Mr. Chairman, Excellences, Distinguished delegates,

Let me congratulate Ambassador Jinga on the assumption of the Chairmanship of the First Committee. I assure (you) him of the full support of the Georgian delegation.

Excellences,

As the Secretary-General states in his new Agenda for Disarmament: „we are living in really dangerous times“, where security threats and challenges are becoming more and more complex, asymmetric and transnational in nature. Thus, our work on disarmament, non-proliferation, and other contemporary security challenges is ever more relevant.
We continue to face major proliferation threats to international peace and security. The risk of nuclear, chemical, radiological and biological weapons falling into the hands of unauthorized actors is acute. Addressing the threat emanating from unauthorized use of the above weapons in a resolute manner requires credibility and effectiveness of the NPT, CWC and BWC regimes, which are key elements for the progress towards total WMD disarmament.

The recent high-level talks between the Republic of Korea and the DPRK and the Joint Statement between the US and the DPRK are encouraging diplomatic efforts that can contribute to easing tensions and lead to denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We encourage the DPRK to embark on a credible path towards a verifiable and complete denuclearization by returning to the NPT and adhering to the relevant Safeguards Agreement of the IAEA, as well as call to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The use of chemical weapons, including the use of any toxic chemicals as weapon by anyone and anywhere is crime against humanity. We condemn, in the strongest terms, the multiple use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Armed Forces, as well as by Daes'h, as verified by the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism. Despicable acts of continuous use of chemical weapons against the civilian population in Syria shall not go unpunished.

We also reaffirm our solidarity with the UK following the abhorrent chemical attack in Salisbury. We hope that the thorough and transparent investigation conducted by the British authorities will soon lead to the prosecution of the perpetrators.

Addressing the problem of excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of conventional arms and ammunition is another priority. Maintaining effective strategic trade control system, which keeps in pace with evolving proliferation threats, rapid technological and scientific developments is vital. In this context, the ATT is a unique instrument defining common state responsibilities on different stages of arms transfer that serves as an important preventive mechanism.

Excellences,

The conventional military conflicts continue to be unresolved and are on the rise. The Black Sea is particularly exposed to threatening wave of militarization in flagrant violation of international law. Military aggression by the Russian Federation against Georgia and Ukraine represents fundamental threat not only to our countries, but endangers the wider European security.
Russian Federation continues its military buildup in Georgia's occupied territories and further isolates these regions from the rest of the country, in total disregard of its commitments under 2008 Ceasefire Agreement [to withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Georgia]. Russia's illegal military bases in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions are equipped with contemporary and sophisticated offensive weaponry, including tanks, various armored vehicles, launch rocket systems as well as SA and SS missile systems SA10 Grumble and SS21 Scarab. The force structure and posture of these deployments, including the type and quantity of their military hardware, go beyond any defensive objectives and serve nothing but power projection across the entire Black Sea region and the Mediterranean.

Last year, the Russian Federation deployed additional complexes of S-300 air-defence missile systems in Abkhazia region. Furthermore, Russia has deployed powerful Anti-access/Area denial (A2/AD) capabilities, which cover virtually whole Caucasus and large part of the Black Sea. These capabilities may critically restrict manoeuvrability of a potential adversary in land, air and maritime domain and are further reinforced with the means of electronic warfare.

In parallel, the Russian Federation conducts regular military drills in occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions as part of the exercises of its Southern Military District. This year is marked by unprecedented military activities in Georgia's occupied territories - in January-September 2018, around 70 exercises were conducted in Abkhazia region and 25 in Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia. In addition, violation of Georgian airspace by the Russian air force has become the regular practice.

Lack of international control mechanisms in the occupied regions of Georgia creates fertile ground for illegal activities, including those related to the CBRN materials. You may recall recorded attempts of smuggling nuclear and radioactive materials through the Georgian occupied regions, whereof this Committee has been duly informed. This is another reminder that such black holes pose fundamental threat not only to the affected country but to the international security system as a whole.

Mr. Chairman,

Multilateralism and the rules-based international system are vital prerequisites for the stable and secure international environment. Our joint efforts and political will to comply with international law and adhere to nonproliferation, disarmament arms control regimes and related commitments will define how we cope with our security challenges today and in the future.

I thank you.