Mr. Chair,

Let me start by thanking you for the way in which you have led our meeting thus far. We believe that under your able chairmanship, by the end of our deliberation, we would have a final report which contains a concrete set of recommendations aimed at moving nuclear disarmament forward. For the pursuit of this objective, rest assured that you have my delegation’s full support.

Mr. Chair,

As we have heard from the panelists last week, we live under the constant threat of nuclear detonation with unimaginable humanitarian consequences. It would only be fitting, therefore, to redouble our efforts to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. Global zero is a shared objective which can only be attained if states exert strong political will, mutual trust and flexibility. This OEWG would be a venue to prove to the world whether or not we, all of us, have what it takes to build a safer future for our next generations.

Mr. Chair,

As clearly stated during the first session of the OEWG, my delegation believes that any effective legal measure on nuclear disarmament needs to comprise of two key elements, namely prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, my delegation is of the view that the best and ideal approach would be to negotiate these two elements in parallel and to put them in a single treaty. However, if launching a negotiation process on a single treaty that regulates prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons is not plausible, then this delegation is open to the idea of, as a first step, commencing negotiations on a treaty that categorically prohibits activities related to nuclear weapons which applies non-discriminatory to nuclear weapons possessor states as well as non-nuclear possessor states.
As far as the list of prohibited activities is concerned, we have submitted a joint working paper entitled “Addressing nuclear disarmament: Recommendations from the perspective of nuclear-weapon-free zones” which lists the possible proscribed activities related to nuclear weapons.

This prohibition treaty would then need to be followed up by negotiations on a protocol or set of protocols which regulates the elimination of nuclear weapons. These two separate negotiations can take place within specified time frame. We concur with the view that elimination of nuclear weapons would have many technical challenges, particularly relating to verification arrangements. But as past experiences suggest, as long as political will exist, we should be able to overcome technical challenges in achieving the common goals of the international community.

At this point, Mr. Chair, we would like to emphasize that this approach should be fully open to all states, in particular nuclear weapons possessor states, from the very beginning of the process. We are fully aware that the involvement of nuclear weapons possessor states is a key factor for any nuclear disarmament measure to be effective. It is never our intention to exclude their roles in any nuclear disarmament measures. Taking into account the constant threat of nuclear detonation and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences following nuclear detonation, it is the interest of all states, including nuclear weapons possessor states to positively consider this approach.

**Mr. Chair,**

Let me conclude, Mr Chair, by thanking you once more for your work. We highly appreciate your leadership and have no doubt that the OEWG will produce a meaningful set of recommendation that can take us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.