Mr. Chair,

The discussions at the OEWG about the humanitarian consequences have been very fruitful, partly because we could build on the substantial work undertaken at the three humanitarian impact conferences.

These discussions contributed to greater clarity about, and awareness of, the humanitarian consequences. They made the debate about nuclear weapons more comprehensive. They clearly also lent the debate new energy, and brought new voices to the table, including from the survivors of nuclear detonations. And like others we would like to thank Ms. Setsuko Thurlow, for her testimony. We would also like to thank the other two panelists for their important contributions.

Mr. Chair,

The developments around the humanitarian dimension over the past few years have led many States, including Switzerland, to conclude that these weapons must never be used again, under any circumstances. Switzerland also concludes that it is difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with international law, and in particular with international humanitarian law. We are also of the view that the debate on the humanitarian consequences represents a welcome opportunity to reflect on the legal dimension of nuclear weapons.

Listening to the debate in this group, it seems to our delegation that a considerable amount of convergence exists about a number of points:

- that the risks posed by nuclear weapon detonations are real, because the probability of such scenarios is not zero, and because the immediate and long-term humanitarian impact of a nuclear weapon detonation would be devastating.

- that a detonation would constitute a humanitarian disaster of such magnitude that we would have no adequate response to it.

- that it is important to pursue academic education and public awareness raising, and to put our endeavors in the multilateral disarmament discussions in relation with the catastrophic consequences.

- that the elements which resulted from the humanitarian debate should underpin our efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament
  
  o on the one hand, to work more resolutely and systematically on practical measures, and as mentioned, that includes notably looking more closely at the risk dimension and how to mitigate those risks, and
  o on the other hand, to explore and progress on possible additional instruments needed for a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

We welcome that various dimensions of the humanitarian debate are reflected in the synthesis paper, namely in the introduction, in part III.C, as well as in the annex.

In terms of specific measures, we see value in particular value in:
  - furthering studies on risks associated with nuclear weapons;
  - furthering the understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons;
- paying special attention to promoting disarmament and nonproliferation education.

We hope that these points can be adequately reflected in the recommendations of the OEWG’s report.

Regarding considerations of a more general nature, we would also deem important that the language of paragraphs 3. and 4. of the synthesis paper could be reflected, in some form, in the report.

One additional element which should, in our view, be anchored in the report is that the OEWG reiterates the deep concern first expressed by the 2010 NPT Review Conference “at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons” and “the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.”

Thank you very much for your attention.