



**Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament and
Ambassador for Disarmament**

UNGA72: FIRST COMMITTEE

Explanation of Vote on L.35

**Delivered by H.E Dell Higgin
Ambassador for Disarmament**

26 October 2017

Mr Chair,

I take the floor to explain New Zealand's position on resolution L 35, entitled "United Action with Renewed Determination Towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons".

New Zealand has voted in favour of the previous versions of this resolution which have been presented to this Committee. However we note with disappointment that this year's text represents a fundamental departure from its predecessors. Some of its language risks fracturing the widespread and long-standing agreement on certain fundamental aspects of the international community's approach to nuclear disarmament - notably with regard to the standing and integrity of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its Review Conference process and in relation to the importance of the entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

L 35 has redrafted important outcomes and undertakings made in the NPT context and which are pivotal to the health of that regime. Notwithstanding its condemnation of the DPRK and its call for North Korea to desist from nuclear weapon testing and to join the CTBT – elements which New Zealand continues to support most strongly – and despite welcome recent efforts by the Delegation of Japan to improve the text of OP 21, L 35 has failed to emphasise the vital importance of the CTBT's entry-into-force and to urge the removal of all the obstacles in its way.

As a committed supporter of both these Treaties, New Zealand cannot support any resolution, however well-meaning its sponsors, that risks undermining the fundamental importance of the NPT and CTBT to the international community's longstanding efforts to advance nuclear disarmament and support non-proliferation.

New Zealand also notes with concern the divergence of the text of L35 (in preambular paragraph 19 and operative paragraph 8) from the language of the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons Initiative.

Accordingly, New Zealand is abstaining on the vote on L 35.

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