Mr Chair,

I take the floor to explain New Zealand’s vote in favour of resolution L.26, entitled “United Action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”.  

New Zealand has voted in support of this resolution in recognition of our agreement with its overall intention and with its stronger emphasis on the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. We note however our disappointment at the low level of ambition in the text - which we consider, indeed, to be weaker than that in previous years including, inter alia, because of the removal of references to the need for states possessing nuclear weapons to remove them from high alert status. We are disappointed, too, that there is no reference to the need for legally effective measures in the context of Article VI of the NPT.

Notwithstanding the expanded title of this year’s resolution - which refers to a “renewed” determination to totally eliminate nuclear weapons – there seems little clear direction set in this text that would help get us there. Certainly, we do not believe that the discussions held at this year’s failed NPT Review Conference, and which are referenced in pp 12 as if they could provide guidance for the way forward, can do so.