Nuclear weapons can never be the basis for a sustainable security for mankind. The catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons are well documented and irrefutable.

Sweden’s basic perspective, like so many others’, is the humanitarian one. The security and welfare of our citizens and societies must be front and center in the deliberations in our Committee. We are supportive of any effective legal measure that would make a difference, thus leading to meaningful nuclear disarmament. For norms to be effective, they need to have sufficient support, provide an added value and be implemented by States.

We must also always bear in mind that disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin. Progress in both areas are mutually reinforcing and will contribute to a more secure world, a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be seen through the lens of global development. Last year the world managed to come together not one but three times; in Addis Abeba, here in New York and in Paris, reaching global agreements on fundamental issues concerning our joint future. International security is very much a part of this and cannot be treated separately. Thus, nuclear disarmament is not an island isolated from current world events – it is a fundamental pillar of international security. Some may argue that, because of current global security challenges, time is not ripe for nuclear disarmament. But what if it is the other way around; that the current security issues the world is facing, are occurring since necessary actions and
commitments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation have not been fulfilled.

The Open-Ended Working Group enriched our discussion and reflected a strong commitment to make progress on nuclear disarmament, despite the ultimate lack of agreement on its report. This report contains important proposals on how to move forward. In this context we thank the sponsors for their draft resolution Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. This is of great importance but, operationally, only the trigger of a process. If adopted, it would set in motion negotiations during 2017, and possibly beyond. For the legitimacy and effectiveness of the process, it will be of special importance that these negotiations are conducted in an inclusive manner with the broadest possible participation.

At one level, the issue is clear-cut: our ultimate goal is disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. At another, it is highly complex: is the suggested project an effective method to achieve this goal? It is in this light we are still considering this matter very carefully. Our hope is that the future negotiations will lead to a result that will complement and reinforce existing instruments, including the NPT which remains the most important legal framework in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation field.

Obligations under the NPT and commitments undertaken during Review Conferences need to be urgently implemented, including the unequivocal undertaking by the Nuclear Weapon States. We will work closely with others in the process leading up to the 2020 NPT Review Conference. It must not fail.
Mr. Chairman,

Sweden has chosen to promote a feminist foreign policy. This policy also impacts issues before this Committee. Recent studies indicate that women are even more vulnerable to the consequences of nuclear detonations than men are. Yet women are still hugely underrepresented in multilateral fora, especially those related to security policies. Together with Ireland, Sweden hosts the launch of UNIDIR and ILPI’s latest report on Gender, Development and Nuclear Weapons on Tuesday October 19. I hope you will be able to join us.

Mr. Chairman,

The responsibility for strengthening international security by filling the existing framework for nuclear disarmament with dynamic and constructive initiative is ours. Sweden urges all States to take it on them, to deliver on this fundamental responsibility. In a world of heightened tensions, status quo implies increased risk for all. Therefore, we have an obligation to explore all measures that could take us closer to our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.