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Statement on Preambular Elements of the Treaty  

16 June 2017  

Thank you Madame President,  

Nuclear deterrence, the logic it professes, and the practices it justifies, are reckless, costly, and completely counterproductive to the aims of global security. We agree with Indonesia, which has highlighted the need to delegitimize nuclear deterrence as a concept.

I refer you to our Working Paper 39, which presents reasons why nuclear deterrence is inadequate and flawed as a means of providing security, and is antithetical to the goal of comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

Relying on the constant threat of nuclear weapons use, nuclear deterrence in any form cannot coexist with the pursuit of comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

Therefore, we encourage the inclusion of a clause in the preamble of the treaty to the effect of,

“Understanding that nuclear deterrence is only an unproven hypothesis regarding human behavior—one that does not provide physical protection and could fail catastrophically.”

In addition, since nuclear deterrence constitutes an ongoing threat of nuclear weapons use, we support proposals outlined by South Africa and Iran, and backed by numerous states, to include the threat of use of nuclear weapons in the preamble.

Thank you, Madame President.