Mr. Chairman,

I should like to begin my statement by congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that your diplomatic skills and extensive experience will contribute to the success of the Committee’s work.

Mr. Chairman,

Disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation are closely associated with the very mission of the United Nations. They are widely recognized as indispensable to achieving the maintenance of international peace and security, a core principle of the UN Charter. Unfortunately, this and other fundamental principles developed over the past century are under serious strain.

The global and regional tensions are on the rise. New and destabilizing arms competitions in both strategic and conventional weapons create mistrust and make harder to negotiate disarmament treaties or to resolve ongoing conflicts. We have witnessed the use of chemical weapons. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the UN Member States have been violated.

Against this worrisome security background, the Republic of Moldova welcomes the UN Secretary General’s new disarmament agenda, entitled “Securing Our Common Future”. The timely proposals contained therein aim to integrate the disarmament into the priorities of the whole UN system. We commend the Secretary General António Guterres for laying out a clear and strategic roadmap for addressing current challenges that could help the Member States to set the world on a path towards sustainable peace and security for all.

Mr. Chairman,

It is imperative to strengthening the UN disarmament and arms control architecture, and in particular the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The main issues at stake are well known and have been out-lined in previous interventions, including the EU statement, with which the Republic of Moldova fully associates itself.

If the present stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament is prolonged we might lose the only multilateral treaty developer the international community has in the field of disarmament.
No doubt, as we have witnessed in the recent past, much needed and effective multilateral legal instruments can be generated by using of other *ad-hoc* negotiating formats. The Nuclear Ban Treaty, the Cluster Munitions Convention and its predecessor, Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, are often referred in that regard.

Yet, we continue to believe that the Conference of Disarmament should remain the central multilateral body with responsibility for negotiating agreements, particularly those that are critical to international security, including a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).

The imperative to advance constructive work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, on negative security assurances and on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is also evident.

Obviously, treaties are not the panacea for the international security and stability. Nevertheless, they are the basis of our collective security. The small states, that lack military power, like it is the case of my own country, have no choice but rely on building and strengthening a rule-based international system.

Proceeding from this understanding, the Republic of Moldova ratified or adhered to all major disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements at both global and regional levels. Moreover, we joined the international efforts aimed at fostering and promoting the principles of international humanitarian law. As a State Party to all multilateral legal instruments that are relevant to this area, we are committed to implementing them and to pursuing universalization of their norms.

One of our expectations is that a rule-based international system, with functional and strong institutions, would prevent the uncontrolled expansion of armaments, including in the conflict-prone regions, and would encourage transparency and concrete disarmament measures.

In this context, Mr. Chairman, I would like to underscore the need for adequate transparency and control over the significant military potential retained by the unconstitutional power structures in the eastern part of the Republic of Moldova. The presence of heavily equipped unlawful armed forces in this part of Europe that are not subject to any democratic, constitutional or international control whatsoever must be a grave concern to all of us.

The military offensive capacity of the transnistrian armed forces has been continuously upgraded, including as a result of the illegal recurrent joint military exercises with the Russian military forces, stationed on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, without its consent and against its express wish. These joint military exercises, which have lately increased in scope and frequency, as well as other unlawful and destabilizing military activities undermine international efforts aimed at the peaceful resolution of the protracted transnistrian problem and have progressively led to the worsening of the internal and sub-regional security situation.

The current security situation requires the resolute decrease of the military factor in the region which entails, the most and foremost, the unconditional and complete withdrawal by the Russian Federation of its troops and armaments from the Moldovan soil, in accordance with its legal commitments under 1999 Istanbul Summit Outcome Document and in observance of its obligations under the International Law and the UN Charter.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me stress that the observance in good faith of the existing legally binding instruments, bilateral and multilateral, is crucial for maintaining peace and security and for advancing general and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.