Mr. Chair,

We share the view that the use of nuclear weapons is the most serious threat ever faced by humankind. For many years, Ukraine has been consistent in its call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a final purpose of nuclear disarmament and for strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime as a tool to achieve this goal.

Pursuing this goal, Ukraine has demonstrated a proactive approach by abandoning its nuclear capability and acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in November 1994, as well as by taking practical steps to eliminate the use of highly enriched uranium for civilian purposes through the removal of all of its existing stocks from its national territory by March 2012.

Ukraine continues to view the NPT as a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and renders comprehensive support to its effective implementation, further strengthening and universalization. However, Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine in violation of the key principles of the NPT challenged the efficiency of its mechanisms.

We have to re-emphasize that the historic decision of Ukraine to renounce its nuclear weapons and to access the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon state was largely based on the international security assurances provided in writing in 1994, in particular in the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances signed by Ukraine the three other nuclear weapon States.

The State-signatories to the Memorandum «reaffirmed their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations».

Now Ukraine is facing military aggression by one nuclear weapon state. Russia’s breach of the Budapest Memorandum on security assurances to Ukraine has significantly undermined the international efforts of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
It is the right time to acknowledge that the “security assurances” provided by the nuclear-weapon state so far proved their inefficiency. The Budapest Memorandum politically bounded Ukraine’s denuclearization to the respect for its territorial integrity by the nuclear powers. Continued violation of this commitment by Russia will not encourage proliferators to take steps towards nuclear disarmament. Quite the contrary – such an example would contribute in favour of a nuclear deterrent as a remedy for both nuclear and conventional military threats.

To eliminate such a risk, the international community will have to invent a more convincing offer than a security assurance. There must be a solid mechanism of taking violators to responsibility.

**Mr. Chair,**

Today’s debate is yet another opportunity to highlight the crucial importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Ukraine fully supports its early entry into force and universalization.

One of the important elements of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament is the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT). Ukraine continues to support the need to negotiate and conclude such a Treaty.

Ukraine also supports the establishment of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones worldwide. Establishing WMD-free zones will get us closer to the ultimate goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons.

**Thank you.**