Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and other members of the Bureau on your election and to express our confidence that your diplomatic skills will lead our deliberations to a successful outcome.

Ukraine associates itself with the statement of the European Union made on 8 October 2015 at this General Debate.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine consistently supports a multilateral approach to the disarmament and international security agenda. While recognizing the difficulties in the implementation of existing international treaties and in bringing new ones into force, as well as the deadlock in the disarmament negotiations, we fully reaffirm our commitment to maintaining and strengthening the current disarmament machinery and international cooperation in order to reinforce existing international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Mr. Chair,

We share the view that the use of nuclear weapons is the most serious threat that humankind faces nowadays. For many years Ukraine has been consistent in its call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that it is essential to strengthen international cooperation in order to reinforce existing international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Pursuing this goal my country has demonstrated a proactive approach and set a pattern to follow by abandoning its nuclear capability and acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in November 1994, as well as by taking concrete steps to eliminate the use of highly enriched uranium for civilian purposes through the removal of all of its existing stocks from its national territory in March 2012.

At the same time, the 20th anniversary of Ukraine’s decision to renounce nuclear weapons took place on the background of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, occupation and annexation of Crimea and further inciting and orchestrating the anti-Ukrainian movements in the East of Ukraine. Such actions of the Russian Federation is a grave violation of the imperative norms of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act
and a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements, which ensured the territorial integrity of Ukraine, inviolability of its borders and non-interference in the domestic affairs.

Even being a victim of the Russian aggression we still remain a reliable partner who continues to fulfill its obligations under the NPT as a non-nuclear state.

Since the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum have been totally neglected and brutally violated by the Russian Federation as one of its signatories, we call on the Conference on Disarmament to urgently develop and conclude a multilateral legally binding instrument in order to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

We're disappointed over the incapability of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to provide during its 2015 session a real breakthrough and fulfill its mandate. Ukraine appeals for greater political will for disarmament efforts - finding ways of unblocking the negotiation process within the CD's framework, being convinced that despite the protracted period of dragging, the forum's potential has not been exhausted yet and that CD Member States will show keenness to consolidate efforts in order to overcome the existing stalemate.

Mr. Chair,


Under provisions of the Article 5 of the Agreement <<the Russian Federation is obliged not to have nuclear weapons in formation of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, which is stationed on the territory of Ukraine>>. Taking into consideration the strategic location of Crimea in the region, we cannot exclude the deployment of nuclear forces of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which constitutes a serious challenge to the existing non-proliferation regime and must be tackled by international community.

Moreover, we have been receiving evidence that the Russian Federation has deployed means of delivery of nuclear weapons and has been renovating relevant infrastructure on the Ukrainian soil in Crimea.

In this regard special attention should be drawn to the actions of the Russian Federation on renewal of the two base complexes of nuclear weapons maintenance in the cities of Balaklava and Feodosia.

Implementation of these plans challenges Article 1 of the NPT because Ukraine has never ever given permission to Russian Federation to deploy their nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory. We have never ever been in the relations of military alliance with Russia. Thus we express our strong protest against the possibility of deployment of Russian Nuclear Weapons in Crimea.

Even more worrying is Russian deputy Foreign Minister statement as of August 15, 2015 that Russia does not deem worth continuing dialogue with the United States regarding nuclear arms control and further WMD reduction. This could mean totally different approach of one of the P5 states towards global nonproliferation efforts or properly speaking – complete disrespect of the NPT regime.

In order to save the nuclear non-proliferation regime world community must take with high level of alert the statements of Russian officials on their right to deploy nuclear weapons in Crimea and to stop nuclear disarmament.

Such aggressive plans constitute a serious challenge to the existing non-proliferation regime and their fulfillment would infringe the non-nuclear status of Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine encourages the universalization of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty’s (CTBT) with a view that its entry into force will constitute a tangible stride in attaining the noble objective of a safe and peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. It is of paramount importance that the integrity of the norms set out by the CTBT is respected. As the current voluntary moratoriums on
nuclear weapon tests are valuable, they are no substitute for a binding global ban. In this regard, we call on the relevant Member States to urgently ratify the CTBT.

Ukraine continues to support the development of the IAEA safeguards system and calls on all NPT Parties that have not yet done so, to conclude and strictly implement comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA and to conclude and put into effect Additional Protocols.

In this vein we emphasize that by brutal seizure of Ukrainian territory - the Autonomous Republic of Crimea - Russia impedes the Agency’s safeguard implementation regime which plays a leading role in the nuclear non-proliferation.

The implementation of safeguards is carried out in strict conformity with the international law, Statute of the Agency and Agreement between Ukraine and the IAEA for the Application of Safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as of 1995 and Additional protocol thereto as of 2000.

Consequently all facilities and nuclear material in Crimea continue to be covered by the said Agreement and Additional Protocol. The IAEA did not undertake on-site verification activity in 2014 at the IR-100 research reactor and subcritical uranium-water assembly located at the Sevastopol National University of Nuclear Energy and Industry of Ukraine caused by the occupation of this territory. We call on the Russian Federation to return to the tenets of international law and reverse the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. This will provide an appropriate access for the IAEA to nuclear facilities and material of Ukraine under the Ukraine’s Safeguards Agreement.

We also continue to insist that negotiating and concluding the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) will be essential both to constrain nuclear proliferation and to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament. Ukraine strongly appeals for finding common grounds on the issue of existing fissile materials stocks and immediate commencement of negotiations on the FMCT within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine considers the total elimination of nuclear weapons to be the only absolute guarantee against the scourge of nuclear warfare and supports the call for the immediate adoption of the comprehensive international agreement on the ban of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, we proceed from the understanding that the only way to protect world from nuclear proliferation is to make Ukrainian refusal from the nuclear weapons a success story. Otherwise it will become much more difficult to convince any country to refuse from national nuclear program.

Mr. Chair,

The issue of the negative security assurances (NSAs) is one of the veritable priorities of the international disarmament agenda and is widely supported by the vast majority of members. Numerous consultations within various international fora have repeatedly acknowledged an urgent need to conclude the relevant binding instrument and demonstrated ripeness of this issue for negotiations.

We recall UN Security Council resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995), containing the relevant unilateral statements of the nuclear-weapon states, in which they gave conditional or unconditional security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the NPT, as well as the good practices of non-nuclear-weapon states demonstrated in this field regarding the nuclear-weapon-free zones by signing and ratifying “non-use” protocols to respective treaties.

We believe that the convocation of the international conference under the auspices of the United Nations as well as the establishment of the UN Group of Governmental Experts to conduct a relevant thematic study would contribute to the elaboration of the mutually acceptable solution for the provision of security assurances to non-nuclear states.
Mr. Chair,

Ukraine remains a devoted advocate of the efforts within the UN system and at the regional level to address the illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) issue in all its aspects. Effective control over brokering activities and SALW transfers are the areas where international community should take more active steps.

In this regard, Ukraine welcomes coming into force of the ATT as a comprehensive instrument for establishing common standards in this field thus preventing conventional arms proliferation.

Military aggression of Russia against Ukraine with the use of the regular military forces, and heavy armaments armor and aviation, has significantly damaged the existing system of arms control and the strategic deterrence architecture. The idea of disarmament has also been discredited. It cannot be acceptable for the UN that Russia has “suspended” its membership in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and constantly evades honest and faithful implementation of the provisions of the Vienna Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures and the Treaty on Open Skies.

Let me also remind you about illegal transfers of conventional arms from the Russian Federation to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Donbas region of Ukraine.

Russia dispatched a large amount of weaponry into the territory of Ukraine thus deliberately destabilizing not only regional situation but entire international security and stability. Such illegal transfers included not only SALW but also heavy armaments.

The amount of this weaponry is simply unbelievable, as President Petro Poroshenko mentioned in his statement during UNGA opening - “Heavy weaponry and military equipment are concentrated in the occupied territories in such quantities that armies of the majority of UN Member States can only dream about.”

Despite denials of the Russian Federation there are plenty of facts of illegal transfers of weapons and military equipment to illegal armed groups and terrorists in Ukraine. Such transfers and excessive accumulation of arms have already destabilized regional security.

Mr. Chair

Ukraine recognizes and highly values the important role played by the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in addressing post-conflict remedial measures in order to minimize the occurrence, risk and effects of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). Being a State Party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on their Destruction (Mine ban treaty) for over 10 years, Ukraine acknowledges its fundamental character in minimizing the occurrence, risk and effects of landmines.

Despite current significant challenges in the security field related to the “hybrid” war waged against our country, Ukraine fully complies with its obligations under these treaties.

As a result of the armed aggression of Russia and offensive actions carried out by the Russia-guided illegal armed groups operating in the certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine, nowadays our country has to deal with a drastically increased number of dangerous ERW, causing severe casualties among civilians, including children.

These ERW as well as antipersonnel mines which have indiscriminate effect are planted by illegal armed groups in residential areas and routes of communication between inhabited areas thus violating the Convention. In fact, they pose more threat to the civil population than to the military personnel.

By today, approximately 5 900 hectares of the territory were cleared in the East of Ukraine. Over 26 200 explosive devices and mines installed by the Russia-guided illegal armed groups and units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation were destroyed along with other explosive remnants left after artillery and mortar attacks, including with the use of 9K57 “Uragan” and 9K58 “Smerch” rocket systems.
During last year the Ukrainian Armed Forces have defused 82 objects and destroyed 12,974 units of explosive devices (including TM-62M anti-tank blast mines; OZM-72, MON-100, MON-90, MON-50 anti-personnel mines; improvised explosive devices; mortar shells and mines) placed by the Russia-guided illegal armed groups.

Ukraine believes it is vitally important for the international community to make every effort to ensure proper implementation of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Mine Ban Treaty and we are willing to share best practices on existing ERW detection and destruction technologies. Alongside, due attention should be paid to the needs of state-parties to the Convention on elimination of ERW. Ukraine attaches great importance to further deepening cooperation with international partners in this field.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to the new challenge we are facing today, which should be addressed properly by the First Committee – an issue of the “hybrid war”.

Ukraine has become the object of external aggression conducted by the neighboring nuclear state, former strategic partner that legally pledged to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Ukraine and despite the fact that until now Russia refuses to officially admit its direct military invasion. Today, there is no doubt that this is an aggressive war against my country. In the wake of this war, more than 8,000 Ukrainians, of whom about 6,000 civilians, died form the hands of the Russian-guided terrorists and occupiers in Donbas. More than 1.5 million residents of Donbas were forced to flee their homes and became internally displaced persons moving to other regions of Ukraine.

To mislead the world community, Russian leadership orders to take off insignias of its military servicemen and identification marks of its military equipment; to abandon its soldiers captured on the battlefield; to cynically use mobile crematoriums to eliminate traces of its crimes on Ukrainian soil.

Moreover, Russia’s aggression against my country has been continuing through financing terrorists and mercenaries, and supplies of arms and military equipment to the illegal armed groups in Donbas.

It is time for the international community to stop neglecting the issue of hybrid wars and start elaborating the ways to prevent and tackle them. The First Committee possesses all expertise and knowledge to launch this work, and I also hope that this Committee has the will to do so.

Thank you for your attention.