Mr Chair,

I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the members of the New Agenda Coalition - Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and my own country, Brazil.

The NAC congratulates you on the assumption of the chairmanship of this PrepCom and we assure you of our full cooperation and support in your endeavours.

The New Agenda Coalition was established in 1998 in response to the continued threat to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and the urgency of fulfilling the obligation enshrined in Article VI of the NPT. The NAC has since then contributed constructively to the NPT Review Process in order to address these concerns, and that remains our objective and our commitment.

It is of utmost concern to the NAC that the threat to humanity posed by nuclear weapons has not abated and that the risk of a nuclear weapon detonation continues to grow. The Doomsday Clock is now set at the closest to midnight it has been since 1953; citizens certainly understand only too well the risks for us all.

It is clear to all that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”. To save humanity, as stated by the UN Secretary General, States Parties, in particular nuclear-weapon States, must demonstrate their commitment to peace and security by fully implementing the NPT and moving towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control. As we approach the 50th Anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT, all States Parties should reiterate their commitment to the NPT as the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments that States Parties have under the Treaty are clear - laid out in Article VI and elaborated since then in the Treaty's Review Conference outcomes. The consensus agreements reached at past Review Conferences, in particular the package of decisions and resolution from 1995; the 13 practical steps from 2000; and the Action Plan from 2010 are part of the NPT acquis - they are binding commitments, common ground, on which all States Parties have agreed.

Throughout each NPT review cycle, and in our annual UN General Assembly resolution, the New Agenda Coalition has consistently called for and proposed measures to accelerate
the implementation of States Parties’ nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments. These include de-alerting, entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, a fissile material ban treaty, the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East, and entry into force of the legally-binding protocols to existing zone treaties as well as the review of any related reservations, transparency and nuclear disarmament verification among others.

NPT commitments and obligations are binding on all Parties and remain valid. They are not to be reinterpreted, rolled back, or conditioned in any form. Rather, they must be fully implemented, including through the establishment of voluntary benchmarks and timelines.

The full and effective implementation of existing commitments and obligations will advance international security and reinforce the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The NPT’s grand bargain between nuclear weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States is at the Treaty’s core and must be fulfilled by both sides. While a constructive dialogue on the urgent implementation of the Treaty’s disarmament obligations and commitments is welcome, the imposition of conditions for the implementation of any Treaty obligations and commitments would undermine the credibility of the Treaty and the goal of its universalization.

Mr Chair,

Implementation of agreed undertakings is not a new agenda, nor is it an exclusive one. The existing obligations and commitments are mutually reinforcing and reflect the common agreement of all NPT States Parties on measures to advance implementation of Article VI.

States Parties currently differ on a number of key issues, including the approach to and pace of disarmament, the emphasis to be given to the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. While it is necessary to acknowledge the differing and sometimes competing views on these and other issues, they must not prevent us from working together to make progress and reach agreements on all issues. The NAC has made a series of proposals and recommendations to this effect on working paper, which we will present during the thematic debate on nuclear disarmament.

States Parties must fulfil their obligations and commitments under the NPT. At the 2020 Review Conference, States Parties must, as a starting point, reiterate their commitment to those obligations and commitments, including those agreed at previous Review Conferences and furthermore, identify new and creative ways toward realizing our shared goal of a nuclear weapon free world. To uphold and preserve the NPT in today’s security environment requires more than statements of good intentions, it requires the concrete and unequivocal implementation of the disarmament obligations that underpin the regime.
Thank you Mr Chair.