

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MS. GERGANA KARADJOVA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA TO THE UN IN NEW YORK
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF BULGARIA
TO THE ELEVENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-
PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT) IN 2026
MAIN COMMITTEE I**

Mr. Chair,

Bulgaria aligns with the statement made by the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to outline a few points.

Bulgaria remains fully committed to a world without nuclear weapons. This shared objective of the international community requires a step-by-step approach based on mutual trust, while fully taking into account the security environment and the present strategic context. This approach stems from Article VI of the NPT and calls for concrete progress towards the pursuit of global nuclear disarmament, especially through the strict, full, and universal implementation of all NPT obligations and commitments from previous Review Conferences, the overall reduction in the nuclear arsenals, and strengthened nuclear arms control dialogue aimed at meaningful and constructive results.

In today's world all States should prevent the use of nuclear weapons. Russia's announced deployment of nuclear weapons in Belarus, its irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear force in the course of its war of aggression against Ukraine clearly demonstrate how severely Russia undermines the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Bulgaria urges Russia and Belarus to adhere to their NPT obligations and other relevant international commitments. We also call on Belarus, DPRK, and Iran to immediately stop their direct military assistance, and on China and other countries to refrain from providing material support to Russia's war against Ukraine. Bulgaria reaffirms its support for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace that upholds Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Chair,

Nuclear disarmament should be effective, verifiable, and irreversible. We believe that it can be achieved only within the NPT framework and its Article VI. We thus welcome the discussions on improved effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and risk reduction and we will continue working to build on them.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an important step in the global nuclear disarmament efforts. In this regard, we regret the withdrawal of Russia's ratification of the CTBT. As one of the first Annex II States to sign and ratify the CTBT, Bulgaria calls on Russia to continue to adhere to the goals of the treaty, to renew its CTBT ratification, and we urge the other Annex II States to sign and/or ratify the CTBT without preconditions or further delay. We also call for a complete moratorium on nuclear testing.

The immediate commencement of the long overdue negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) remains a top priority. Such treaty will bring the international community closer to a world without nuclear weapons and would further the implementation of NPT's Article VI by reinforcing the disarmament commitments. Pending an FMCT entry into force all States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The challenges posed by the current international security environment reinforce the need for ever more pressing trust- and confidence-building efforts. In that sense, a credible verification is indispensable for the advancement of nuclear disarmament and establishing confidence.

Following the recent expiration of the New START Treaty – the last bilateral nuclear arms control agreement limiting the world's two largest nuclear arsenals, we underline the importance of responsibility and restraint in the nuclear domain. Nuclear arms control is crucial to global security, and we call for renewed multilateral efforts and timely process to this end. It is in this context that we join the calls on China to engage meaningfully in an arms control dialogue, including on nuclear risk reduction measures, as well as to enhance its transparency.

In conclusion, I would like to once again emphasize Bulgaria's strong commitment to the NPT and its Article VI for achieving a world free from nuclear weapons in a realistic, pragmatic, and progressive manner that will contribute to fostering the strategic stability in the interest of international peace and security, and will encourage further progress in nuclear disarmament.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.