

STATEMENT BY ARGENTINA

HIGH LEVEL DEBATE ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

The Delegation of Argentina would like to align itself with the statement delivered by Cuba on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. At the same time we would like to add some remarks in our national capacity.

Argentina considers that the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction should constitute the main priority of the international community, since their consequences reach beyond the field of disarmament and seriously impact in the international peace and security area.

Grave events that recently occurred have shown the serious humanitarian consequences of the use of a certain type of those weapons of mass destruction as well as their destabilizing effect on international security.

The case of nuclear weapons is probably the most serious one, since their prohibition has not been achieved despite the fact that their use or threat of use constitute a crime against humanity and a violation of international law.

In such context it is necessary to refer to the Non Proliferation Treaty and its role within the international security scheme.

The NPT is a security treaty.

Within its geometry while non nuclear weapons states committed not to acquire or develop such weapons, states possessing them committed to negotiate their elimination.

Nevertheless, decades after such commitments, the progress achieved in the field of non proliferation is not matched by the results achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Such fact is particularly grave since the failure of the nuclear weapons states to comply with the obligations they assumed in the NPT introduces an element of inequity in the security balance of the Treaty and at the same time provides arguments to those questioning the credibility of the non proliferation regime.

From the same perspective of equity, it is also not acceptable that some non nuclear weapons states maintain a role for such weapons in their doctrines, security policies and military strategies or as a prospective approach in conflicts management.

Such a picture of concerns must also include the absence of assurances from nuclear weapons states that those weapons will not be used against countries that have renounced to possess them. In the case of the Latin American and Caribbean region we can not avoid mentioning the fact that nuclear weapons states still maintain their interpretative declarations to Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and that those declarations dilute the legal scope of the commitments they assumed in relation to the military denuclearized Zone and constitute actual reservations prohibited by the Treaty.

The persistent situation of countries possessing nuclear weapons as well as of countries benefiting from the protection supposedly provided by such weapons can only generate greater distortions and instability to international peace and security.

It is from such conviction that Argentina supports the efforts of the international community to move towards the negotiation of a universal legally binding instrument banning nuclear weapons.

In the same sense we support the international process aiming at drawing global attention to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

Steps towards a complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament should no longer be delayed.

The sole assurance against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons lies in its total elimination.