Mr. Chairman,

Next year will be the Review Conference of the “Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”, fifty years since the treaty entered into force. The U.N. First Committee has been meeting faithfully year after year to ensure that a nuclear war will never happen, ever. Yet the harsh truth is simple and uncompromising. Nuclear weapons by their very existence pose a “potent” threat and subject the world to needless fear and anxiety. If only the Nuclear weapon states had to bear this fear and sense of uneasiness, then Samoa would have long been convinced of the reasons and justifications advanced to date.

But coming from a region where the emotional scars of terror and mistrust from real-life experiences of nuclear testing remains up to this day, our shared perspective has made us strong advocates for total disarmament. The accelerated entry into force of the “South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty” to safeguard our biodiversity and ocean from radioactive contamination is testimony to this.

Mr Chairman,

We opened the current General Assembly session with a focus on the urgent need for united global action and commitment to address the climate crisis, to provide peace and prosperity and to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Yet the presence of nuclear weapons, fuelled by the human tendency to achieve a competitive edge over others at whatever cost, means global efforts towards sustainable development are already sidelined and ineffective and any goodwill, compromised and unsustained.
Thus, during these turbulent times of uncertainties, our only shield to protect us as a small island state without a defence force, is our unbroken faith in the rule of law, international treaties and global good governance. A stable and resilient peace and security environment without threats of nuclear weapons is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development aspirations.

Samoa’s membership of the “Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty” and the “Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons” are firmly anchored on that conviction. We are committed to cooperate and work with like-minded States and all stakeholders on concrete actions to move us closer to realising a nuclear-weapon-free world. Samoa values the vital role and positive contributions civil societies and international organizations bring in our joint fight to achieve a treaty-based prohibition on nuclear weapons, and we thank them for their ceaseless advocacy.

Mr Chairman,

They say that “every cloud has a silver lining” and the “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” is perhaps that timely breakthrough. Samoa, with thirty-two other states, has so far ratified the Treaty. We are still seventeen ratifications shy for the Treaty to enter into force and we encourage others to sign up to and ratify the treaty, to help strengthen the existing Nuclear Proliferation regime.

Let me conclude by reiterating Samoa’s firm belief that the only guarantee humankind has against the use, and the threat of use of nuclear weapons is through the non-possession and total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Thank you.