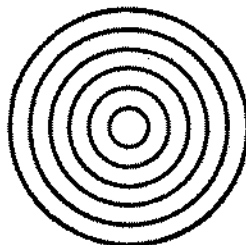


AGENCY FOR THE
PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IN LATIN AMERICA



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STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE,
HIS EXCELLENCY JACQUES MASSENET

Mr. Chairman,

It is both a great honour and pleasure for me and the French Delegation to enjoy, today, the perfect and warm hospitality of our Jamaican friends, with whom France —allow me to speak as my country's representative to Jamaica— enjoy the best and most cordial relations.

France, not only because of her territorial possessions in the sub-Continent, but also because of the historical, cultural, economic and political ties with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, is especially anxious to develop its friendly relations with all the States of the region and particularly those gathered here, with the aim of promoting peace and co-operation.

The Government of France is happy to use this opportunity to participate, in her capacity as Observer bound by the Treaty, in this Eighth Regular Session of the General Conference, to affirm her interest and constant support for this undertaking of the countries of Latin America aimed at reducing the risk of a nuclear conflict on this Continent.

France, I wish to repeat here, respects the wish of

the States of a region to determine together —within the framework of the provisions of an International Law to which Latin America makes such a noble contribution— the procedures of their own security.

In this context, France supports the efforts of the Latin American countries to establish, of their own free will, a nuclear-free zone, a zone where nuclear weapons are not installed and also a zone of peaceful co-operation in nuclear matters.

In this regard she is to protest against the fact that some —we do not wish to call names— may have been able to suggest the possibility of counter-measures in Latin America to any deployment of nuclear weapons in another part of the world.

Need I repeat that this idea of the transfer of an East-West dispute to this region is contrary to the obligations contracted by all the nuclear powers by virtue of Protocol II of the Treaty?

France, for her part, attaches very great importance to the Treaty which constitutes the first and —to date— only concrete and effective system which has been set up with a view to the establishment of a nuclear-free zone, the full achievement of which would be a significant development.

This is a unique contribution, at a time when there are many among the informed who question the possibility of establishing similar zones in other parts of the world.

I think especially of South Asia, the Near East and Africa; where circumstances, which for the moment do not seem as propitious as might have been hoped, would be favourable for the establishment of such zones, should the situation arise.

This is not the case with Europe, the permanent

stake in the East-West rivalry, where security and balance still depend on the maintenance of a credible nuclear deterrent, consolidated if possible, by negotiation, at the lowest level of the forces.

The difficulties encountered and which are still being encountered by the undertaking assumed by Latin America itself, provide, as such, a wealth of information as the different problems brought out here and in other fora have proven.

Let us recall, for this purpose, that the 1975 United Nations study on nuclear-free zones —in the updating of which France is participating this year in New York— was directly motivated by the successful conclusion of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

France has supported this constructive effort, aimed at bringing about effective solutions to the regional problems of Latin America, by signing Protocols I and II of the Treaty, and by its ratification of Protocol II which is important to the five nuclear powers.

Admittedly, we are aware of the hope expressed by certain States of the region to see France proceed rapidly with ratification of Protocol I.

On this point, we must make our position clear to our Latin American friends: as I have just repeated on behalf of my Government, France is in favour of the regional approach to problems of security and disarmament —and particularly to the establishment of nuclear-free zones in regions of the world where the balance of power is not linked to nuclear deterrent power, and therefore, particularly in Latin America at present.

France, therefore, will do nothing to delay in any way, the complete implementation of the Treaty, but will do

nothing to go ahead of her Latin American friends.

This was made clear by my Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Claude Cheysson, at the Second Extraordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the subject of Disarmament:

"Such zones shall not be established except by the unanimous decision of the States concerned. As is the case with all other regional agreements, decisions should not be imposed upon these countries by external forces".

Ratification of Protocol I by France can only be linked logically, therefore, to the importance that Latin American countries of the Continent, themselves, attach to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

As our representative in the First Committee of the last United Nations General Assembly has emphasized:

"France cannot allow herself to be called into question when certain countries within the zone of application of the Treaty have not signed, or ratified it, or have not implemented the clause whereby the Treaty is to enter into force as it relates to them, before all countries of the region become Parties to the Treaty. At a convenient time, the French Government will take the appropriate decision in respect of ratification of the Protocol bearing in mind the state of the ratifications of the Treaty itself".

Of course, the function of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is to bring together the great Latin American family with a view to prohibiting nuclear weapons in the Continent, but also, as we have said, to assist countries which have chosen to use nuclear

energy exclusively for controlled peaceful purposes.

We do not believe, however, that this Treaty could become a sort of regional substitute for a Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) imposed from outside the region. We do not believe, furthermore, that this interpretation, in itself, could justify why France, which has made its contribution by its definite signing of the two Protocols, should now wish to:

- Either forestall the sovereign decisions of other important States of the region in respect of the success of this enterprise,
- or even pressure them indirectly.

From the start, France, which has not signed the Treaty for well-known reasons, has solemnly declared that it will conduct itself as if it had done so. The aim of non-proliferation, as a means of controlling nuclear installations, can only result in a sovereign decision free from external pressures.

Of course, we feel that it is desirable that countries remaining outside the NPT should place their nuclear installations under the IAEA system of guarantees, and they should be encouraged to do so. But, I repeat, they should make these decisions free from all discrimination.

Mr. Chairman,

Because of her deep commitment to the cause of disarmament, France has wished to join in this task undertaken by the Nations of Latin America.

We hope that this will prove useful in the course of peace, particularly in this region.