

IRELAND STATEMENT

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

General exchange of views Topic 1:

Principles, objectives and preambular elements

Delivered by

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Thank you Madam President,

In this thematic segment you have invited us to focus on the content of the Preamble. My Delegation spoke yesterday on our overall approach to these negotiations and we will speak later on core prohibitions and other issues. We are pleased to have a specific opportunity to address the content of the Preamble.

We believe that this is a very significant and important part of the Treaty which deserves due care and attention. It is the Preamble which will, in a way, introduce the Treaty to the wider world, the world outside this room and these negotiations, which we must always bear in mind. We do not work here in a vacuum and our work on nuclear disarmament is connected to all of the global challenges facing humanity.

The Preamble is our opportunity to set out our vision for this new and complementary Treaty, to explain where it has come from and to demonstrate where it is leading. For this Treaty, as many distinguished delegates have already made clear, is part of a continuum on disarmament and one of a number of steps. The Preamble, therefore, provides us with the opportunity to set out Treaty in context – both the human context and the legal context. It also allows us to speak to a wide audience and to connect what can sometimes be the detached, technical language of nuclear disarmament to the genuine human concerns, which are at the heart of our work here and the driving force behind this Treaty, to prohibit these weapons, comprehensively, for the protection of all humanity.

In terms of the human context, the Preamble should set out our determination to act on the humanitarian suffering caused by these weapons and make clear that the Treaty is based on those key concerns which I think every delegation has referred to – the devastating human and environmental

consequences of these weapons, the inadequacy of a humanitarian response and the growing risk of a detonation in this regard.

The Preamble should also indicate how the Treaty will support other global governance issues such as the SDGs and Climate Agreement. Gender and Disarmament is a horizontal priority for my Delegation and we would wish to see the Preamble reflect the important role and strong contribution of women to nuclear disarmament, as well as the disproportionate impact of these weapons on women and girl children.

Bearing in mind the opening statement by my Delegation, we believe the Preamble should also situate the Treaty in the context of the existing body of international law, regimes and instruments, which it will complement, as well as the United Nations Charter itself and all relevant UN Resolutions. It should make clear that nothing in this new Treaty should be read as setting aside, over-riding, weakening or undermining States Parties' obligations under existing law and other treaty commitments – this would include of course the NPT, which I think we have all made clear the Treaty will reinforce (but also the entry into force of the CTBT, the role of the IAEA, and the nuclear weapons free zones, and other related issues).

The Preamble should pay tribute to the contribution of civil society, for their determination, advocacy and expertise, without which we could not have reaching this point. The Preamble should also recognise the impact of these weapons on victims and the incredibly important role of survivors as living witnesses, whose powerful testimony is an unanswerable argument for change – and we were privileged to hear some of that moving testimony in the morning session. The Preamble provides us with an opportunity to create a lasting voice for such witnesses.

The Preamble should emphasise, and, in itself, serve as an important tool for, the key area of disarmament education and awareness.

Madam President,

The Preamble should remain true to the full text of our Resolution, which is our mandate, and set out how the Treaty is also a contribution towards the total elimination of these weapons.

It should underline efforts for universality, make it clear that this is a step, that other steps are still required and envisaged, and indicate that there is a pathway for those who, for whatever reasons, may join later.

Thank You.