Statement of the Republic of Lithuania at the UN General Assembly 1st Committee thematic discussion on nuclear weapons
New York, October 17

Mr. Chair,

Lithuania remains strongly committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the basis for further development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Three mutually reinforcing pillars of the Treaty should be promoted in a balanced manner to further enhance its credibility and integrity. It is crucially important to uphold and preserve the NPT as a multilateral instrument for reinforcing international peace, security and stability. All obligations and commitments assumed under the Treaty or undertaken during previous Review Conferences must be fully implemented.

We are stressing the importance of confidence building measures, reciprocal transparency and effective verification as integral and essential parts of nuclear arms control and disarmament. This process should be inclusive and balanced. The enhancement of international peace and security and the advancement of nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing. Hence, effective measures related to nuclear arms control and further disarmament, including reduction of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, remain of the utmost importance.

Mr. Chair,

Our collective efforts in nuclear arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are driven by profound understanding of the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Yet in order to make real progress we need to maintain inclusive approach, promote reciprocity and transparency, avoid fragmentation and involve all states, specifically those in a possession of nuclear weapons and to take into serious
consideration the realities of the current international situation. In this respect we associated ourselves with a Joint Statement delivered today by German ambassador on behalf of states that support The Progressive Approach.

Lithuania remains strongly committed to seeking practical ways toward a tangible advance in nuclear disarmament process. It is for this reason that we view the legal ban of nuclear weapons initiatives as counterproductive to the international disarmament efforts, and potentially generating dangerous ramifications for regional and global security.

The only viable way to nuclear disarmament is through persistent practical work that takes into account both humanitarian and security considerations. The international community already has a framework of mutually reinforcing and complementary treaties, institutions and commitments in support of achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,
In addition to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we also share the objective of increasing international cooperation on nuclear security and physical protection of nuclear material. These objectives are becoming increasingly urgent at the evident risks of nuclear terrorism and calls for a new, robust and clear security paradigm in fostering international cooperation in these fields.

We welcome the official entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Adoption of this Amendment is one of the most important steps in strengthening nuclear security globally. Successful ratification of the Amendment inspires promotion of other goals: entry into force of
the CTBT and successful negotiations of the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, both essential to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process – with the pinnacle Summit held in Washington this year – marks a tremendous advance in international efforts and an important achievement in strengthening nuclear security and we are delighted to have contributed to the process over the years. We will remain supportive of its objectives and continuity.

In this regard, Lithuania‘s national initiative to establish the Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence in 2012 has proven extremely beneficial. Centre has grown to a regional nuclear security training hub, an exemplary training facility, and it is also an active member of the IAEA Nuclear Security Support Centers Network. In cooperation with international partners, the Centre continues to develop regional cooperation projects aimed at capacity building support to the Eastern Partnership countries and has the ambition to further expand its international outreach.

And in conclusion, Mr. Chair, let me assure you that Lithuania will spare no effort in continuing its active engagement in international co-operation efforts aimed to promote a safer world for us all.

Thank you.