STATEMENT

by

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at the

United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Toward Their Total Elimination

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Sweden
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Madame Chairperson,

Sweden has always participated in multilateral negotiations related to disarmament. And as a strong supporter of the United Nations it goes without saying that we participate in a multilateral UN negotiation. And in a deteriorating security environment, as we are witnessing today, every opportunity to seek progress in nuclear disarmament must be seized. We all have an obligation to try to make a difference. We continue to encourage all members of the United Nations to participate in the negotiations. Any treaty is stronger with a broad participation. Some argue that these negotiations will be harmful to the NPT. Sweden’s view is that they can be beneficial by injecting new energy into the disarmament work. My country sees the prohibition negotiation in the context of the NPT framework, not as a substitute for it.

We support the humanitarian perspective, regardless of whether it refers to conventional arms or to weapons of mass destruction. However, the humanitarian perspective carries a particular weight when it comes to nuclear weapons. They have the capacity to destroy the human civilization, to kill millions or even billions of human beings, to destroy the environment and to end life on earth as we know it. The humanitarian perspective should be clearly reflected in the preambular part of the treaty. In the preambular part we should also reflect the ambition towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

We should also mention the NPT as the cornerstone for non-proliferation and disarmament, and that nothing in this treaty affects obligations under the NPT and that the treaty cannot replace the NPT.

Furthermore, we would like to see that the treaty recognizes the gender aspects of nuclear issues. We would also like to see references to the ever present danger of use of nuclear weapons by mistake. And finally, there should be references to the enormous waste of resources resulting from the production and modernization of nuclear weapons.

Wherever possible, we should use consensus language from the NPT as well as from GA and UNSC resolutions.

Finally, Madam Chairperson, the vision for my country for this negotiation is that it should strengthen the norm against the use of and possession of nuclear weapons, that its result should enjoy the respect of the international community, and that it should be ready in time for the high-level meeting on disarmament in September 2018.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.