STATEMENT

by

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Permanent Representative of Sweden
to the International Organizations in Geneva

on behalf of the Article XIV Process Coordinating states
Mexico and Sweden

at the First Committee of the 66th General Assembly,
Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons

United Nations
New York

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Mr Chairman,

I make this statement on behalf of the delegations of Mexico and Sweden in both countries’ capacity as current Article XIV Process Coordinating states, i.e. facilitators of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. As regards other nuclear disarmament issues we would like to refer to the statements made on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

Achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an important priority in our work for nuclear disarmament. Mexico and Sweden have jointly taken on the role as Coordinating States during the next two years for the facilitation of the entry into force of the Treaty. Less than a month ago, on 23 September, here in New York, the Mexican Foreign Minister Patricia Espinosa Cantellano and my minister, Carl Bildt, co-chaired the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, also known as the Article XIV conference.

We would like to repeat the words of appreciation, expressed at that occasion, for the strong support in this endeavor by the Secretary General of the UN, Mr Ban Ki-moon, and the valuable work carried out by the previous Article XIV Coordinators France and Morocco, as well as by Ambassador Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission, and his staff.

Mr Chairman,

Sweden and Mexico share a resolute support for the CTBT and its entry into force, and a wider interest to strengthen the international security architecture. We have consistently supported the CTBT as the means by which to completely put an end to nuclear testing. The Treaty will significantly constrain the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. By doing so, it will make an indispensable
contribution to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. With the CTBT in force another step will be taken towards the goal of a future without nuclear weapons.

An overwhelming and growing majority of the international community already agrees on the urgent need for the CTBT to enter into force. The built-in safety-valve of the Annex 2 should alleviate any possible concerns among states to commit to the Treaty, because the of risk of others not taking on the same obligation. Moreover, the unprecedented verification system has proven itself and demonstrated that the CTBT, once in place, will indeed work effectively.

In our view, the Annex 2 states also have a special responsibility. The need to act cannot be passed on to others. As of now, 35 of these 44 states have assumed this responsibility and ratified the Treaty, including three nuclear weapons states. This is commendable. Nine Annex 2 countries have so far not yet chosen to do so. We are convinced that this will change as it becomes increasingly clear what the potential future options might be: a world where nuclear testing would again risk inflaming international relations, or a global community that has put such dangerous practices behind itself and banned them once and for all. With the CTBT in place we can build a more secure global environment for all.

Mr Chairman,

The course of further CTBT ratifications is an evolving process. Two of the remaining Annex 2 countries have publicly announced their intention to actively pursue ratification. This leadership is very much to be welcomed. Any further ratifications, in particular by states possessing nuclear weapons, could untie the knot and pave the way for a series of ratifications.

Sweden and Mexico strongly wish to contribute to such a positive development. We urge all states that have not yet done so – in particular Annex 2 states – to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, thereby becoming part of the international consensus to
completely end nuclear testing. Until the entry into force of the CTBT, the moratoria on nuclear testing must be upheld, keeping in mind that voluntary moratoria cannot replace legal instruments.

Sweden and Mexico will continue to pursue the entry into force of the CTBT and we invite all states to join us in this effort.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.