



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**UNGA68 First Committee
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Joint Statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons

**Delivered by Ambassador Peter Woolcott
Australian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva
and Ambassador for Disarmament**

Mr Chairman,

I take the floor on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. We welcome the statement to be delivered by New Zealand on behalf of a large number of countries on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons.

The devastating immediate and long-term humanitarian impacts of a nuclear weapon detonation are of clear concern, as was endorsed by all members of the NPT during the 2010 Review Conference final document. This was again illustrated at the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo earlier this year.

This is why we reaffirm with a sense of urgency our unwavering commitment to achieving and maintaining the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Achieving this goal will require high-level political will by all countries but expectations fall most heavily on the nuclear armed states.

It should underpin our practical, sustained efforts towards effective disarmament, including through implementation of the 2010 NPT Action Plan. Banning nuclear weapons by itself will not guarantee their elimination without engaging substantively and constructively those states with nuclear weapons, and recognising both the security and humanitarian dimensions of the nuclear weapons debate.

Achieving this goal will require all States working together to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear

disarmament. This includes through fulfilling the objectives of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and achieving its universal application.

We encourage all states to participate actively and constructively in all relevant fora with a clear focus on practical and effective measures that will contribute to the mutually reinforcing goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

We believe we must continue to commit ourselves to strengthen all efforts on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to provide the best chance of securing a safer future without nuclear weapons for all of us and for future generations.

We welcome Mexico's offer to convene a follow-up conference on the humanitarian issue and encourage all states to participate.

Thank you.