Lithuania's statement at the UN General Assembly 1st Committee
General Statement

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, allow me to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on the assumption of your functions. Lithuania aligns with the statement made on behalf of the EU.

In our national capacity let me highlight few points:

The security environment we live in is dynamic, complex and highly unpredictable. We face already known and completely new security challenges – military build-ups and muscle flexing, unprecedented scope and scale military exercises, active intelligence operations, including sophisticated cyber-attacks against high value political and economic targets, hybrid threats etc. All that does not make our planet a safer place.

Lithuania keeps highlighting that our agreed security principles enshrined in the UN Charter, Helsinki Final Act and other internationally or regionally agreed legal instruments should be respected and preserved. Upholding the integrity of the rules-based international system is of critical importance, as it is designed to preserve and guarantee international peace, security and stability.

For the time being, our arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament system faces numerous challenges, which are testing our international community’s resolve and cohesion.

Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania is fully committed to consistent implementation of the NPT as a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. We highlight significance of upholding and preserving the NPT in all three pillars - non-proliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We support an inclusive and gradual approach to nuclear disarmament and we are looking forward to the successful work of the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Given the current geopolitical context, we do not agree that delegitimization of nuclear weapons is a realistic addition to the harmonization of the disarmament and security ends. Lithuania fully supports further practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, strategic stability and negotiated, verified reductions of nuclear forces. We have to be realistic nuclear disarmament is not possible without engagement of nuclear states. Lithuania as a
non-nuclear weapon State highlights the importance of confidence building measures, reciprocal transparency and effective verification as integral and essential parts of the nuclear arms control and non-proliferation process.

In this light, we underscore the importance of preserving the integrity of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, an essential instrument to the international security and strategic stability, only ensured by a full compliance of its Parties.

We believe that the JCPOA remains a meaningful achievement of non-proliferation architecture. The JCPOA was concerted to exclusively prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons and it worked, as attested by multiple IAEA inspections and other sources. However, we need to bear in mind that JCPOA does not cover Iran's ballistic missile programme and this program's implications for the regional security. All these issues should be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

Lithuania fully supports the efforts of stakeholders towards the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, which has to be complete, verifiable, and irreversible, until then sanctions must remain in place and be fully implemented by all countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Since 2013, chemical weapons have claimed numerous lives in Syria. Earlier this year we witnessed the reckless use of a nerve agent, this time in Salisbury, on the European soil for the first time since the end of World War II. In February 2017, a chemical nerve agent was used in a fatal incident in Malaysia.

We cannot allow any further erosion of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Lithuania highly welcomes the decision adopted by the CWC Conference of States Parties in June 2018 to enhance the OPCW's capacity to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic as well as universally. Lithuania also fully supports a new EU restrictive measures regime to address any use and proliferation of chemical weapons horizontally.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, let me express strong Lithuania's commitment to active engagement and co-operation in the area of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

Thank you.