STATEMENT

by

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at the

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agenda item

Structured Discussion on Nuclear Weapons

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Mr. Chairman,

Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. Sweden also stands behind the statement given by New Zealand on behalf of 155 states. I would like to add some points in a national capacity.

The detonation of a nuclear weapon would have massive and enduring consequences. This we know from historic experience from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where life and culture were destroyed within minutes, and from the many decades of nuclear testing with its damage to humans, animals and plants.

Mr. Chairman,

The humanitarian perspective can assist disarmament discussions in similar ways as it did in the past, in the NPT and in other fora. We were able to conclude the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963 in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis, once we comprehended how close the world had come to a nuclear war. We were able to put in place the NPT once we realized how dangerous the world would become if more countries were to acquire nuclear weapons.

My own country Sweden discontinued its nuclear weapons R&D program in the mid-1960s, because we believed that our people would be more secure without nuclear weapons, and that the people of the world would become safer if we all worked together to abolish these weapons.

In today's world, reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes is becoming increasingly hazardous, as the Four Statesmen George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn put it a couple of years back. We live in an increasingly multipolar world, in which traditional arms control mechanisms and fora have difficulty producing results. We live in a world where we see the rise of increasingly powerful non-state actors which could acquire nuclear weapons. In this world, the risk that nuclear
weapons will be used – by accident, miscalculation, unauthorization or design – has increased. Today, we are presented with new security challenges that require new security approaches including those that put human beings at the centre of attention.

We look forward to continue discussing these issues at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in December. We hope that all states with an interest in nuclear disarmament, security policy, and human security will join us there.

Mr Chairman,

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Progress on all three pillars of the NPT – disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy – is of the essence. At next year's Review Conference, we need to take stock of progress made, address current security challenges and strive for a forward-looking outcome document.

It is essential that all states implement their obligations assumed under the NPT and at previous review conferences, particularly in 1995, 2000 and 2010. At the 2000 NPT Review Conference, a major breakthrough occurred in nuclear disarmament. Nuclear-weapon states committed themselves to unequivocally eliminating their nuclear arsenals without preconditions. We know from other fora that if we link progress on one issue with progress on another, it will be very difficult to make headway on either issue. We are now concerned that preconditions are reemerging in disarmament discussions. This will neither help us with the challenges we face, nor with upholding our commitments under the NPT.

Leading up to the Review Conference next year, we welcome that the number of nuclear weapons have steadily decreased since its peak during the cold war. However, we are far from done since more than 16 000 nuclear weapons remain. We are particularly concerned about the renewed efforts to modernize and upgrade the nuclear arsenals among nuclear weapon states and nuclear weapon possessor states alike.
We commend proposals to disarm further. It is still time to heed President Obama's calls in Prague and Berlin, to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines and negotiate reductions in strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. We urge the Russian Federation to move forward on this, together with the United States.

Other building blocks are needed to help construct a world free of nuclear weapons. These include:

- Immediately commencing negotiations on an FMCT,
- Putting the final ratifications in place so that the CTBT can enter into force and its powerful verification regime be completed,
- Increasing transparency in nuclear arsenals and fissile material holdings,
- Reducing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems to increase warning time and thereby reduce the danger of an accidental or unauthorized use of a nuclear weapon,
- Strengthening nuclear-weapon-free zones and creating new such zones – including the swift signing, without conditions, of the protocol to the South East Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, by the nuclear-weapon states, and holding a conference on a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Sweden welcomes the untiring efforts of Under-Secretary of State Jaakko Laajava and his team to prepare for this conference.

Sweden will also actively engage in consultations and discussions to explore ways to achieve the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes. Serious proliferation concerns remain unresolved.

The DPRK has in recent years tested nuclear explosive devices and launched ballistic missiles in contravention of UNSC resolutions. We urge the DPRK to return to full
compliance with its NPT and safeguards obligations, and to respect the *de facto* universal norm against nuclear tests set up by the CTBT, pending accession.

We regret that Iran has repeatedly failed to abide by UNSCRs and sufficiently reassure the international community that its nuclear program is strictly peaceful. With rights follows obligations, on that point the NPT is clear. Sweden fully supports the on-going diplomatic efforts led by the High Representative, together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the UK and the US to seek a diplomatic solution with Iran to the Iranian nuclear issue. This is a historic opportunity that must not be lost.

We urge all states yet to do so to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states, and pending their accession, to adhere to its terms. We encourage these states to develop and strengthen transparency and confidence-building measures - nuclear arsenals only provide an illusion of security; sustainable security is built through cooperation.

Nuclear security needs to be pursued both at home and abroad. Sweden welcomes the Nuclear Security Summits initiated by President Obama in Washington in 2009. We look forward to the continuation of this process and the meeting in the United States in 2016, and will be actively engaged in the preparatory process.

Bilaterally, Sweden will continue its nuclear security cooperation with Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. –As announced by Norway and Sweden at the NSS summit in The Hague earlier this year, our cooperation with Ukraine has intensified.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.