

Statement of Uruguay on behalf of UNASUR on Nuclear Disarmament in the Thematic Debate of the First Committee of the 70th UNGA

Mr. Chair,

1. Uruguay has the honor to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), in its capacity of Pro Tempore President.
2. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election; we are looking forward to successful meetings under your leadership.
3. With regard to Nuclear Disarmament, UNASUR joins the efforts of the international community in moving towards the negotiation of a universal and legally binding multilateral instrument that prohibits nuclear weapons, considering that their total elimination is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and that their very existence diminishes the security of all States, including those who poses them. While nuclear weapons exist, there will be a real risk of their use and proliferation. Nuclear disarmament is the only credible way to consolidate the non-proliferation regime. Priority should be given to the negotiation of a Convention on nuclear disarmament that would completely ban such weapons.
4. UNASUR expresses its deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and takes this opportunity to congratulate Mexico for holding in Nayarit in the Second International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. UNASUR recalls the third Conference held in Austria in December 2014 and the issuance of the "Humanitarian Pledge", whereby 119 States pledged to pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

5. UNASUR welcomes the annual commemoration of the 26th of September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, aimed at mobilizing international efforts to attain the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.
6. UNASUR welcomes with appreciation the decision of the General Assembly to hold a High Level Conference no later than 2018 to identify measures and actions to eliminate nuclear weapons at the shortest possible term and reaffirms its decision to join the efforts of the international community towards the urgent commencement of negotiations of a legally binding multilateral instrument prohibiting the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons within a multilaterally agreed timeframe.

Mr. Chair,

7. UNASUR reiterates its commitment to the NPT and to the balanced implementation of its three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy. It is UNASUR's view, however, that the disarmament pillar has suffered from a serious implementation deficit.
8. In this regard, UNASUR regrets the absence of the adoption of an agreed outcome document on the occasion of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, due to the lack of consensus related to the issue of the establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass-Destruction in the Middle East.
9. The States of UNASUR also express their deep regret at the failure to implement the agreement arrived at the 2010 NPT Review Conference to hold the International Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction. UNASUR strongly believes that such a zone would be a significant contribution to the peace process in the Middle East and the world, and

therefore continues to reiterate its call for this conference to be held as soon as possible, with the active participation of all States in the region, as agreed by the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

Mr. Chair,

10. UNASUR is very proud of the formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace on January 29, 2014, on the occasion of the Second CELAC Summit held in Cuba, a historic decision aimed at uprooting the use or threat of use of force in our region.

11. As members of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, the States of UNASUR urge all Nuclear-Weapon States to withdraw all interpretative declarations to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which will help to eliminate the risk of use of nuclear weapons against the countries of the region.

12. It is a legitimate interest of Non-Nuclear Weapon States- including all UNASUR members- that Nuclear-Weapon States provide unequivocal and legally binding guarantees of not using or threatening to use those weapons. Therefore, we call for work in the negotiation and adoption, in the shortest possible time, of a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances.

13. UNASUR also calls upon Nuclear-Weapon States to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their doctrines, security policies and military strategies, in order to reach the complete elimination of these lethal weapons, regardless of their type or location.

Mr. Chair,

14. Our countries will continue to support the efforts aimed at reviving the works of the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, and that there is an urgent need to begin the negotiations of new international legal instruments governing fundamental issues for disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chair,

15. We reaffirm the need for all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty, particularly those in Annex 2, to do it as soon as possible, as a sign of their political will and their commitment to international peace and security. We thus welcome the ratification of the CTBT by Angola.

16. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the Member States of UNASUR reiterate the importance of maintaining a moratorium on nuclear testing.

Mr. Chair,

17. The Member States of UNASUR would also like to avail of this important occasion to underline the essential contribution of the IAEA in common efforts to establish a more secure world. We would also like to underline the importance of the Brazilian-Argentinean Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, the only bi-national organization of safeguards in the world, which is an initiative of two of our Member States.

Mr. Chair,

18. To conclude UNASUR wishes to reiterate its call for a world free of nuclear weapons, so that humanity can direct resources devoted to the maintenance and modernization of nuclear arsenals to the social and economic development of the peoples.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.