Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania fully aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the EU. In our national capacity, I would like to stress the following.

The security situation in Europe is deteriorating. We are witnessing less transparency regarding military activities near our borders, no progress in resolving conflicts in Europe, illegal migration being used as an instrument of political pressure, sophisticated cyber-attacks against high value political and economic targets, assault on democracy, free media and civil society in neighbouring countries.

It is important to continue our effort to preserve international security architecture and international rules-based order, based on international law. All countries need to show responsibility and restraint and implement their commitments and obligations. Lithuania keeps highlighting that agreed security principles enshrined in the UN Charter, Helsinki Final Act and other internationally or regionally agreed instruments need to be respected and preserved.

Mr Chairman,

We regret the postponement of the NPT Review Conference and we are hoping that it will be successfully conducted in January 2022 despite the pandemic circumstances. We support the NPT as a cornerstone for global nuclear disarmament. The NPT with its three pillars remains a fundamental international mechanism contributing to global peace, security and stability.

As a non-nuclear state Lithuania reiterates its support to an inclusive and gradual approach to nuclear disarmament and meaningful steps towards creating the environment conducive for further nuclear disarmament negotiations to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. This work shall be based on the provisions of the NPT, including Article VI, and built on the principles of effectiveness, verification and undiminished security for all.

Lithuania strongly believes that reciprocal and verifiable treaty-based nuclear arms control, reflecting existing security environment, can contribute to reduction of nuclear weapons. We consider the extension of the New START Treaty as a crucial contribution to international security and stability and welcome the renewal of the Strategic Stability Dialogue between the US and Russia. Lithuania remains convinced that future arms control arrangements should include all types of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we welcome the transparency efforts by the United States announcing a report on its nuclear weapons stockpile on 5 October 2021. We call on China, who is increasing its nuclear weapon capabilities, to demonstrate responsibility and join nuclear arms control talks.

Mr. Chairman,

We strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances, and demand cessation of such use. International community shall not tolerate impunity for the use of chemical weapons and needs to take all necessary action to ensure that the global norm of prohibiting the use of chemical weapons is not compromised. We remain deeply concerned that Russia has not yet disclosed the circumstances of the assassination attempt on Alexei Navalny who was poisoned in
Russia by a military grade chemical nerve agent of the novichok group in August 2020. The use of the chemical weapon on the Russian ground has been confirmed by four different and trusted laboratories (in Germany, France, Sweden, and OPCW). Lithuania will continue strongly supporting all the efforts of bringing those responsible for this heinous attack to justice.

The global norm of prohibiting the use of chemical weapons has been compromised also in Syria – the chemical weapons were used in three separate attacks on its territory by the Syrian Arab Air Force in 2017 and again in 2018. We strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances, and demand cessation of such use. We strongly condemn these attacks and regret the lack of cooperation from the Syrian Arab Republic and urge it to provide all the relevant information to the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW.

Lithuania strongly supports the authority and integrity of the OPCW, which is fulfilling its duty to serve the international community by conducting objective and impartial investigations that helps fighting the impunity of the use of chemical weapons. Likewise, we support the UN Secretary-General’s Mechanism, which is currently the only independent international instrument for investigating possible use of bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons. Any attempts to compromise its integrity, independence and efficiency are totally unacceptable. We expect all States to reaffirm their strong political commitment to upheld the norms of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and their related annual resolutions at this First Committee session.

Mr. Chairman,

We reiterate our strong commitment to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, and call on nations to respect their obligations and commitments in this field.