Mr. Chair,

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made by European Union as well as with that made by Australia on 18 October 2018 on behalf of 30 like-minded countries. I would like to make a few points in my national capacity.

Bulgaria’s commitment to the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons remains as strong as ever. Given the complex security situation, we are convinced that only through an approach that engages all states, and in particular the states with nuclear weapons, can we achieve this goal.

Therefore, we are convinced that a progressive approach based on practical and concrete measures is the most feasible avenue that will eventually lead us to fulfilling the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world. This approach does take into account both the security dimension as well as the risks posed by nuclear weapons. The progressive approach is based on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and in particular Article VI, as the only framework for advancement in nuclear disarmament. We should all concentrate on the current review cycle of the NPT, as well as on fulfilling the commitments of 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences in all three pillars of the Treaty. It is our common duty to ensure that the 2020 Review Conference is a success.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is a matter of priority. Bulgaria, as an Annex II state, has assumed its responsibility and has ratified the Treaty. We call on all states, especially on all Annex II states, to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay.

The commencement of negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is another necessary element that will bring
us closer to a world without nuclear weapons. In this regard, I would like to commend Canada on the skillful chairmanship of the high-level expert preparatory group and on achieving a consensus outcome.

Verification is also essential for an effective nuclear disarmament. We follow closely the work of the Group of Governmental Experts and are looking forward to the results in 2019.

Mr. Chair,

As underlined earlier, nuclear disarmament is only possible with the engagement of all states and it should be based on mutual trust.

In this regard, we urge the United States and the Russian Federation to remain engaged in constructive dialogue in order to preserve the Treaty on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces in Europe (INF) and to ensure its full and verifiable implementation.

Lastly, Bulgaria is convinced that through building trust and through the engagement of all, we stand a chance to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

Thank you!