STATEMENT BY BRAZIL ON BEHALF OF THE NEW AGENDA COALITION
AT THE OEWG

Chairperson,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the members of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), namely Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa. At the outset, the NAC would like to congratulate you on your assumption as Chair of the Open-ended Working Group established by Resolution A/RES/70/33 “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. We would like to assure you of the NAC’s full cooperation and support with your endeavors as Chair and to the success of our work within the OEWG.

Chairperson,

During the 70th UNGA, NAC countries voted along with other 138 countries in favor of Resolution A/RES/70/33, which created this OEWG on Nuclear Disarmament. We want to seize this opportunity to express our strong commitment to work in an active way in order to contribute in fulfilling its mandate, particularly to substantially address concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. We are also committed to substantially address additional recommendations on other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament. We recall that the OEWG was established by an UNGA resolution with all the legitimacy and inclusiveness that the process enshrines.

Chairperson,

In founding the NAC in 1998, the Foreign Ministers of our respective countries were motivated by the continued threat to humanity represented by the existence of nuclear weapons and the possibility of use - or threat of use - of these weapons. This threat continues to drive the NAC in advocating the cause of nuclear disarmament for the achievement and maintenance of a world free of nuclear weapons.

While there has been progress in limiting the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, the NAC remains concerned that there has been limited progress on nuclear disarmament, despite the fact that nuclear disarmament has been on the international agenda since nuclear weapons were first used. We are coming close to the seventieth anniversary of the first time the UN General Assembly addressed nuclear disarmament. In 1946, the UNGA sought to initiate a process to achieve “the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable for
mass destruction" and unfortunately much remains to be done towards a nuclear- 
weapons-free world.

Chairperson,

The NAC welcomes the renewed attention to the catastrophic humanitarian 
consequences and risks associated with nuclear weapons that has been generated by the 
international community since 2010. This initiative, together with the crucial role that 
civil society plays, has managed to create a growing awareness of the threat that even a 
single nuclear weapon poses to humanity, let alone the estimated 16 400 weapons that 
still exist, many on high alert status and ready to deploy within minutes.

Chairperson,

NAC urges all States to engage in the OEWG with a view to agree on a solid basis for 
early negotiations on nuclear disarmament in keeping with the spirit and purpose of 
General Assembly resolution 1 (1) of 24 January 1946 and Article VI of the NPT. For 
our part, the NAC has consistently contributed to the debate on effective measures for 
nuclear disarmament – and on legally effective measures in particular with a number of 
working papers and resolutions in the framework of NPT, CD and UN General 
Assembly with a view to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is our hope and expectation that the OEWG will also contribute to the work of the 
Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, whose role and 
functions were set out in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the 
General Assembly but have not been fulfilled for many years

Chairperson,

The NAC looks forward to contributing substantively during the OEWG process with 
concrete proposals to address the existent legal gaps related to nuclear disarmament. We 
also look forward to engaging in a constructive exchange of views with all participants 
in the OEWG to help us move closer to our shared objective of a world free of nuclear 
weapons.

Thank you.