



**Statement by Ambassador Regina Maria Cordeiro Dunlop – Head of the  
Brazilian Delegation to the Open-Ended Working Group taking forward  
multilateral disarmament negotiations**

**Opening of the Session and General Exchange**

**Geneva, 5 August 2016**

Mr. President,

I would like to express Brazil's appreciation for the effective and balanced way in which you have been discharging your responsibilities as President of the OEWG. I also thank you for circulating the zero draft, which we consider a balanced and solid basis for our deliberations and a consensual outcome.

Brazil associates itself both with the statement made by the Dominican Republic on behalf of CELAC and the statement by Indonesia on behalf of the cross-regional group of countries members of Nuclear-Weapon Free Zones.

Brazil expects that the OEWG will pave the way for the start of multilateral negotiations on a prohibition of nuclear weapons and establish the parameters for the subsequent elimination of nuclear arsenals, in a transparent and verifiable manner, under strict international control. In order to reach such goal, it is of utmost importance to continue to count on the active support of organizations from civil society.

In the current context of increasing international tensions, nuclear disarmament stands out as a high priority for the whole of humanity. As we all know, nuclear weapons are the sole anthropogenic factor that can instantly destroy human civilization and irreversibly change the Earth. Unlike chemical and biological weapons – the other two categories of weapons of mass destruction – nuclear weapons are not explicitly and comprehensively prohibited. Yet, the consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation, notably from a humanitarian perspective, are far more devastating and diffuse than the effects of chemical and biological weapons. Lack of progress on nuclear disarmament

underscores a dangerous absence of urgency on the part of States that mistakenly feel comfortable with the current status quo.

Mr. President,

We thank you for the timely submission of a zero draft of the Working Group's report. We take note with appreciation that paragraph 31 of the draft contemplates the "hybrid approach", which has been suggested by the Brazilian delegation as a possible basis for a consensual outcome at the OEWG.

Despite a few shortcomings relating to specific matters, which we are going to point out later so that they are duly addressed in a second version, we deem the draft's approach as being factual and even-handed. In our view, the zero draft has managed to crystalize the will of the clear majority. While acknowledging other points of view, the OEWG's report should make it clear that time is ripe for multilateral negotiations on a prohibition of nuclear weapons

As we have previously stated, the beginning of negotiations on a prohibition of nuclear weapons is thoroughly consistent with the NPT and does not preclude the pursuit of other initiatives necessary for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. In fact, it gives them renewed momentum, as it breaks away from the morosity which has plagued nuclear disarmament negotiations in so many years. We therefore encourage delegations to consider the report and its main recommendations as a fair reflection of the discussions held here in Geneva throughout our sessions. We believe the zero draft provides the basis of a text which might be acceptable to all. We look forward to engaging constructively with all delegations in consultations on how to improve it. I thank you.