoing Chair of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, Poland tables the resolution on the CCW in the First Committee. We hope that – as in previous years – the resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Poland remains committed to do its part in the efforts to ensure further progress in the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. This year Poland has coordinated the work of the Committee of the Article 5 Implementation dedicated to deal with the mine clearance activities. I use this occasion to congratulate Mozambique for successfully completing the antipersonnel landmine clearance process throughout its national territory. We hope that this year's Meeting of State Parties will take decisions that will further improve the effectiveness of the Convention machinery.
Mr. Chairman,

Last but not least, Poland highly appreciates the development of the Arms Trade Treaty implementation process. We expect that progress in the universalization of the Treaty will be achieved through an increase of the number of ratifications and the accession to it of players that have the biggest share in the international arms market.

Thank you Mister Chairman.