PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

I thank you for giving me the floor, Madame President. My delegation wishes to commend you for the work that you and your bureau have been doing so far.

The Philippines has strongly and consistently advocated for a world without nuclear weapons. Our Constitution renounces war as an instrument of national policy and pursues freedom from nuclear weapons in our territory. The best way to guarantee this freedom is through the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. The Philippines believes that it is important to address issues related to nuclear weapons in a comprehensive, inclusive, interactive, and constructive manner, for the advancement of multilateral nuclear disarmament.

The United Nations was founded to save generations from the scourge of war. One of the ways to guarantee that future generations do not suffer a worse fate is to eliminate nuclear weapons.

There should be no ambiguity in the language of the treaty that -

- we want to establish a clear legal standard to prohibit nuclear weapons based on their consequences, similar to legal instruments that have successfully rendered other weapons of mass destruction unlawful;
- we are non-discriminatory and we apply the same standards to all parties;
- we want to universalise the norms established by the nuclear weapons free zones treaties in various regions in the entire planet;
• we seek to address an unbalanced nuclear regime where states engage in nuclear weapon activities or consider themselves benefitting from the existence of nuclear weapons; and,
• we want to sharpen coherence between non-proliferation and disarmament objectives that bind us under the NPT.

At the OEWG on Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations, the Philippines expressed "deep concern over the threat to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any detonation, emphasizing that the risk of these catastrophic humanitarian consequences will remain as long as nuclear weapons exist." The Philippines would like to see the preambular portion language recognizing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

The preambular section may, as the OEWG did, note "with concern that progress in multilateral nuclear disarmament has been slow" and the existing United Nations disarmament machinery, including the CD, has not been able to carry out negotiations pursuant to an agreed program of work in two decades." It has been 21 years since the negotiation of the CTBT and it is unlikely that a program of work in the CD will be agreed upon anytime soon. This lack of progress has made the negotiation of a ban treaty not only inevitable but imperative.

This section should also recall Article VI of the NPT, which established a legal obligation on all States Parties, especially the NWS, "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament."

The Philippines would like the preambular portion to strongly establish that the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty is in line with this article.

Finally, the Philippines would like to see the preambular portion emphasize that the security of humankind from nuclear weapons is a mandate shared by the entire membership of the UN and that there is no better time than now to press ahead with our collective efforts on nuclear disarmament onward.

I thank you, Madame President.