Talking Points for presentation of Working Paper on a Progressive Approach

Mr Chairman

With your indulgence, I should like to take the floor today to make a brief statement in two parts

First, I have the honour to introduce a paper on behalf of 18 states: Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain, as well as my own delegation, Australia.

This paper has been referred to by a number of delegations already in their interventions to this OEWG. It outlines a Progressive Approach to advancing a world free of nuclear weapons. Its aim is to contribute constructively to our deliberations in the OEWG and to seek common ground upon which we can advance our shared commitment to take forward “effective measures” under Article 6 of the NPT, the foundation of all our work on disarmament.

The paper highlights and refreshes a number of key themes that were already articulated in the Building Blocks paper which was supported by 12 states and circulated to assist the deliberations of the 2013 OEWG.

These themes include the need to encourage an inclusive approach to advancing nuclear disarmament. The paper also underlines the importance of addressing a range of political and security considerations, as well as practical technical verification, enforcement and other issues.

The paper is a clarion call for action in relation to both effective practical as well as legal measures. It also raises questions for consideration regarding the logical sequencing of relevant action.

I shall not enumerate all the initiatives and ideas that are contained in the paper, but would commend them to the careful consideration of OEWG participants.

Mr Chairman

I would like to now make a few general observations on behalf of my own delegation:

• One key challenge for us now is how to deal with the significant and fundamental differences that evidently exist in relation to progressing nuclear disarmament.

  In this regard, I commend the approach adopted by the recently concluded UNGGE on an FMCT. Recognising that the fundamental differences between participants with regard to this topic, the GGE focussed on identifying areas of common ground which were encapsulated in agreed recommendations which provide signposts to take forward this important work.

• A corollary of this is that the narrative of the GGE report needed to reflect accurately the differences between participants. This approach could offer a way forward for managing the differences that will inevitably be articulated in the course of the OEWG discussion.
• On this point, I particularly commend your commitment to use your best endeavours to strive for a consensus outcome on the report, including its recommendations, recognising of course the constraints of the UNGA Rules of Procedure.

Mr Chairman

• A particular challenge I would like to raise is how we can engage with the nuclear weapon states and indeed nuclear weapon states as we try and progress nuclear disarmament.

• Another key challenge is how we refresh and update the disarmament debate on disarmament.

• We also need to take account of the difficult geo political environment. We can’t dismiss the genuine nature of the security concerns of a range of member states.
  o For this reason, a focus on CBMs will be important.

• In this regard, a key role for the OEWG will be rebuild trust and put the disarmament process back on the rails.
  o We are confident that the OEWG under your stewardship can lead us to this outcome.