Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair and the other members of the Bureau on your elections to steer the work of the First Committee during the 73rd session. I want to assure you of my delegation’s full support during our deliberations.

Eritrea fully aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned movement and the African Group; my delegation would like to stress the following points:

Mr. Chairman,

Seventy three years ago the United Nations was established with an aim to save “succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and ensuring justice and development for all. Yet, peace and development remain elusive for humanity. In 2018 death, destruction and displacement caused by conflicts continue unabated despite the “resolve of the international community” to address their root causes by enhancing conflict resolution mechanisms. In Africa, from the East
to the West and in the North, in the Middle East and in all continents, extremism, and terrorism are spreading and continue to find fertile grounds in instability and poverty.

Mr. Chairman,

Eritrea believes international security architecture starts at regional level. Achieving peace and security in any region necessitates meaningful cooperation and engagement between countries in the region to address the roots of the twin evils of insecurity and poverty. It requires multilateral regional conflict mechanism that organically evolves to address the peculiar challenges of the region.

A wounded region, a region whose main components view security in a non-inclusive way can hardly provide security for its citizens nor contribute to global peace and security. Worst, instability provides fertile grounds for terrorists and other transnational organized crimes and becomes sources of displacements.

The Horn region has been described as conflict-ravaged, volatile, hostile and underdeveloped due to conflicts and international interventions. In the past half century, the citizens of the Horn of Africa have endured conflict, extreme poverty, and displacement within and beyond their countries of origin. This was the story of the Horn of Africa for the past two decades.

Since June, the countries in the region have shown a determination to change the story of their neighborhood. As a result, the region is experiencing significant and rapid positive developments. The countries in the region are making remarkable progress by ending a distorted regional situation marked by conflicts and zero-sum competition; the new phase is allowing the countries of the region to create a peaceful and cooperative neighborhood. Eritrea always believes in the shared destiny of the people of Horn of Africa; they can only progress together.

Through their bilateral and trilateral agreements, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia have shown their determination to seize the emerging historic opportunity in order to forge closer political cooperation and accelerate economic integration. Moreover, the leaders of Eritrea and Djibouti met in Saudi Arabia and agreed to establish a new chapter of cooperation and good neighborliness.
Mr. Chairman,

Even though some progress was made in the right direction, the world still witnesses set-backs in achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which is the most critical for global disarmament and non-proliferation. Peace and security are not threatened by nuclear weapons only. Other weapons such as the proliferation, transfer and circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons are also known to have destabilizing effects across several countries and regions. Multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions in accordance with the UN Charter provide the solid basis for addressing disarmament, peace and security issues. In this regard, Eritrea reiterates its commitment to the work of Disarmament and International Security, as nuclear disarmament can only be achieved on a multilateral basis.

Mr. Chairman,

The lack of meaningful progress in the field of nuclear disarmament is a concern. Eritrea believes that the only guarantee humanity has against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, is through the total and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.

Eritrea firmly believes that legally binding nuclear negative security assurances, establishment of nuclear free zones as well as the universalization and early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) are critical steps towards general and complete nuclear disarmament. Eritrea attaches high importance to the role played by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in maintaining international peace and security. Eritrea reiterates its position on the inalienable right of all states to peaceful use of nuclear energy and it should be fully guaranteed and respected without compromising the goals and objectives of the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

Eritrea wishes to underscore the full observance of all principles and norms of international law, including full respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of states in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is vital that all nations, peoples as well as political and social forces that stand for peace, independence, international law, justice, equity and sustainable development forge a common front in order defend time-tested principles of equal sovereignty of
nations, respect for territorial integrity, peaceful coexistence, the right of nations to choose their social and economic path of development, respect for the dignity and rights of citizens and migrants and fidelity to the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating that disarmament benefits mankind not only because it eliminates threats to peace and security but also because it prevents diversion of scarce material and financial resources from developmental efforts.

I thank you Mr. Chairman