Statement by
Head of Delegation of the Republic of Indonesia
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at the General Debate of the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally-Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons Leading Towards Their Total Elimination

New York, 27-31 March 2017
Thank you Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to commend you, Madam President, on your work leading up to this highly important Conference. I am confident that under your able leadership this Conference will attain all its objectives.

Allow me also to congratulate Mr. Thomas Markram, Secretary General of the Conference and all members of the Bureau. Rest assured of our full support and cooperation throughout the Conference.

Madam President,

Nuclear disarmament is clearly one of the top international challenges. In this context, the convening of this conference is the culmination of decades of international endeavors on nuclear disarmament.

Indonesia believes that the current international security environment is worrisome; partly due to the continued presence of nuclear weapons, which potentially can be used to threaten the security of neighboring countries as well as regional and global stability. Like many, Indonesia is deeply concerned by the catastrophic global impact of nuclear weapons to civilians. We believe that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons can guarantee against their use or threat of use. Therefore, we believe that the Treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons is not only important but also of the utmost urgency.

We are of the view that there should be a shift in the principles of nuclear disarmament, which, in addition to the humanitarian imperative, would further render the deterrence doctrine obsolete. There should be a shift from the current principle of “undiminished security for all,” which has provided elusive legitimation for the existence of nuclear weapons, to the principle of “increased security for all.”

My country is of the conviction that the point when non nuclear-weapon states decide to forego their right to acquire nuclear weapons is the point when nuclear-weapon states have the moral obligation to start the process of disarming their nuclear arsenals.

The slow progress in nuclear disarmament underpins Indonesia’s decision to support the convening of this Conference. In light of the ongoing frustration surrounding the lack of progress towards disarmament, strengthening the
Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty regime would require mending the imbalance between the three pillars of the NPT. Indonesia believes that this negotiation on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons is a clear path in that direction.

Madame President,

We should liberate humankind from the gridlock of the menace of nuclear catastrophe, either by design or by accident, due to the continued existence of nuclear weapons.

As a strong proponent of nuclear disarmament, Indonesia expresses deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian impact that could be inflicted upon millions of human beings in the event of detonation of nuclear weapons.

Such concerns, however, should never be interpreted as Indonesia's diminishing commitment and interests toward the continued existence and relevance of the NPT. In fact, like the majority of the NPT states parties, Indonesia believes that the NPT is an indispensable instrument to prevent global nuclear proliferation, with the eventual objective of achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

I would like to underline that Indonesia does not share some opinions stating that the negotiation on the treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons might somehow undermine the NPT.

On the contrary, Indonesia is convinced that the negotiation on such a treaty will in fact strengthen the NPT. Complementary to the NPT, this treaty is aimed toward categorically and universally banning nuclear weapons.

In light of this, Indonesia envisages the treaty to affirm its mutually reinforcing nature with the NPT.

Madam President,

The time is high for the international community to view the threat of nuclear weapons in a concrete and tangible context, reflecting the three primary issues of our deliberation.
Firstly, our principle objectives should be set no less than to eliminate and further de-legitimize the development, possession, transfer, and use of nuclear weapons by anyone by any means against anyone for any purpose on this planet, in its orbits, atmosphere, air, oceans, underwater, inland, ashore, seabeds, sub-terranean, et cetera.

Secondly, the legal provisions and norms of the Treaty should be firm, strong, and unambiguous.

The possession of nuclear weapons is in itself bares the potential and consequences of inflicting massive number of human casualties. Moreover, nuclear weapons can cause wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, and devastation not justified by military necessity. Who can guarantee that civilians will not fall victims as collateral damage?

That particular line is undisputably consistent to the menacing "city-busting" nuclear weapons, sitting coldly in their underground silos, ready to be launched at any moments’ notice, with targeted cities pre-programmed in their guidance systems.

I wish to make it very clear that in the context of nuclear warfare, the so-called "military necessity" would in that sense comprise of none other than the threat of somebody else’s nuclear weapons. That is the vicious circle that this process should break once and for all.

Thirdly, the most pertinent question above anything would be on how we should organize the implementation and enforcement of those legal principles and norms.

We must recognize that this might be the biggest question mark that this process needs to urgently answer.

Either we must rely on current organizational modalities pertaining to nuclear weapons and/or energy, or build something from scratch. Those are options that we need to ponder together.

Let me conclude, Madam President, by calling all countries to be resilient, to hold steadfast to our primary goal, that is to liberate humanity from its handmade doomsday device: nuclear weapons and their menace.

Thank you.