IRELAND

STATEMENT

by

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PERMANENT MISSION OF IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Introduction of Draft Resolutions A/C.1/57/L.2 and A/C.1/57/L.3

L.2 Reductions of Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons
L.3 Towards a Nuclear Weapon Free World, the Need for a New Agenda

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to introduce two draft resolutions on behalf of their co-sponsors who are members of the New Agenda Coalition - Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden. The resolutions are contained in documents A/C.1/57/L.2 and A/C.1/57/L.3 respectively.

Mr Chairman,

I propose to address draft resolution L.3 first.

Draft resolution L.3 entitled "Towards a nuclear weapon free world: the need for a new agenda", is an effort to engage this Committee with a view to giving a new impetus to nuclear disarmament.

The Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT in 2000 provided the forum for the elaboration of a set of agreements on the elements and structure for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Importantly, the Final Document fundamentally alters the context in which nuclear disarmament must henceforth be pursued. That context is the unequivocal commitment by the nuclear weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament.

In 1995, the NPT States Parties renewed their commitment to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective nuclear disarmament measures. By the time we reach the NPT Review Conference of 2005 a full decade will have passed. The undertakings made by States Parties at the 2000 NPT Review Conference have mapped out the practical steps through which such progress can be achieved. The current NPT Preparatory Committee process provides a facilitating framework. We, as an international community, must take the agreed practical steps. As we said in our statement in the general debate on 30 September, our continued indecision leaves us as vulnerable to a nuclear event as at any time in our history.

Now then is the time to reinvigorate the wider nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation debate so as to respond with tangible results.

In this urgent context, the draft resolution, in its operative paragraphs:

- calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee to deal specifically with nuclear disarmament;

- wishes to see the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty enter into force as soon as possible with confirmation of the moratorium on all test explosions;
expresses deep concern about the continued retention of the nuclear weapons option by the three States who have not yet acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and calls on them to do so and bring into force full-scope IAEA safeguards;

- seeks the resumption of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives;

- seeks to prevent an arms race in outer space and calls on the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish an *ad hoc* committee to deal with this issue;

- calls on the nuclear-weapon States to respect fully their existing commitments with regard to security assurances and for recommendations on this issue to be made to the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

The co-sponsors of this draft resolution welcome and intend to continue to conduct informal consultations with other delegations with a view to achieving the widest possible support. We will bring forward a revised version of the draft resolution later in the session, as we will wish to take account of certain new and welcome developments, such as Cuba's announcement of its intention to accede to the NPT and the finalisation of the negotiations among the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon free zone in the region. As we have indicated in informal contacts, we are also ready to look at possible adjustments to the language of the text where clarification of the intent may be necessary, provided the thrust of the resolution remains unchanged.

Mr Chairman,

I also take this opportunity to introduce, on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, draft resolution L.2 entitled “*Reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons*”. This is a very straightforward resolution. As indicated in the general debate, the co-sponsors of draft resolution L.2 believe that the existence of these weapons is matter of concern for the international community. In particular, the commitment made in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT to the further reduction of non-strategic weapons creates for us all a priority which this resolution seeks to fulfil. The draft resolution expresses the view that the reduction and elimination of non-strategic nuclear weapons should be included as an integral part of the nuclear-arms reduction and disarmament process.

The draft resolution reflects these concerns and calls, in particular, for

- for the issue to be addressed as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process;

- for reductions to be carried out in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner;

- the development of further confidence-building measures with regard to non-strategic nuclear weapons and a reduction in their operational status,

Both of these latter measures would be entirely consistent with efforts to achieve an
irreversible and transparent process which leads to their elimination.

Again, as we have already indicated with regard to draft resolution L.3, the co-sponsors of this draft resolution are very open to comments on the draft from other delegations and will continue informal consultations with a view to bringing forward a revised text somewhat later.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that the two resolutions we are putting forward can act as a catalyst for meaningful progress and concrete action. They have the necessary operational flexibility to meet the concerns of all like-minded States. Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala in his introductory remarks two weeks ago referred to the need for "results-based disarmament". The two resolutions being tabled by the New Agenda Coalition are tabled in that spirit and we invite like-minded States to support them - also in a spirit of shared global concern.

[ENDS]