Madame President,

Thank you for this opportunity for my delegation to speak on this topic, and to share with the Conference our contributions on the principles and objectives, and preamble elements of a potential legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading toward their total elimination.

2. As stated in our general statement earlier, this Conference should seek, by the end of its Session on 7 July 2017, a legally-binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons. The principles of objectives of this instrument would be to strengthen the global norms against the use and possession of nuclear weapons, and have a political as well as legal impact on the disarmament debate and would provide much needed direction for further initiatives aiming at the elimination of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of a nuclear weapons free world.

3. A legally-binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons should be one that is legally-sound, and while being ambitious, focuses on prohibitions that are achievable and realistic to negotiate and agree upon in the limited time available before the conclusion of the Second Session of the Conference.

4. We thus wish to suggest the following as elements that can be included in the preamble of the Treaty:

4.1 Firstly – That general and complete disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority and that this instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons is a necessary step to lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This is of course our ultimate shared objective;

4.2 Secondly – A reference to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter;
4.3 Thirdly – A reference to the universality of the instrument to recognize the inclusiveness of the instrument and how all states, including the NPT-designated Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS) and those that with long-standing defense arrangements with NWS;

4.4 Fourthly – A reference to Article 6 of the NPT to recognize the interrelation and the complimentary nature of the instrument to the NPT;

4.5 Fifthly – A reference to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons on 8 July 1996, to recognize the opinion of the Court, and the linkage between that Advisory Opinion to the current process; and

4.6 Sixthly – A reference to the Humanitarian Impact of nuclear weapons, and the effects of such weapons, as well as how this process had led us to where we are now.

5. My delegation looks forward to hearing and considering other contributions that would be suggested for the preamble.

6. While being ambitious, we need to be realistic on what we are able to fully consider and achieve in our limited time. As the Conference discusses its next topic of core prohibitions, this Conference may find that there will be elements that may better suited for the preamble, especially if such elements may trigger major political divisions or technical debate. We are prepared to fully consider those and engage with delegations to ensure a successful outcome for this Conference.

I thank you.

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