Mr. Chairman;

At the outset let me congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your elections to steer the work of this important Committee. I want to assure you of my delegation’s full support.

Mr. Chairman;

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished representative of Indonesia and the distinguished representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and African Group respectively.

Eritrea’s foreign and national security policy is anchored on ensuring economic growth and inclusive development and establishing a peaceful and cooperative neighborhood. Eritrea believes that international peace and security could only be guaranteed through stable and inclusive global economic and social development and full respect of the UN Charter, international law as well as treaty obligation.

Mr. Chairman,

Peace and security is a shared global responsibility and no country acting alone can secure its border from all forms of threats. Regional and international security and issues of disarmament are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, transparent, comprehensive and non-discriminatory instruments. Eritrea reiterates its commitment to the multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and international security.

Our shared future should compel us to demonstrate the necessary political will to move disarmament issues substantively.
Mr. Chairman,

The problem of proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons continues to plague our region, the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, and indeed many parts of the world. The volume of weapons diverted to illicit trade and non-state actors is fueling instability, transnational crimes and terrorism to an alarming level.

Eritrea believes that combating this phenomenon more than anything else requires enabling states to enhance their capacities to protect their sovereign territories. Undue restriction on state defense capabilities such as unjustified arms embargo undermines regional and international peace and security. It creates opportunity for extremists and terrorists.

Strengthening the institutional capacities of regional arrangements would meaningfully advance the objective of regulating small arms and light weapons thereby contributing to regional peace and security. Eritrea will continue to closely work with the sisterly countries to advance the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa and the work of the Regional Center on Small Arms (RECSA) to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons from the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear weapons continue to pose great danger to humankind. Eritrea believes the sole guarantee against the use, threat of use and proliferation of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. Eritrea believes that legally binding negative assurance, establishment of nuclear free zones as well as the universalization and early entry into force of Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) are critical steps towards general and complete nuclear disarmament. Eritrea supports the stigmatization of nuclear weapons through highlighting their humanitarian consequences and expresses concern that the 2015 NPT Review Conference failed to accommodate this positive development.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me stress that experience has shown that weapons only fuel insecurity. Thus, disarmament is the only viable tool for a more secure planet. Eritrea believes international and regional security can only be realized through pacific settlements of disputes, adherence to rule of law and global economic cooperation. In this regard, we must go beyond regulation and disarmament to address factors that contribute to and exacerbate conflicts such as: underdevelopment, insecurity, weak states and external intervention and occupation.

Thank you!