

Chair,

1. Canada is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the members of the Stockholm Initiative: Argentina, Canada, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.
2. As we enter the 11<sup>th</sup> NPT review cycle, we as members of the Stockholm Initiative remain unwavering in our commitment to advancing nuclear disarmament under the NPT. We stress that existing commitments under the NPT remain valid, and obligations must be met.
3. We recognize the interlinkages and the mutually reinforcing nature of the three pillars of the NPT. Our Initiative is dedicated to advancing the disarmament pillar as a means to realize the full implementation of the NPT and to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.
4. The Stockholm Initiative has focused on making disarmament recommendations that, if implemented, will reduce international tension, improve global security, and promote confidence between states. Implementing these Stepping Stones will in turn enable further, more substantive steps towards nuclear disarmament.
5. As a cross-regional grouping, the Stockholm Initiative is all the more committed to keep nuclear disarmament high on the political agenda and to advance implementation of the NPT. It is crucial to limit the salience of nuclear weapons and spare no efforts to return to the path of nuclear disarmament.
6. It is imperative that meaningful progress is made in implementing Article 6 of the NPT on disarmament. It is critical for upholding the integrity of the NPT and ensuring its ongoing success. It is for this reason that we have called, and continue to call, inter alia, for:
  - The reduction of nuclear arsenals as an interim step towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner
  - Practical measures to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in doctrines
  - Increased transparency by the Nuclear Weapon States on their arsenals
  - Strengthened negative security assurances
  - Tangible progress towards the launching of negotiations on a treaty prohibiting fissile material production and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)
  - Continued efforts towards building multilateral nuclear disarmament verification capacities
  - Strict adherence by Nuclear Weapon States to legally-binding agreements, established norms as well as political commitments that advance the goals of nuclear disarmament
  - Efforts on consolidation of existing as well as the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned

7. The imperative of reducing nuclear risks was widely acknowledged during the last Review Conference and in the months since. Regardless of the state of international relations, engagement on nuclear risk reduction among the Nuclear Weapon States must continue.
8. Building upon existing frameworks and commitments, the Stockholm Initiative urges the Nuclear Weapon States to immediately implement measures aimed at ensuring that, in the interest of humanity, nuclear weapons are never used again. The nearly 78 year-record of non-use of nuclear weapons must be maintained. The Stockholm Initiative urges the Nuclear Weapon States to take all measures necessary to reduce the risk of the use of nuclear weapons, whether intentionally, by miscalculation, miscommunication, misperception, or accident in the context of achieving nuclear disarmament.
9. The Stockholm Initiative believes that the engagement of younger generations is crucial to the success of disarmament efforts. We also reiterate our commitment to promoting the full and effective participation of women in nuclear disarmament and to integrating diverse gender perspectives. Furthermore, we believe it is important to continue to raise awareness of the realities of the use of nuclear weapons, including by visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki and engaging with those who have suffered the use of nuclear weapons irrespective of their nationalities and origins, known as the hibakusha, as world leaders demonstrated in Hiroshima in May 2023, and engaging with other people affected by nuclear weapons including at former nuclear test sites such as Semipalatinsk and in the Pacific.
10. The Stockholm Initiative is made up of a diverse cross-regional group of states that, despite differences in security policies and priorities, have come together to find ways to achieve nuclear disarmament goals and obligations under the NPT. The constructive contributions of the Stockholm Initiative were broadly recognized by states parties at the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference in August 2022. 24 other NPT states parties formally aligned with us.
11. We encourage all NPT states parties to consider the recommendations made by the Stockholm Initiative and to engage in constructive dialogue throughout this review cycle. Only then can we achieve lasting and irreversible progress on nuclear disarmament.
12. We recognise the complementary efforts of other cross-regional disarmament and non-proliferation groupings such as the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and the New Agenda Coalition who have also made earnest efforts to further strengthen and uphold implementation of the NPT. The diversity of our positions and perspectives is an important tool in our effort to achieve the goal that we collectively share.
13. We look forward to a collaborative and successful review cycle.