Azerbaijan shares concerns of the international community that proliferation of nuclear weapons poses an existential threat to international peace and security and supports all multilateral efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

In pursuit of these efforts, Azerbaijan works closely with the IAEA, whose key role in developing nuclear security regulations and standards we recognize and commend. Moreover, Azerbaijan signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1999. We note that it is one of the most crucial instruments of strengthening of non-proliferation regime and limitation of nuclear armaments and we support efforts to establish a viable and effective verification architecture for nuclear tests.

Due to proliferation challenges and our geographic location, Azerbaijan attaches particular importance to prevention of use of our territory as a transit route for nuclear trafficking. In close cooperation with partners, we established a strong export control system. We are committed to continuing cooperation with international organizations and our partners to strengthen nuclear security in the region and around the world while reducing threats emanating from illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials.

Azerbaijan believes that elimination of all types of WMD’s in accordance with obligations under existing non-proliferation regimes and establishment of nuclear weapons-free zones in remaining regions is a prerequisite for strengthening international security and confidence worldwide. In this context, we strongly support the initiative of establishing Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East.

Mr. Chair,

As a reliable member of international community Azerbaijan fully abides by its commitments under the CWC and BWC and strongly condemns any use of these types of weapons, as well as their development, production or stockpile.
Azerbaijan supports goals, purposes and principles of the Ottawa Convention and considers that a full ban and destruction of anti-personnel landmines is an important humanitarian objective that will reduce civilian casualties.

Mr. Chair,

Excessive and destabilizing accumulation and proliferation of SALW and SCA continue to be a threat to security and stability, as well as to safety of civilians. Full implementation of commitments of relevant international documents and practical steps in this regard are necessary to tackle these threats. We believe that work of relevant regional organizations should complement UN-led international efforts in this sphere, including through the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in all its Aspects. We also note that prevention of illicit transfer and diversion of SALW and SCA could be an important element for rehabilitation, reintegration and peace-building in post-conflict contexts.

Mr. Chair,

Speaking from our regional perspective, we must stress our deep concern over and strong condemnation of extensive use by Armenia of massively destructive methods of warfare and weapons prohibited under international law and international humanitarian law, such as cluster munition and white phosphorus projectiles during the course of armed hostilities in September-November last year. Even more egregious were repeated missile strikes from the territory of Armenia on residential areas of Azerbaijan which resulted in horrific casualties among civilian population, including children and massive destruction of property. These facts have been well established by national authorities of Azerbaijan, as well as by international actors and confirmed in several reports presented by international NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

Armenia’s refusal to release maps of minefields it planted during the occupation and in particular prior to its military’s withdrawal has already claimed lives of 30 Azerbaijani citizens and threatens to kill even more. This situation also prevents nearly a million of Azerbaijani IDPs from exercising their inalienable right to return home in safety and dignity. We urge the international community not to ignore this ongoing humanitarian crisis and call upon Armenia to immediately release all minefield maps.

I thank you Mr. Chair.