



United Nations General Assembly | First Committee

Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons

Introduction of resolution on "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas"

**Statement by H. E. Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota,
Permanent Representative**

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Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honor to take the floor on behalf of Indonesia, New Zealand and South Africa and my country to present our joint draft resolution (L.XX) entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free Southern hemisphere and adjacent areas". The text of this draft resolution has been circulated to all delegations and I take this opportunity to comment briefly on its key elements.

Mr. Chairperson,

The elimination of nuclear weapons and of the threat they pose to humanity is a seminal goal of the United Nations. As the international community strives towards the ultimate goal of complete, transparent verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament, all measures to enhance and strengthen the existing international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime must be explored.

The establishment of nuclear weapon free zones has already been acknowledged as a significant interim measure to promote cooperation among member states and with the international community, to hinder nuclear proliferation and to support nuclear disarmament, as the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed.

In this context, the draft resolution reaffirms the conviction of the important role of NWFZ in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and in moving towards the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons; welcomes the cooperation between States parties and signatories to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia; and notes with satisfaction that all existent treaties that establish NWFZ - Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba, as well as Central Asia - are now in force.

Mr. Chairperson,

We also call upon all relevant States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the protocols to NWFZ treaties and urge all nuclear-weapon States to withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations contrary to the object and purpose of the treaties establishing NWFZ.

The draft resolution further welcomes steps taken envisioning the establishment of other NWFZ on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between the States concerned, including the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East, and encourages efforts to reinforce coordination among nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Mr. Chairperson,

70 years after the UNGA's first resolution sought the "elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons", they continue to pose a global threat to peace and security. It is incumbent on all States to change this bleak scenario and move beyond the nuclear status-quo – indeed to achieve not just a nuclear-weapon-free Southern hemisphere but a nuclear-weapon-free world We therefore encourage all Member States to support the draft resolution including through co-sponsorship.

Thank you.