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United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination

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— *Check Against Delivery* —

Delegates, NGO colleagues, dear friends. I never thought I'd see this moment!

I would like to share my gratitude for the exceptional work and dedication of everyone who has put their brains and their hearts into these treaty negotiations. I am grateful to you Madame President, for your leadership and to the UN Secretariat, the delegations and NGOs devoted to moving us ever closer to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

As we gather in our celebrations at this extraordinary achievement, let us pause for a moment to feel the witness of those who perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki; both at that time in August 1945, and over these 72 years — hundreds of thousands of people. Each person who died had a name. Each person was loved by someone.

I've been waiting for this day for seven decades. And I am overjoyed that it has finally arrived.

*This is the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons !*

I remember back in 2014 when many of us met in Nayarit, Mexico. The Conference Chair said: "This is the point of no return."

We will not return to failed nuclear deterrence policies.

We will not return to funding nuclear violence instead of human needs.

We will not return to irreversibly contaminating the environment.

We will not continue to risk the lives of future generations.

To the leaders of countries across the world I beseech you, if you love this planet, you will sign this treaty !

Nuclear weapons have always been immoral. Now they are also illegal.

Together, let us go forth and change the world !