Exchange of views, remarks by the delegation of Ireland

14 February 2014

Mr. Chairman,

I would like once again to thank the Government of Mexico and the authorities of Nayarit for their generous hospitality, for arranging this timely and essential conference and for the leadership it has shown and continues to show in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. As has been noted, today is the 47th
anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the first ever act of collective determination to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons, and an enduring symbol of what collective determination can achieve. It goes without saying that Ireland is pleased and proud to work alongside Mexico in the New Agenda Coalition.

This has been a very useful two days. The scientific and dispassionate presentations by many of the panellists made for uncomfortable and difficult listening. It is especially difficult not to be moved by the very powerful and
personal testimony of the Hibakusha. We are particularly grateful to them for sharing their stories with us and for reminding us why we do what we do. They speak with a unique voice on the consequences of nuclear weapons.

Mr. chairman,

As we continue to broaden and deepen our knowledge of the unacceptable risks to which our citizens are exposed because of the continued existence of nuclear weapons, it seems clear to us that inevitable and unavoidable policy implications arise from what we now
know about the extent of the risks involved. We must now ask ourselves what is the most prudent course of action for governments to take in order to protect our citizens from the horrors described very graphically yesterday by the Hibakusha during the opening session.

As has become clear from our discussions here in Nayarit and last year in Oslo, attempts by emergency services to respond to the humanitarian catastrophe which a detonation or sequence of detonations would unleash would fall short. It is dishonest to
pretend otherwise. Our focus must therefore be on prevention. The next phase of the humanitarian discussion should involve an assessment of what we, policy makers, can do to prevent catastrophe.

We warmly welcome Austria's announcement that it will host a third conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons later this year. We thank them for taking forward this very important discussion on our behalf. We believe that the very important work from Oslo and from here in Nayarit can and must be built upon at that
conference. For government representatives and policy makers the focus must inevitably turn to the practical and prudent steps which we should take towards eliminating these inhumane and indiscriminate weapons and with them the ever-present and increasing risks they pose to our citizens. For NPT states, this would do no more than fulfil a binding Treaty obligation which we all voluntarily assumed more than four decades ago.

As we continue our fact based examination of the implications of a detonation, we hope that states will
now begin to consider what this means in practical terms for the international rule of law on nuclear weapons.

Thank you.