United Nations Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination

Statement of Mr. Abdelkarim Ait Abdeslam

on core prohibitions: effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms

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Madame Chair,

Given the importance of this thematic debate related on core prohibitions that the legally banding treaty on nuclear weapons should contain « effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms », Algeria would like to seize this opportunity to express the following general comments on this topic:

My delegation would like to emphasize that the treaty’s prohibitions have to put the nuclear weapons on the same footing as biological and chemical weapons of which these weapons of mass destruction are subjected to prohibition through their own and specific treaties.

My delegation believes that a legally binding international instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons should be as a partial step towards nuclear disarmament and contribute to codify ways and means that would put a definitive end to these evil weapons and to stigmatize them.

The treaty’s effective measures of prohibitions of nuclear weapons need to be crafted and to be build upon existing regime and their sole purpose is to reinforce existing legal instruments, especially obligations under Article VI of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Alike other international legal instruments that deal with inherently indiscriminate weapons, this treaty has also to reaffirm the rights of people who have been victimized by nuclear weapons.

Therefore, Madame Chair, my delegation would like to see that the treaty should reflect, inter-alia, the following core prohibitions:

1- the acquisition, possession, maintain, retain, stockpiling, development, transfer, testing, production;

2- participating in any use of nuclear weapons, including through participating both in nuclear war planning and in the targeting of nuclear weapons, and training personnel to take control of nuclear weapons;

3- permitting nuclear weapons from entering in, being transiting through, stationing or deploying on national territory, including on territorial seas, airspace and land.

4- any nuclear activity for military purposes in outer space;
5- assisting, encouraging or inducing, directly or indirectly, any activity prohibited by the treaty;

Furthermore and most important, my delegation would like to see that the treaty should also contain robust measures regarding the recognition of the rights and the needs of victims and survivors of the use and testing of nuclear weapons including with regard transgenerational health effects and a commitment to provide assistance to those victims and to environmental remediation.

In addition to that my delegation concurs with the majority of the States that the treaty should include as well issues related to dual-use technology, without prejudice to the inalienable rights of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Finally the treaty should contain a strong verification system inspired from the regimes of IAEA and CTBTO.

In light of the above, my delegation hopes that these core prohibitions elements will be duly reflected in the operative part of this treaty.

I thank you Madame Chair.