Mr. Chairman,

I would also like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as Chair of the First Committee for this session. I assure you and the new members of the Bureau of my delegation’s full support for the success of the Committee under your able leadership.

Mr. Chairman,

The current international disarmament and non-proliferation framework -- NPT, CWC and BWC, in particular -- is one of the greatest achievements of the rules-based international order and multilateralism, and has made significant contributions to international peace and security. It has not only enabled access to high-technology for peaceful purposes
while constraining malicious proliferation, but also enhanced predictability and stability in security relations among states.

Today, however, this rules-based international security is under threat and we are even witnessing a rollback of the hard-won achievements of the past, just to name a few: the actual use of chemical and biological agents by both state and non-state actors; erosion of the landmark nuclear arms control agreement; and massive conventional arms build-up in many parts of the world.

We need to stop this dangerous trend. The 2020 Review Conference, marking the NPT’s 50th anniversary of its entry into force and the 25th year of its indefinite extension, is a golden opportunity to show the united will of the international community to support multilateralism and prove that the work of the NPT community is genuinely contributing to a better and safer world for future generations.
We firmly believe that the NPT should continue to be the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and, given the differences of security environments in countries and regions, a step-by-step approach is the right path towards nuclear disarmament and a world without nuclear weapons. We also strongly support the ratification of Annex II countries of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in order to bring it into force, and the commencement of negotiation on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Chairman,

Just a week ago, working-level nuclear talks between the United States and the DPRK were resumed in Sweden as agreed between their leaders at Panmunjeom on 30 June. The one-day talks did not produce any tangible results, and the gaps between the two sides still remain to be narrowed. Yet, we should not be misguided by unhealthy pessimism. As was emphasized by the United States, "a legacy of 70 years of war and hostility on the Korean Peninsula cannot be overcome through the course
of a single Saturday.” We sincerely hope that the DPRK, fulfilling its commitment to denuclearization, will remain engaged in dialogue with the United States so that progress in the negotiation could be made sooner rather than later. The international community, for its part, must continue to work together to maintain the hard-won momentum for dialogue as we seek a negotiated solution to the DPRK’s nuclear problem and work to establish permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. As President Moon stated in his speech at the UN General Assembly last month, “peace on the Korean Peninsula is inextricably linked to peace around the world.”

Mr. Chairman,

Emerging technologies call for our joint efforts in the areas of outer space and cyber security. We take note of the work done by the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) from 2018 to 2019 and hope to continue our work on this issue to ensure the safe and secure space environment.
We also welcome the recent development in regard to cyber security such as the launch of an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) which held its first session last month and agreement to establish another Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) later this year. We sincerely hope that these two groups yield productive and meaningful outcomes by capitalizing on their complementarity. The Republic of Korea will actively participate in the Open-Ended Working Group process to produce a consensus outcome.

This year, Mr. Chairman, the Republic of Korea has tabled a new resolution on youth empowerment and engagement, as part of our contribution to championing Action 38 of the Secretary General’s disarmament agenda.

Empowerment of youth in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation is meaningful not only for securing diversity, but, more importantly, for nurturing young experts who will lead our collective efforts in the future. It is my sincere hope that the resolution we are going
to table will create a new positive momentum for disarmament discussions that have been polarized and remained at a standstill for quite some time. I would like to invite all Member States to join in this endeavor and co-sponsor the resolution.

The Republic of Korea is also organizing two side events on the theme of export control – one on October 8 titled “Export Control in Practice”, and the other on October 14 to launch online training course on UNSCR 1540 which will be co-hosted by Japan, the US and UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. This is part of our efforts to share our experiences and best practices on the implementation of export control, and to provide assistance on capacity-building and education. The Republic of Korea, a member of all existing multilateral export control regimes and one of the leading countries in this field, is committed to working with the international community to strengthen international cooperation for export control.

Mr. Chairman,
Allow me to conclude my intervention on a personal note. This is in fact the last meeting of the First Committee for me to attend as I am going to leave New York shortly after three years of my tour of duty that concludes forty years of my entire diplomatic career. It has been a great pleasure for me to work with all of you to build and sustain peace around the world. Serving as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2017 was a special honor and privilege for me in this regard. I wish you all the best in your continued endeavors towards this end.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.