

**Statement by the Fiji Delegation on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons**

**Oslo, Norway, 4-5 March, 2013**

The Co-Chairs

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen,

Firstly, please allow me to associate my delegation with the sentiments of appreciation earlier expressed by other distinguished delegations in thanking the government and the people of Norway for hosting this important meeting. And we also would like to thank the panel of experts for their very informative presentations.

The nuclear issue is not a new thing to Fiji. Between the 1960s -1990s, we were part of a campaign against nuclear testing in the Pacific and the proposed dumping of nuclear waste there. Anti -nuclear protests led to the Pacific adopting the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. We have also been a signatory to the NPT since 1972. Even though nuclear testing in the Pacific has ended, we are still vulnerable to its subsequent consequences through the possible deterioration of the stability of the old test sites.

We therefore can easily relate to the information imparted over the last two days in regards to the effects of nuclear weapons on human beings. We hold the view that nuclear weapons serve no useful purpose to the world in this day and age but rather exists only as a risk that could lead to human catastrophes of unprecedented proportions. It is evident from views expressed over the last few days that most countries cannot sufficiently react to a nuclear detonation whether accidental or deliberate given that the resources and infrastructure needed would themselves be affected or destroyed. Therefore, the only other option is that the threat should be removed hence nuclear weapons should be totally banned.

However, this might be easier said than done. The question remains on whether the big nuclear powers like the US, UK, France and Russia would be willing to cooperate. It is our view that this meeting would do better to look at ways to engage the nuclear powers with a view to encourage them to abolish nuclear weapons.

In this regard, Fiji is prepared to work with the international community in seeking a realistic way forward in reducing or abolishing the risk to human lives posed by the existence of nuclear weapons.

I thank you