STATEMENT
by Mr. Nguyen Doan Minh,
Third Secretary of the Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations
at the Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons
of the First Committee of the 71st Session of the UNGA
New York, 14 October 2016

Mr. Chairman,

1. Our Delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and wishes to make some comments from our national perspective.

2. There has been limited progress in the reduction in the number of deployed nuclear weapons; the rest of the disarmament picture is bleak. Thousands of nuclear weapons still exists, many on alert status, while international peace and security is being threatened by the increasing danger of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of the terrorists. We regret that after 20 years since the adoption, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not yet come into force. We still have to witness the prolonged stalemate of the disarmament machinery, including the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and recently the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, despite intensive consultations. In the world of complexity and volatility, we firmly believe that the total elimination of such weapons and tremendous efforts with utmost determination towards a nuclear-weapon-free world must be the objectives guiding our collective actions.

3. International efforts to this end should include, first and foremost, our commitment to the continued role of the Treaty on the NPT as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy. Besides, we should also allocate adequate investment to the role of nuclear-weapons-free zones. We call on Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) to fulfill their obligations
under Article VI of the NPT and to work towards the early signing and ratification of their respective protocols, including continued engagement with ASEAN member states. Progress should also be made in the early conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurance for non-nuclear weapons states and negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

4. Challenges to nuclear proliferation should be addressed in a comprehensive and prudent manner. While sharing the view that relevant international obligations should be fulfilled, we are also of the view that legitimate interests of parties concerned must be taken in account, including the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy for development purposes. We also underline the need to promote action coordination and information sharing among international mechanisms, as well as among countries, to improve the efficiency of fighting potential nuclear terrorism activities and to enhance nuclear security in line with international and domestic laws.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Viet Nam has actively joined international initiatives and mechanisms on disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We have strictly implemented our obligations under relevant nuclear treaties, as well as those under UNSC Resolutions, including Resolution 1540. Following the ratification of the Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement in September 2012, the accession to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and the ratification of its Amendment in October 2012, Viet Nam joined the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and just last month, submitted its Instrument of Accession to the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We also cooperate effectively with the IAEA and other international partners to ensure global nuclear safety and promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Let me reiterate Viet Nam's commitment and willingness to work with you, Mr. Chairman and other member states to renew our political commitment and translate into concrete steps, in a comprehensive and balanced manner, to achieve these common goals.

I thank you.