



**Statement by H.E. Dell Higgle
Ambassador for Disarmament**

**Open-Ended Working Group on Taking Forward
Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations**

13 May 2016

Thank you Mr Chair.

We are very grateful for the inclusive and participatory – and may I say genial – way in which you have continued to lead our discussions here.

Mr Chair,

It would be truly wonderful if everybody in this room was of one mind - and all of us wanted to move ahead now, as a single collectivity, and put in place the *same* effective legal measures for nuclear disarmament at exactly the same time. There could be no better outcome from this OEWG than a consensual one. However, as New Zealand noted in a statement here last week some of the viewpoints expressed here are irreconcilable.

I have no doubt that your report *will* be very balanced. But I do wonder how it is that your report can forge recommendations on which general agreement will prove possible. Of course, we can *hope* that you will be able to pluck a white rabbit out of the hat.

But could I take this opportunity to signal that any white rabbit cannot, in the view of my Delegation, be in the shape of a lowest common denominator outcome – such as one that simply repeats steps we have already agreed to elsewhere. We *do* need to move forward, Mr Chair, beyond the status quo.

We agree with the observation made this morning by Brazil (and reinforced so eloquently just now by Jamaica) about the importance of not preventing a clear majority of States pursuing a negotiating process right now.

Thank you.