



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE CUBA ANTE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS
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STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RODOLFO BENITEZ VERNON, REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY OF THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. New York, 29 April 2015.

Madam Chair,

The Cuban delegation is particularly pleased to have you, honorable representative of the brotherly government and people of Algeria, as chair of this Conference. You have all our support.

We associate ourselves with the important statements by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

Madam Chair,

Humanity remains at serious risk of being annihilated, a risk posed by the existence of over 16.000 nuclear weapons, 4.000 of which are ready for immediate use. Making use of a minimum amount of these would have serious consequences for our planet. No country would be immune to the folly of a nuclear attack.

The Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) establishes clear legal obligations on nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, Article VI of the treaty has remained unimplemented for over 40 years after its adoption.

Some States Parties hold on to the alleged power that derives from the possession of such weapons, despite the fact that history and scientific research conclude that the power of the atom as a weapon leads to genocide and annihilation of life on earth.

Why not build

4- Adopt an international instrument under which nuclear-weapon States provide unconditional and legally binding assurances that they will never use or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear States.

5- Establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as soon as possible.

6- Start multilateral negotiations in 2015 for an International Convention on Nuclear Disarmament under which all nuclear weapons are prohibited and eliminated in a period not longer than 20 years. The Convention might be formally adopted at the United Nations High-Level International Conference on Nuclear Disarmament convened by the General Assembly for 2018.

Madam Chair,

At the 2nd CELAC Summit, held in Havana in January 2014, the Latin America and the Caribbean region was formally declared a Zone of Peace, which constitutes a historical landmark. Such declaration stressed the steadfast commitment of CELAC member countries to the promotion of nuclear disarmament as a priority goal.

We welcome the historical decision by the United Nations General Assembly to convene in 2013 for the first time a High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, and designate 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

At this Conference, Cuba has presented a detailed national report on the strict observance of all the NPT provisions by our country. We shall contribute with concrete proposals hereto.

I would like to conclude by calling upon all States Parties not to waste the opportunity this Conference provides us with. Our commitment to future generations must be no other than ensuring a better world, a world forever free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you very much.