Statement by Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota, Head of the Brazilian Delegation to the Open-Ended Working Group taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations

Panel I: Measures to reduce and eliminate the risks of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapons detonations

Geneva, 2 May 2016

Mr. Chair,

I would like to thank the panellist, Dr. Patricia Lewis (Chatham House), for her presentation. I also want to point out that many of the measures to reduce and eliminate the risks of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapons detonations have already been examined, and even agreed, in other fora, in particular the NPT. For example, under Action 5 (c) of the Plan of Action adopted during the 2010 NPT RevCon as well as under Step 9 of the “13 Practical Steps” adopted during the 2000 NPT RevCon, Nuclear-Weapon States accepted to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their military doctrines and the operational readiness of those weapons. Unfortunately, those commitments were not implemented.

In the context of the OEWG, we believe it may be interesting to reiterate and elaborate on the measures mentioned in paragraph 33 and Annex III of the “synthesis paper”. However, the non-implementation by NWS of their commitments to implement those measures raises serious doubts about their effectiveness, in particular taking into account the decision by NWS not to be represented in the OEWG.

With regard to the prohibition and moratoria on nuclear test explosions, mentioned in paragraph 34 and Annex III of the “synthesis paper”, Brazil would like to reiterate the need to include explicit reference to subcritical and computer simulations of nuclear explosions. Such experiments, which have been addressed by NNWS in discussions under the CTBT framework, including in the Article XIV process, are inconsistent with the long term goal of nuclear disarmament. In this sense, they should be explicitly banned under any Treaty on nuclear weapons.

Finally, with respect to paragraph 35 of the “synthesis paper”, regarding the possible access to nuclear weapons by non-State actors, Brazil believes that such issue, however important, should not divert the attention of delegations from the major threat, which is the very existence of nuclear weapons.

I thank you.