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

Opening of the Session and General Exchange

Geneva, 2 May 2016

Mr. Chair,

I would like to reiterate Brazil’s full support to your work and to the activities of the OEWG. I also thank you for circulating the “synthesis paper”, which we consider a balanced and solid basis for our deliberations.

Brazil expects that the OEWG will help us move towards concrete proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. Therefore, it is important that discussions are focused and concentrated on key issues. We believe that the OEWG should make substantive recommendations to the UN General Assembly in line with the proposals contained in paragraphs 45 and 46 of the “synthesis paper”, which emphasize the need to start at an early date multilateral negotiations of a legally binding instrument or set of instruments for the prohibition of nuclear weapons as a preliminary measure towards their total elimination.

On the other hand, we do not believe it is feasible to make recommendations to the UN General Assembly based on the proposals contained in paragraphs 47 and 48 of the “synthesis paper”, which mention the negotiation of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons within the Conference on Disarmament and the adoption of a broad, flexible and progressive framework which would include, as a final building block, the negotiation of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons. If such proposals were viable, we would have been well advanced on the path towards a nuclear weapons free world. But they are not, for the simple reason that they are based on the traditional approaches to nuclear disarmament, in particular the step-by-step approach, which is largely responsible for the lack of progress in the nuclear disarmament field.

Let me stress that Brazil’s preference would certainly be the negotiation of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons with the participation of all nuclear armed States. Unfortunately, it is clear that States possessing nuclear weapons have not yet achieved the necessary political will to engage in good faith in such negotiations. In fact, the absence of all nuclear armed States in the OEWG suggests that they are collectively determined not to contribute to nuclear disarmament efforts.

Finally, Mr. Chair, I would like to point out that, in order to fulfil the mandate set out in Resolution A/RES/70/33, in a timely manner, we expect that the final session of the OEWG, to be held in August, will be devoted solely to the operational aspects of the report as well as the negotiation of agreed recommendations to the General Assembly. I thank you.