STATEMENT BY

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CHEMICAL WEAPONS

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FIRST COMMITTEE

THEMATIC DEBATE ON REGIONAL DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY

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Mr. Chairman,

Poland associates itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

Poland remains committed to the existing regional security architecture founded on conventional arms control regimes and confidence and security building measures. Regrettably, current security environment in the region is characterized by the lack of trust caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine and Russia’s decision to suspend its participation in the CFE Treaty; Russia also vetoes the process of modernization of CSBMs.

In such difficult and challenging situation Poland’s efforts are aimed at strengthening and enhancement of the existing arrangements. They need to be modernized and updated. Acting in a constructive way, Poland proposed modernization of the Vienna Document concerning risk reduction (proposal of an amendment to the para 17 – dangerous military incidents). Poland is also a co-sponsor of 10 proposals of modernizing the Vienna Document, including on lowering thresholds for prior notification and observation, improvement of verification options for evaluation visits, and introducing new regulations concerning the so-called snap exercises.

Moreover, to address the issue of increased military activity in the region, in 2017 Poland launched the initiative of voluntary reporting on military exercises in the OSCE’s Forum for Security Cooperation.

Furthermore, under Chapter X of the Vienna Document, Poland concluded two bilateral agreements on military transparency with its neighbours: Ukraine and Belarus; to increase transparency and confidence, mutual inspection visits are taking place each year on a parity basis.

Poland spares no effort to engage in the Structured Dialogue process – a format initiated in late 2016 in OSCE. Although its results are yet to be seen, we hope that this process will help to restore trust and mutual understanding in the OSCE area;
hence, the Structured Dialogue can be viewed as a specific “confidence building measure”.

Mr. Chairman,

Aggression against Ukraine undermines the core principles and commitments of the UN and the OSCE, as well as our collective security. Policy applied by Russia is entirely in breach to the commitment not to change borders through the use of military force. It violates the principle of refraining from the threat or use of force and contradicts the commitment that every nation has the right to determine its own choice of its political, economic and security arrangements.

Peaceful settlement of this conflict requires constructive engagement of all parties and full implementation of the Minsk agreements. Poland strongly supports the efforts of the Normandy format and of the OSCE, including the Trilateral Contact Group. We are one of the largest donors to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, accounting for 41 monitors and experts.

Mr. Chairman,

The issue of illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of conventional arms is of particular importance in the context of regional security. The situation in Ukraine is a showcase how these activities can destabilize not only the region itself but affect the entire European security. We should spare no efforts to assist countries like Ukraine to prevent and combat such illicit trade. One way of dealing with this is through applying stricter controls. Poland’s arms export control system, consistent with the European Union’s policy, has been established and developed over the years and meets most advanced standards. Further strengthening of such instruments like the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and enhancing their implementation at the regional level should be also encouraged.

States affected by the conflict often also face the challenge of constant insecurity due to contamination from landmines, explosive remnants and unexploded
ordnances. Their ability to conduct effective demining action is often hindered by the lack of control of state authorities over the territory in question. Poland is determined in pursuing the objectives of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and promoting its universalization and full implementation. Polish MFA continues financial support to UNMAS for mine action and risk mitigation in Gaza.

Mr. Chairman,

As a current member of the UN Security Council, Poland is paying an increased attention also to the situation in other regions.

We believe that it is in our common interest to stabilize the situation in the Middle East, reduce tensions in the region and, most importantly, to prevent further proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is crucial for the security of Europe given its immediate proximity to the Middle East.

On the Korean Peninsula, process of denuclearisation, despite encouraging developments such as the inter-Korean summits, and the meeting of Kim Jong Un with the US President Donald Trump, has not started yet. The lasting peace will not be achieved without denuclearization of the DPRK in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions. Until then international community must remain united in keeping up real and consistent pressure on the DPRK. Poland will continue to support further initiatives and actions which would contribute to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.