Madame President, Excellencies and Colleagues,

As this is the first time the Marshall Islands is addressing this meeting, we wish to congratulate you, Madame President, on your election.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is pleased to offer the following reflections on possible elements for consideration in our negotiations, regarding the goals and principles to be reflected in an outcome instrument.

Madame President,

The humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons use should be rightfully acknowledged as an important pillar of the instrument. This must be accomplished in a means which does not point fingers nor erode whatever trust exists with nuclear-armed states. This should be done in a manner which points to something which should be plain and obvious to everyone in the room -- that there are devastating human and environmental consequences resulting from the use of nuclear weapons. We have a moral obligation to our youngest and future generations.

The Marshall Islands has a unique perspective on this issue -- having suffered the devastating impacts of 67 nuclear weapons tests, between 1946 and 1958, during its status as a UN Trust Territory. The lasting death, disease, environmental devastation and cultural disruption are not distant history but contemporary challenges. Marshallese warned the UN about humanitarian consequences in 1954 and 1956, and were met with UN resolutions which remain the only instance where the UN ever authorized specific nuclear detonation. Six decades later, the world simply must do better.

In this light, it is also imperative to properly address the rights of survivors of nuclear detonation, and the role and responsibility of the international community towards them.
Madame President,

The instrument should also recognize that nuclear disarmament does not occur in a vacuum or on moral principles alone, but that there are complex security issues which are a political reality in disarmament efforts. Unilateral disarmament does not address the difficult security scenarios in which such weapons persist. But this political reality is not an indefinite reason to indefinitely shy away from addressing a strong global desire.

Security should be desired - and achieved - by all, in both national and collective levels, and this should also be on the table.

Madame President,

The instrument should recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for engagement or participation by all necessary actors. It is important that efforts within this instrument eventually result in direct, concrete measures which reduce - and eventually eliminate - global nuclear risk.

In the Pacific, tuna fish are an important resource - and a tuna treaty that is incompatible with tuna-owning nations, or did not involve their views, likely would not do much. So we should avoid further divisions, and not preclude participation. In this regard, the instrument must strengthen and not weaken the NPT, and must strengthen all current and effective efforts. We should consider how this instrument helps to frame and encourage future efforts. Particular attention may be needed regarding the implications of the principles of widest possible participation, active engagement with non-parties, and entry into force provisions.

Madame President,

The instrument must frame further action necessary to reduce and eliminate global nuclear risk. We must set our sights high but also be pragmatic that this won't be achieved in a single effort. We must keep the door open to further action needed to address this issue directly, and yet do something more than indefinitely kick the issue into an uncertain future, without conclusion. No doubt, actually achieving this goal will be a lot more difficult than just saying it or repeating it.

In this regard, it has been suggested in the past by some that the UN member states should aim to achieve this goal before 2045 - the 100th anniversary of the United Nations. Perhaps this is a compelling point of discussion - what will we all have to show for a century of diplomacy?

Madame President,

Finally, everyone here, and everyone listening in, must bear in mind that we will not achieve a different result if everyone merely repeats long-held positions. This is true for all sides of the table. Political creativity - and political will - are both truly needed.

Thank you and kommol tata