

# Guatemala

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2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION  
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

STATEMENT BY

*H.E. Ambassador Carlos Ramiro Martinez*  
VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

GENERAL DEBATE

New York, May 4, 2005

**Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations**  
**57 Park Ave. New York, NY. 10016**  
**Tel. (212) 679-4760 - Fax. (212) 685-8741**  
**E-mail: guatemala@un.int**

Mr. President:

We wish to congratulate you on your election to preside over this most important Conference, charged with reviewing the non-proliferation treaty. Our congratulation also extends, needless to say, to your colleagues on the bureau. We have no doubt that your experience in and your devotion to the matters we shall be addressing guarantee that this meeting will result in significant advances towards strengthening the Treaty.

Mr. President:

The review of the Treaty is being carried out at the right time. Certain circumstances have shown that it has become necessary, indeed urgent, to reaffirm the existence and the validity of the rules it lays down, as well as the obligations we have been undertaking, particularly at the 1995 and 2000 review conferences.

The new challenges that the present juncture places before us have generated divergent perceptions as to the measures to be taken. But we must not overlook that the treaty was adopted as the cornerstone for disarmament, control of armaments and the peaceful prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It therefore behooves us to reflect on the manner in which we have complied with its provisions, due credit being given to the advances made at the last two review conferences.

We recognize that since then the treaty has had to cope with new challenges. Terrorism has moved close to the top of the global agenda. Guatemala shares the concern over the possibility that nuclear weapons may be used not only by States but also by non-State actors. This danger has prompted the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1540, which aims to counter this danger. We remain convinced, however, that the best response to it is through the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It is, moreover, the creation of global security that deserves priority. We should make sure that the new threats are not relied on as a pretext for rolling back the advances already made. On the contrary, the best way to deal with the new threats is through a strengthening of the obligations assumed multilaterally.

The treaty has, unfortunately, suffered a number of breaches that have generated a climate of distrust. The withdrawal of one of the parties thereto, as well as the threat which now exists that the rules it lays down may be subjected to further violations, is liable to destabilize the regime of nuclear non-proliferation.

For these reasons, namely the ones we confronted at the last review conference and those facing us now should be addressed on an equal footing. Each one requires the same degree of attention and neither should be held hostage to the other. Accordingly, the true challenge we face today in connection with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is, first, the need to preserve the multilateral approach that, by concluding the non-proliferation treaty, we managed to adopt during the cold war; and, in the second place, to adapt that approach to present-day global conditions. The cornerstone of that

approach, namely the Non-Proliferation Treaty, is nowadays as, and perhaps even more, important than when it was adopted over thirty years ago.

We are not starting from scratch. We have, as departure point, the thirteen practical steps designed to cope with non-proliferation and bring about nuclear disarmament. We agree with the points made by the Secretary-General in his "In larger Freedom" report with regard to the measures that this Conference should ratify. As he has stated, among the most important of them are the measures to be taken by nuclear-weapon-States. Also the need to begin negotiating in the Disarmament Conference a fissile material cut-off treaty and uphold the moratorium on nuclear test explosions until the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

We are convinced that in carrying out these measures we should, to ensure that they produce optimum results, bear constantly in mind that just as there should be advances in nuclear disarmament, in the same way progress is necessary in the area of non-proliferation, both endeavors being treated on a footing of equality. Thus non-nuclear-weapon States are also under a duty to fulfil their obligations under the treaty, reaffirming their undertaking not to acquire nuclear weapons, but exercising their inalienable right to accede to, develop and participate, in the future, in nuclear technology meant exclusively for peaceful use. It may, finally, be added that all these measures should, as regards both disarmament and non-proliferation, be carried out in an environment that favors monitoring and transparency, so as to revive trust among the parties to the treaty.

This brings us to our second point, namely the fulfillment of the obligations the treaty lays on States. As regards Guatemala, we are pleased to inform the Conference that we are submitting our national report, as provided for in the Final Report of the 2000 Review Conference, in connection with the thirteen practical steps. We also wish to express on this occasion our support for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, which we signed in September 1999 and wish to ratify at an early date.

Although an impasse is hampering our ratification of this instrument, the Government of Guatemala is aware of the need to overcome it and of taking steps to sensitize national agencies to this end. Accordingly the Foreign Ministry organized a seminar, held in Antigua Guatemala on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of last March, on the management of natural disasters and the importance of non-proliferation.

We can inform the conference that we have taken a very important step towards sensitizing national institutions to these matters, a step that will surely contribute to ratification of the treaty by Guatemala at an early date.

I am also pleased to inform the conference that a facility agreement between Guatemala and the CTBTO Preparatory Commission was signed by the President of Guatemala on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March of this year. This agreement provides for the establishment of a seismic station in the Department of Alta Verapaz, which will be able

to detect seismic movements throughout not only the national territory but also the whole Central American region.

Guatemala is pleased to be a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zone and has served as example and inspiration for the creation of other such zones. A nuclear-weapon-free zone has thus been consolidated in Latin America and the Caribbean. But it is also necessary to ensure that this zone does not incur the danger of a nuclear threat. For this reason Guatemala joins the other States of the region in the efforts that, together with the members of other nuclear-weapon-free zones, they are making in order to adopt a common policy vis-a-vis nuclear-weapon-States, thus seeking to strengthen peace and security worldwide and regionally. We thus participated, last week, in the Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties establishing Nuclear-Weapon-Free zones. This conference, held in Mexico City, became the point of departure for achieving better coordination between those zones. We are grateful to the Government of Mexico for having taken this initiative and support, as a positive step, the declaration adopted by the conference.

We also wish to recall that Guatemala signed the Additional Safeguard Protocol. We thus contributed to strengthening the consolidation of Latin America as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In conclusion, we wish to affirm that this conference affords an opportunity for evaluating the will of all the parties to live up to their commitments and the expectations they have generated. We must not back away from these commitments. We should, rather, breathe new life into the unequivocal promises made in 2000 and rely on them to deal with the new menaces the treaty confronts. The strength, the credibility and the very existence of the treaty are based on a fundamental bargain, one in which the undertaking that there will be no indefinite possession of nuclear weapons is balanced by the assurance that there will be no new nuclear-weapon States, the right to peacefully use nuclear energy being nevertheless safeguarded. It is on the basis of this bargain that all the States parties to the treaty should advance towards agreement on a common agenda to preserve international peace and security. Thank you.