



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Statement by Mrs. Marieta García Jordán, delegate of the Republic of Cuba in the Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons. First Committee, 63 UNGA, 15 October 2008.

Mr Chairman,

The Cuban delegation fully supports the statement on *Nuclear Weapons* by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Cuba reiterates its concern about the serious threat to humankind due to the existence of an immense arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Notwithstanding the proclaimed end of the Cold War, there are some 32,300 nuclear weapons in the world, over 12,000 of which are ready for immediate use. The existence of strategic defense doctrines based on the possession and use of this kind of armament is unacceptable and poses a grave danger to the international peace and security. The continuous possession of nuclear weapons is an irresponsible incentive to proliferation, which increases the nuclear danger in the world.

Despite the fact that in 1996 the International Court of Justice issued its historic advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, and that every year the international community demands the total elimination of mass destruction weapons, there are certain nuclear-weapons states which still refuse to renounce the use of nuclear weapons as part of their military doctrines and continue to develop new and more sophisticated nuclear weapons through modernization programs.

Cuba considers that the use of nuclear weapons is illegal, totally immoral and that cannot be justified by any concept or doctrine of security. The use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic consequences for all known forms of life on Earth. Their use would, moreover, constitute a flagrant violation of international standards on the prevention of genocide.

Mr. Chairman,

For non-nuclear-weapon states, like Cuba, which are also parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), this situation gives cause for a serious concern. The lack of progress on the implementation of nuclear disarmament measures agreed upon in the Review Conference of the NPT in 2000 is unacceptable. The nuclear-weapon states must fulfill their obligations to hold negotiations in good faith, which lead to nuclear disarmament and to a

general and complete disarmament treaty under strict and effective international control.

Cuba reiterates the need to fully honor the commitments already met, including the 13 practical steps agreed at the Sixth Review Conference of the NPT in 2000, aimed at totally eliminating nuclear arsenals, under Article VI of the NPT.

I must reiterate that for Cuba the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is not an end in itself but rather a means of achieving the supreme goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The total elimination of such weapons is the only sure way to avoid disaster as a result of their use.

Once more, Cuba firmly expresses its rejection to the selective and double standards application of the NPT. The issues related to nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy cannot continue to be disregarded while horizontal non-proliferation is favored.

The inalienable right of the States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, as established in Article IV of the NPT, must be fully respected. On the other hand, developed countries have the responsibility to facilitate the legitimate development of nuclear energy in developing countries, and to provide assistance in this respect, allowing them to fully participate in the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

Besides being State party to the NPT, Cuba has supported the resolutions advocating for the full elimination of nuclear weapons in the United Nations General Assembly, like resolution 62/42 "Nuclear Disarmament" and 62/51 "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". As a member of the Conference on Disarmament, Cuba is also in favor of giving priority to commencing negotiations on a phased disarmament program for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and has been among the sponsors of concrete initiatives developed by the Group of 21 for that purpose. Such position in favor of nuclear disarmament extends to Cuba's participation in the UN Disarmament Commission, where it has joined the rest of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement in proposing a set of recommendations aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament.

Cuba reiterates the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice on the obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion the negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

The establishment of nuclear weapons free zones created after the Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba, Semipalatinsk and Mongolia treaties is a positive advancement and an important measure to meet the objective of disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world. In this

context, Cuba considers essential that nuclear weapons States unconditionally guarantee that they will neither use nor threaten to use said weapons.

Cuba stresses the urgent need for commencing multilateral negotiations leading to the prompt conclusion of a Convention prohibiting the development, production, deployment, storage, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for the elimination of those weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear weapons and their technical infrastructure are highly expensive. The nuclear weapons industry involves a useless diversion of resources that could be used in valuable programs, like development assistance, the implementation of which would allow real contribution to international peace and security.

We reiterate our full commitment in favor of a nuclear weapons free world and our total willingness to fight for turning this aspiration into reality for all humankind.

Thank you very much.