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**Draft Statement**  
by  
**H.E. Sr. SurasakChuasukonthip**  
**Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary**  
**at the XXIV Regular Session of the General Conference of the Agency**  
**for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean**  
**(OPANAL)**  
**Mexico City, 26 November 2015**

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

Colleagues,

It is a great honour for me to be here today at the 24<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. This year marks the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Tlateloco, the first treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons entirely from a densely populated region. The Treaty has served as an important model for the subsequent establishments of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world. It demonstrates how a regional initiative can help advance the goal of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The success of this Treaty had inspired other regions to pursue and work towards establishing their own zones.

As a depositary state of the Bangkok Treaty which established the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), Thailand recognises that the zones contribute significantly towards strengthening the security of states within the zones, and enhancing international peace and security at the global level. It also serves as a key confidence building measure for countries in the region. In this regard, Thailand, together with ASEAN Member States, will continue our efforts to encourage signing and ratification by the nuclear weapon States of the Protocol to the Treaty at the earliest opportunity.

Thailand commends and fully supports all efforts aimed at establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not currently exist, including the Middle East. Thailand views this as a vital step forward in strengthening peace and security in that region. We express our hope that the Parties concerned will continue to strive for progress despite the failure of the NPT Review Conference this year.

Mr. President,

As of today, 111 states are signatories and parties to 5 nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, making the southern hemisphere virtually nuclear-weapons free. This is an achievement that we can all be proud of. Nevertheless, more work needs to be done in order to obtain concrete progress in nuclear disarmament. Thailand believes there is real potential and value from cooperation among nuclear-weapon-free zones, to further reinforce them in a more collective



manner, and to strengthen states parties' implementation of the treaties through exchange of best practices and dialogue.

Thailand is also a strong advocate of the Humanitarian Initiative, and is proud to have joined 120 other countries in endorsing the humanitarian pledge. The Humanitarian Initiative has changed the discourse. It has shifted the paradigm, and created unprecedented momentum for nuclear disarmament. In advancing this initiative, Thailand firmly believes that there is a need to fill the gap in the legal regime governing nuclear weapons, by establishing an international legally-binding instrument for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. Thailand looks forward to the start of serious and substantive discussions on such a legally-binding instrument, especially within the context of the impending establishment of an open-ended working group in Geneva. For Thailand, efforts that advance this initiative complement and reinforce the nuclear-disarmament objective of the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties.

In concluding, Thailand wishes to reiterate our full commitment to nuclear disarmament, and underscores nuclear-weapon-free zones as essential disarmament measures that contribute to advance the paramount goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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