



**UN Conference on a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons,
leading towards their total elimination**

Second Session, New York, 15 June – 7 July 2017

First Reading of Draft Convention

Statement by Ireland on the Preamble

Thank you, Madam President.

GENERAL

As this is the first time my delegation takes the floor, allow me to start by expressing our appreciation for your remarkable work in this process, both at the first, very successful, session, and intersessionally.

We are faced with a historic opportunity to make progress and create real change on one of the most complex and difficult issues on the international sphere. Experience has shown that this is possible when there is good will, political leadership, engagement in good faith and a strong commitment to a common goal. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 was a prime example of what states, the UN and civil society can achieve when

working together to address issues of global concern. Nuclear disarmament is one such issue, and it closely interlinked with the others. Nuclear disarmament, Health, Sustainable Development, Climate Change, Migration, are interdependent, are all pieces of the broader picture, and should be addressed as such. The references to the adverse environmental and health impacts of nuclear contamination during the recently concluded Oceans Conference serve as a timely reminder that nuclear disarmament is a truly global issue, of concern to all.

Madam President,

Ireland welcomes the first draft of the Prohibition Convention, which distilled the key points of convergence that emerged in March and which we see as a good, solid basis for further work.

We were very satisfied with the interactive debate that took place in the March session and with the rich interventions, which enabled a meaningful exchange and enhanced our understanding of the important issues which the new legal instrument will have to attend. Civil society's input and the contributions of experts were, as always, valuable in this respect.

I would like to share with you Ireland's views on the preambular section of the draft Convention:

The Preamble strikes a good balance and sets out the object and purpose of the Convention, as well as the reasons for its adoption. We were pleased to see reflected in the Preamble a lot of the elements which we had raised during the first session and subsequently.

We would like to offer a number of suggestions in the hope that these will be helpful in the further development of the draft. These are amendments to existing paragraphs as well as a small number of proposals to include new language.

PP2 [IRELAND introduces]

This is a very important paragraph which highlights the multiple effects of nuclear weapons and their links to a variety of global issues, a point which my delegation has repeatedly stressed. We would like to make a number of suggestions which would further strengthen this paragraph.

Firstly, we suggest a small amendment in line 2, by replacing “pose grave implications for” with “**pose a threat to**” [human survival]. This language is taken from the Humanitarian Pledge, which 127 states have signed, and we believe it more accurately reflects the magnitude of the threat posed by nuclear weapons for humanity as a whole.

Secondly, we welcome the reference to the gendered impact of nuclear weapons, but we suggest rephrasing it to address the broad spectrum of their disproportionate effects on women, which are not solely caused by ionising radiation and which are not limited to maternal health. The last phrase of this paragraph should in our view thus read: “...and of the disproportionate impact of **nuclear weapons, including through** ionising radiation, on **women** and on girls”.

Lastly, we suggest adding a reference to the end of this paragraph on women’s empowerment and participation in the field of peace and security, in accordance with the commitments we have undertaken under UN SC Resolution 1325.

This reference would come after “women and girls” and would read as follows: **“and of the need to promote the equal, full and effective participation of both women and men in the process of nuclear disarmament,”** (the “and” before “of the disproportionate impact” may then have to be deleted).

New PP on lack of adequate humanitarian response [AUSTRIA introduces]

One of the main arguments justifying the need for urgent progress on nuclear disarmament is the impossibility of any adequate humanitarian response to the catastrophic effects of a nuclear detonation. We strongly believe that this determinant factor should be reflected in the Preamble of the new Convention, and we support the suggestion made by Austria to include a new paragraph in this respect.

New PP on risk of nuclear weapons [AUSTRIA introduces]

Another important factor justifying the prohibition of nuclear weapons is the growing risk of a nuclear detonation, whether intentional, mistaken or accidental. We agree on the need to insert a reference to this important element in the Preamble and we support the suggestion made by Austria in this respect.

New PP on UN Resolutions [NIGERIA introduces]

We would like to support the Nigerian proposal to include a new paragraph to refer to the several UN Resolutions having expressed concern at the grave humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

New PP on ethical imperatives [SOUTH AFRICA introduces]

In order to comprehensively make the case for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, we agree that a reference to the ethical and moral dimension of these weapons of mass destruction and to the critical importance of nuclear disarmament for both national and collective security would be well-placed. In this respect my delegation supports the proposal made by South Africa.

PP3 [BRAZIL introduces]

We support the Brazilian proposal to strengthen the language of pp3.

PP4

We would support a more comprehensive and precise reference to the principles of IHL, in particular the rules on distinction, proportionality and precautions, along the lines suggested in the paper submitted by the ICRC.

[PP6

We would support a redrafting along the lines suggested in the paper submitted by the ICRC, for the sake of clarity and accuracy.]

New PP on UN Ch Art 2(4) [SOUTH AFRICA introduces]

We agree that a new paragraph quoting Article 2(4) of the UN Charter would be appropriate in order to link the prohibitions established by this instrument to the overarching prohibitions on the threat or use of force stemming from the Charter, and we support the proposal made by South Africa in this respect.

PP8 [IRELAND introduces]

In order to streamline the language of this paragraph with UNGA Resolution 71/258, from which the mandate of this Conference derives, and in order to more clearly convey the importance of a prohibition of nuclear weapons for nuclear disarmament, my delegation suggests rephrasing this paragraph as follows: “Bearing in mind that the prohibition of nuclear weapons **will be** an important contribution towards **achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons**”.

PP9 [BRAZIL introduces]

We agree that current pp 9 would benefit from more simplicity and in this respect we would like to support the proposal made by Brazil.

PP13 [BRAZIL introduces]

We agree that the very important instruments referred to in this paragraph should be addressed separately and we support the Brazilian proposal to split this paragraph into three subparagraphs dealing with the NPT, the CTBT and NWFZ respectively. We also support the language amendments proposed by Brazil in this respect.

New PP on disarmament education, awareness raising and dissemination [IRELAND introduces]

Ireland suggests adding a new paragraph, after pp14, on the importance of and need for disarmament education and awareness raising and on the dissemination of the Convention. This paragraph could read as follows: **“Recognising the importance of disarmament education in all its aspects and of awareness raising on the risks and consequences of**

nuclear weapons for current and future generations, and *committed* to the dissemination of the principles and norms of this Convention”.

Thank you, Madam President.