STATEMENT BY

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Mr. Chairman,

Let me congratulate you on the assumption of the Chairmanship of the First Committee for the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly. We wish you success in fulfilling this important function. You can be assured of full support and cooperation of the Delegation of Poland.

Poland fully associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. Building upon it, I would like to stress several issues in my national capacity.

Current security situation is not encouraging. Tensions at the global and regional level put under stress existing international order, including non-proliferation and arms control regimes. In fact, we have been witnessing progressing decomposition of the those regimes.

The non-proliferation is a collective effort and to uphold the security architecture built for decades full and unwavering commitment of all us to observe all norm and obligations in this field is indispensable

Mr. Chairman,

Since its entry into force in 1970, the NPT has been the cornerstone of the global regime for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament and as such the essential part of the modern collective security system. Current international geopolitical challenges underline an important role of the Treaty and necessity to uphold and strengthen it. The NPT helps to ease tensions and build confidence between states.

Poland has always been committed to the objectives of the NPT. This approach was highlighted inter alia by our chairmanship of the 2018 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee. In recent months we spared no efforts to: 1)
uphold the integrity and credibility of the Treaty; 2) create environment for an all-inclusive, mutually respectful and transparent dialogue; 3) deliver practical solutions for the 2020 Review Conference, which will mark the 50th anniversary of the NPT’s entry into force.

Having said this we stand ready to support the Malaysian chair of the Third PrepCom, and wish all the best to our successor.

Mr. Chairman,

Entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is yet another challenge. We welcome international efforts towards this end, such as the recent CTBT Friends Ministerial Meeting held in New York. Poland welcomes Thailand’s and Tuvalu’s ratifications of the Treaty this year.

We are convinced that lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula can only be achieved through peaceful means. Therefore, we welcome the diplomatic process related to its nuclear disarmament as well as the DPRK’s commitment to denuclearise itself and to suspend its nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions. However, further steps by Pyongyang are necessary towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation and the abandonment of all other WMD programmes. In this context we call upon the DPRK to sign and ratify the CTBT, CWC and to return to full compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to IAEA Safeguards without further delay.

Poland supports progressive approach to nuclear disarmament centered on the NPT and system of relevant international institutions and agreements. We believe that another important building block in this direction would be an early commencement of the negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament on the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). In this context, we welcome the report presented by the High-level FMCT expert preparatory group, to which we contributed with the Polish
expert. We consider it as a good basis for future negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and hope it will facilitate the process leading to the start of the negotiations of the Treaty.
Proliferation of ballistic missiles, especially those capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, remains a serious challenge to international peace and security. In 2017-2018 Poland chaired the work of the Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation (HCoC), which is the major instrument of transparency and confidence building measures.

Mr. Chairman,

As in previous years Poland will introduce in the United Nations General Assembly Draft Resolution on the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Our efforts are nowadays more important than ever. Unfortunately, despite many successes along recent years, the world of today is still witnessing real threats and challenges related to chemical weapons, including with regard to its key bedrock – use of this inhuman type of weapon. It raises a fundamental question on the CWC integrity and the OPCW credibility.

Poland is deeply concerned that in recent years chemical weapons have been used in Iraq, Malaysia, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. We strongly condemn these acts and demand that the perpetrators be held accountable. In this context, the General Assembly has to convey a strong, united and unambiguous signal of support of the whole international community for the CWC integrity and the OPCW role. We need to demonstrate unity of purpose for the world free of chemical weapons that should enhance, not weaken, the CWC and the Organization. This is the only way to defend against chemical weapons challenges and threats as well as to deter any future State and Non-State perpetrators. Failure is not an option.
Mr. Chairman,

We express our continued support for important work conducted within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Poland firmly believes that this Convention remains the most appropriate forum to examine new developments in weapons technologies. We appreciate the work carried forward in 2018 by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) which should lead to identifying constitutive elements of LAWS. The CCW Convention is also the right place for discussion on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) to minimize the humanitarian harm by possible strengthening of the application of existing principles and norms of International Humanitarian Law.

As holders of the non-permanent seat in the Security Council for 2018 and 2019 we continuously promote responsible export policies of small arms and light weapons (SALW) as well as physical security and stockpile management of SALW. We welcome the outcome document of the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects which can help protect the most vulnerable members of the society from illicit flows of SALW and thus help advance the Sustainable Development Goals.

Poland also remains committed to the objectives of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, its universalization and to implementation of the Maputo Action Plan in order to fulfil the aspiration to achieve an anti-personnel mine free world by 2025. The Fourth Review Conference in 2019 will be a key milestone in our collective efforts to strengthen the protection of civilians in armed conflicts.
Mr. Chairman,

Poland has received positively the Secretary General’s Agenda for Disarmament. It is important that such initiative is coming from the top of the United Nations system. At the same time, it is natural that this kind of initiative has not universal character and should be applied to the needs and expectations of individual states. In this context, we look forward to the Implementation Plan to be presented by the High Representative on Disarmament.

Poland appreciates the substantive work of this year’s session of the Conference on Disarmament. The establishment of five subsidiary bodies and adoption of four reports of them is a significant and the first such achievement in 22 years. We commend the coordinators of these bodies from Belarus, Brazil, Germany, Indonesia and the Netherlands. We hope that this contribution will lead us to even more successful work of the CD next year.

Thank you, Mister Chairman.