



**Statement by H.E. Dell Higgle
Ambassador For Disarmament &
Permanent Representative to the CD**

**UNGA 74 First Committee
Explanation of Vote on L.47**

4 November 2019

Mr Chair.

I take the floor to explain New Zealand's position on L.47 entitled "Joint Courses of Action and Future-oriented Dialogue towards a World without Nuclear Weapons".

My Delegation had hoped that Japan's decision this year not to present its earlier resolution ("United Action with Renewed Determination towards a World without Nuclear Weapons") signalled a move away from the divisive approach toward nuclear disarmament which that text had encapsulated. We are sorry to see that this is not the case.

There is global acceptance, Mr Chair, that the NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. That will not continue to be the case – and we will not indeed move, in the words of the title of this resolution, "towards a world without nuclear weapons" - if we attempt to re-draft and move away from existing legally-binding NPT commitments. New Zealand regrets that this draft resolution – in its OP1 – distorts the fundamental commitment set out in Article VI of that Treaty. As New Zealand is unable to endorse any attempt to re-write fundamental provisions of the NPT, including Article VI, we have voted 'no' on that paragraph.

OP1 is our key concern, Mr Chair, but it is unfortunately not at all our only one. New Zealand regrets the low level of ambition which is reflected, in general, in this resolution with respect to the advancement of nuclear disarmament. This is particularly apparent in the list of suggestions for “Joint Courses of Action” in OP3 and for “Future-oriented Dialogues” in OP 4.

In this regard we would wish to draw especial attention to OP 3(d) which, in our view, considerably devalues the importance of the entry-into-force of the CTBT. We believe the better characterisation of this is in OP1 of L.24 which “Stresses the vital importance and urgency of signature and ratification, without delay and without conditions, in order to achieve the earliest entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.”

Similarly, Mr Chair, with respect to OP 3(e), New Zealand is certainly not opposed to any efforts to advance nuclear disarmament verification. In fact, we fully support such efforts. But, reflecting our genuine commitment to advancing such verification, we do not think this must be done through the framework of only one process. Such an approach, in our view, imposes an unnecessary straightjacket on the important work that needs to be done to carry forward progress on nuclear disarmament verification.

Accordingly, as a reflection of these and other concerns with its text, New Zealand has abstained on the vote on L.47.