

ECUADOR

Permanent Mission to the International Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY ECUADOR IN THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE PREPARATORY
COMMITTEE FOR THE 2020 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY
ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS - NPT**

**Ambassador Wilson Pastor Morris
Permanent Representative of Ecuador**

Vienna, 2 May 2017

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to express our congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of this Session of the Preparatory Committee. Let me assure you of my delegation's commitment to contribute to the success of this meeting and to our common objectives towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Ecuador fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement, and by El Salvador, in the name of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States – CELAC.

Mr. Chairman,

The Constitution of Ecuador proclaims peace and universal disarmament and condemns the development and the use of weapons of mass destruction. My country, based on its own conviction and recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, reaffirms that the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons constitute a crime against humanity and a threat to collective security.

This continued proclamation of Ecuador's foreign policy finds its concrete expression in Ecuador's active participation in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and in the creation of the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, whose 50th anniversary we are celebrating. We are

equally proud of the formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a “Peace Zone” during the Second CELAC Summit, held in La Havana, Cuba, in January 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

Ecuador is concerned about the resurgence of security policies based on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence policies. For that reason, we wish to reiterate that the only effective guarantee against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons is its total elimination and prohibition.

We maintain our firm position in favor of the full implementation of the three pillars of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), without discrimination and double standards, and we reiterate our concern that, while the objectives of the Treaty in the field of non-proliferation and the exercise of the inalienable right to peaceful use of nuclear energy have been implemented, no progress has been made in achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

We CELAC Member States have reiterated our deepest concern about the enormous humanitarian consequences and the global effects of any accidental or intentional nuclear detonation; and we believe that this subject should be addressed every time nuclear issues are discussed, including in this Preparatory Committee. Therefore, we welcome the organization of the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna and their contributions to the global discourse seeking to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

For this reason, we are glad that the will of the majority of the United Nations Member States has made a reality the Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, which first session was successfully held this March.

Ecuador is committed to this negotiation, due to its indisputable conviction to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world and because we firmly believe that it is a necessary measure to achieve nuclear disarmament that would meet the obligation of the States parties to the NPT established in article VI of the Treaty. It needs to be reaffirmed that the negotiation and subsequent adoption of a legally binding international instrument to ban nuclear weapons in no way undermines the NPT; on the contrary, it complements the Treaty – and addresses the need to fill the legal gap in article VI of the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

Ecuador is proud to have been part of such a fundamental endeavor as was the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean and which constitutes a political, legal and institutional reference for the creation of other zones. 50 years after its creation and its invaluable contribution, the main challenge of the Region is to strengthen the regime vis-à-vis the renewed interest of the international community in moving towards nuclear disarmament.

My delegation reiterates the call on the Nuclear-Weapon States that made interpretative statements to the Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco to withdraw them and to provide full and unambiguous security assurances for the States in the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the region.

Ecuador attaches particular importance to the creation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones because it recognizes their significance in moving towards a safer world. For this reason, it regrets that the Middle East Conference for the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and weapons of mass destruction, was not convened in 2012, as agreed during the 2010 Review Conference of the NPT, and urgently calls for the fulfillment of the agreement and for the convening of the Middle East Conference with the participation of all countries of the region.

Mr. Chairman,

Ecuador strongly advocates for a balance between the three pillars upon which the NPT is based, to be precise nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In the field of nuclear disarmament, Ecuador regrets the insufficient progress made in the 22 points of the 2010 Action Plan. The minimal reductions registered demonstrate the failure of the Nuclear-Weapon States to fulfill their NPT obligations and to implement the commitments set out by the Review Conferences since 1995 and by the 2010 Action Plan.

On the contrary, it is a source of concern that the nuclear powers remain committed to the modernization and development of new types of nuclear weapons. We reiterate the call to refrain from conducting nuclear tests, other nuclear explosions or any other non-explosive relevant test, including sub-critical tests, since they are

against the principals and purposes of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, as well as against the spirit and scope of the CTBT. Ecuador reiterates the urgency of the entry into force of the CTBT and urges the remaining eight States of Annex 2 to ratify it without further delay.

We believe that in order to increase trust and cooperation between the State parties to the NPT, the Nuclear-Weapon States and those hosting such weapons in their territories, -in the interest of transparency and in fulfillment of the NPT reporting provisions-, must commit themselves to provide the Preparatory Committee of the NPT with a comprehensive transparency report on all nuclear weapons in their territories.

Any action aiming at securing nuclear non-proliferation has to be in strict accordance with International Law and the principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the possible use of force can only be accepted with prior express authorization of the Security Council for that purpose; unilateral actions not help to promote non-proliferation, but can also create adverse conditions for achieving this aim.

My country defends the right of all States to the pacific use of nuclear energy in accordance with the provisions of the NPT. We acknowledge the excellent work undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency in the field of technical cooperation, control and verification of nuclear activities. We attach special importance to the contribution to the development which nuclear technology has realized in such relevant areas as health, food, agriculture or industry, and therefore Ecuador expects the IAEA to become a key player in supporting the States in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, agreed for the next 15 years.

Mr. Chairman,

The Latin America and Caribbean region has had a long-term commitment to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, not only regarding the strict compliance of its international obligations, but also by determined action and taking a leadership role in initiatives that drove us forward. It is for that reason that we have unanimously responded to the responsibility of our region in the Presidency of the 2020 Review Conference, through the nomination of Ambassador Mariano Grossi, from Argentina. My country hopes that this designation will soon be formalized and we already offer him Ecuador's full support.

By renewing our commitment to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, Ecuador will continue to proclaim the need to overcome the strange paradox of pretending to preserve peace through the maintenance of nuclear weapons.

Peace, Mr. President, cannot be built through fear.

Thank you,