Mr. Chair,

A world free of nuclear weapons is an aspiration embraced by all humanity. However, in recent years, the international security environment has not been proceeding in a positive way and this has in turn hindered the efforts for international peace and security.

And yet this year there have been a number of welcome developments. The extension of the New START and the launch of Strategic Stability Dialogues between the US and Russia are some causes for optimism.

At the same time, we all know that our ultimate aspiration cannot be attained without concerted multilateral efforts. Maintaining the NPT as the cornerstone of our efforts will be a good place to begin with. The upcoming 10th NPT Review Conference will be a crucial occasion to reaffirm our strong commitment to the Treaty. In this regard, the Republic of Korea is of the view that particular considerations should be given to the following elements.

First, there should be an emphasis on deepening shared understanding and nurturing trust between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states and among NWS. Above all, we believe that the role of the NWS is particularly important. We therefore look forward to ongoing discussions among the P5. We also extend our support to pragmatic approaches such as of the Stockholm Initiative, the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) and International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament
Republic of Korea

Verification (IPNDV).

Second, many long-standing issues including the early commencement of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) negotiations and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) should warrant our full attention. After more than 20 years of preparations for the negotiations on the FMCT, we believe that it is now time to embark upon the negotiations on the Treaty. We also call on all non-parties to the CTBT to sign and ratify the Treaty at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Chair,

The ROK also reiterates the significance of the Conventions against chemical and biological weapons. In this vein, we emphasize our unflinching support for the Syria-related mechanisms at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and urge the Syrian Arab Republic to take necessary actions as called for by the Conference of the States Parties of the CWC.

The use of a Novichok nerve agent in poisoning Mr. Alexei Navalny remains a matter of grave concern as well. My delegation encourages the Russian Federation, on whose territory the attack took place, to fully cooperate with the Technical Secretariat to disclose in full the circumstances surrounding the incident.

As we are looking forward to the Review Conference next year at a time when the relevance of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) is growing with the risks brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, my delegation hopes that we can and should use
this focus in strengthening the BWC to make the regime more resilient, useful, practical and up-to-date.

In this line, our delegation welcomes creative new ideas proposed thus far and hopes to build upon the areas of convergence for the upcoming Review Conference in the Meeting of States Parties in November. Our contribution of 1 million dollars to the Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action (ZODIAC) initiative by the IAEA is another contribution the ROK is making to help counter biological pandemic.

Mr. Chair,

Ensuring a safe, secure and sustainable space environment has emerged as a matter of shared interest and a goal for all humanity. In this regard, the UNGA resolution on responsible behaviors in space allows us to navigate a secure space by reducing space threats. The ROK fully supports this resolution.

The ROK also welcomes the efforts pursued through the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) in 2018-2019 as well as the report by the GGE on the Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBM) in Outer Space Activities in 2013-2014 which contributed to fostering of a common understanding.

Mr. Chair,
The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need to prevent the diversion of conventional weapons including small arms and light weapons and better regulate arms trade to reduce human suffering, especially that of the most vulnerable. We therefore reiterate the important contribution by the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and welcome the successful convening of the 7th biennial meeting of the Program of Action (BMS7), looking forward to their enhanced synergies.

We also remain committed to the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and expect that the collective efforts through the GGE process will continue within the framework of the CCW.

We will continue to work closely with the international community on landmine issues by participating in the 19th Meeting of the States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban convention as an observer as well as by continuing its contributions to UN and other relevant trust funds.

Mr. Chair,

The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula remains one of the key issues in the field of international peace and security. Indeed, the Korean Peninsula Peace Process is our enduring commitment to achieve complete denuclearization and establish permanent peace in our part of the world.

My government is unwavering in its resolve to advance the peace process and we ask
the DPRK to respond to our call for the resumption of dialogue. The continued support and encouragement of the international community would be most deeply appreciated.

Thank you.

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