Statement of H.E. Mr. Sabri Boukadoum, Ambassador, Permanent Representative

High level segment of
The United Nations Conference to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination,

New York 27 March 2017

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Madame President,

It is great to be here at this most likely historical juncture. We are opening a new trail with certainly a lot of difficulties, obstacles, and misunderstandings, but it is a necessity we owe it to the world, and a huge majority has decided to open this path for everyone’s sake and in the name of the very reason we are here at the United Nations: promote peace, prevent war through multilateral endeavors.

Madame President,

This is truly a historical Conference you are presiding over today. It represents the outcome of tireless advocacy efforts and determination of States and NGO alike, who believe in the sanctity of a world free of nuclear weapons. More, this Conference is the result of the dedication of all those who are convinced that we have to do something, that we have to listen to stray messages, like the moving one delivered this morning by the Hibakusha, and to all those who do not want to continue betting on the unbearable risk of annihilating all humanity.

So, thanks to all those stakeholders who bear high the very first pledge made by the First Committee United Nations General Assembly and thanks to all who believe that we have to do something, and today is the day to start discussing a legally banding international instrument to prohibit nuclear arms.

Madame President,

Let me say it very clearly at this stage: My Country Algeria will definitely bring its full support to all initiatives leading towards the prohibition and total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and specifically today to the only weapons of mass destruction that it is still to be addressed, nuclear ones.

Clearly, we have welcomed the report of the open ended working group, created by UNGA resolution 70/33 and we strongly support its recommendations. It is also a source of hope that for the first time in 20 years we have something in the field of multilateral negotiation for nuclear disarmament.

Clearly also, the most difficult part is to drag and to convince all those who have different views, and we have to continue to call on them to join the logics of hope and openness against any other logics.
Let’s stop for a while and try to project ourselves in the future: How will be our world in the next 100 years? Shall we bequest to next generations the fear or the hope? Exchange vows of peace or threat to annihilation?

It is hard to imagine that on behalf of narrow logics, we will continue to invest in even more sophisticated and destructive capacities. Are we looking for a new form for the end of history?

We simply refuse these logics, because we strongly believe that the collective security of all, as stated in the United Nations Charter, is to be reached out through confidence, diplomacy and based on the very reasons we all, have argue about for biological and chemical weapons – there is no difference!

**Madame President,**

We do not start out of nothing or out of nowhere. We will be following the next NPT RevConf, and it is hard not to see it – I mean the NPT – as a parallel trail.

We should not forget all the regional efforts. In Africa, we have the Pelindaba treaty that came to support our endeavors in Biological and Chemical Conventions – Of course; we have the Comprehensive Safeguards agreement of the Atomic International Energy Agency.

So, our gathering today is also the opportunity to renew all these commitments. There are no reasons no excuses, no ifs and no buts and no strings to be attached for the very idea of the development, production, acquisition, possession, storage, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

And, we cannot ignore no more the humanitarian impact of this weaponry as it was highlighted by the three international Conferences, held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna with the adoption of the humanitarian pledge.

Let me recall at this juncture that more than 20 years ago, already, the International Court of Justice has reminded the whole international community that these weapons are not in conformity with international humanitarian law.

**Madame President,**

I speak today on behalf of a country that know what are the consequences of nuclear testing – 7 open air nuclear tests were conducted on the soil of my country
almost 60 years ago, and we are still assessing the horrendous effects on the people and on the environment.

I speak also out of the frustration of seeing that none of the 13 measures to materialize nuclear disarmament agreed upon at the 2000 NPT RevConf and endorsed by the 2010 NPT RevConf are far from being implemented.

So, Madame President, this is very briefly what I wanted to say to you, as the Representative of Algeria, but also in my capacity as Chair of the First Committee of the 71st UNGA.

But let me assure you that in your very difficult task, you will always have us at your side and at the side of all who think that our collective security cannot be built over fear.

I thank you