

2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and of paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament*

Report submitted by Mexico

1. The present report updates the information contained in document NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/7 of 24 April 2014. It therefore includes only information updated after that date, in compliance with action 20 of the action plan set forth in the final document of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in 2010, in particular, implementation of article VI, paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision entitled “Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament”, and the practical steps agreed to in the final document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, and recalling the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996, in order to encourage greater efforts to be made in this regard and promote the presentation of such information by nuclear-weapon States.

2. In that regard, Mexico has been a regular, active and committed advocate of disarmament and has stressed the urgent need to totally eliminate weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, in accordance with the principles of verification, irreversibility and transparency. The efforts made by Mexico in this field are founded primarily on international law, as well as the foreign policy principles enshrined in the Mexican Constitution and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. Mexico shares the goal of universal application of existing international instruments, in addition to their full implementation, strengthening and functioning, and supports the creation of new instruments.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



4. It should be recalled that nuclear weapons are the only weapons of mass destruction not expressly prohibited by international law. This leads some to believe that such weapons confer “prestige” on their owners, or that they guarantee collective security, ideas that Mexico has rejected practically since the birth of the nuclear era almost 70 years ago.

5. Mexico advocates consideration of the damage caused by nuclear weapons and of their consequences as the basis for an eventual and necessary prohibition.

6. Mexico’s efforts as one of the leading proponents of the so-called “humanitarian initiative” have included submitting, at various forums where issues of nuclear disarmament are addressed, a joint declaration on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons as the basis for disarmament actions and as the reason why such weapons must not be used again, in any circumstance. The number of endorsements of that declaration rose from 16 in 2012 to 80 in 2013 and 157 in October 2014.

7. The humanitarian initiative was born of the frustration of non-nuclear-weapon States and civil society at the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament, together with the deadlock in the disarmament machinery and forums (mainly the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament) of the United Nations General Assembly for almost twenty years. Nuclear weapons are addressed at multilateral forums from a political and legal perspective rather than in relation to their effects, which is why we, the founders of this movement, agreed to help to stigmatize these weapons, as a step towards their prohibition and elimination, based on hard factual data on their impact.

8. The presentation of data on the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons at the three Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo (2013), the State of Nayarit (Mexico) and Vienna (both in 2014), showed the international community’s interest in the field, and the paradigm shift that has taken place.

9. Moreover, at the Nayarit Conference, the Chair (Mexico) stressed that the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should lead to the commitment of States and civil society to reach new international standards and norms, through a legally binding instrument, and that the time had come to initiate a diplomatic process conducive to that goal. The process should comprise a specific time frame, the definition of the most appropriate forums and a clear and substantive framework to achieve it (see NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.35).

10. At the Vienna Conference, at least 44 countries endorsed the Nayarit conclusions in order to initiate a diplomatic process aimed at a legally binding instrument that prohibits nuclear weapons as a step towards their total elimination, under international supervision, with a timetable for its implementation.

11. Mexico reiterated that the Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna discussions and conclusions must feed into a diplomatic process leading to the negotiation and conclusion of a legally binding instrument on prohibition. In that regard, Mexico invited all States to give this course of action serious consideration, as a demonstration of their commitment to the very survival of humanity.

12. Furthermore, one outcome of the Vienna Conference was a pledge from the Austrian Government (Austrian Pledge) to disseminate the results of the Conference

in order to encourage the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to renew their commitment, in particular to article VI, and to work to reduce the risks associated with nuclear weapons. In that regard, every effort will be made to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks. The Austrian Pledge has been endorsed by 78 countries, including Mexico.

13. In that regard, and recognizing the contribution of the humanitarian initiative to its members, during the third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), held in Costa Rica in January 2015, its 33 members (including Mexico) reiterated their commitment to continue promoting full and verifiable nuclear disarmament, and gave their strong support to the call made in Nayarit to initiate a diplomatic negotiation process for an internationally legally binding instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons. This has consolidated regional unity around an important issue and strengthens the ultimate goal of general and complete nuclear disarmament: the elimination of the danger posed to humanity by nuclear weapons.

14. The Special Declaration also reiterated that Latin American and Caribbean countries were proud to belong to the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area and stressed their full support for the work of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) as the “specialized body in the region” in the field of nuclear disarmament.

15. CELAC also endorsed a proposal made by Cuba at the Vienna Conference for the countries of the region to promote the negotiation of a global legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons at the seventieth session of the General Assembly, to be held in September 2015.

16. In parallel with this process, and in the framework of preparations for the ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (New York, 27 April-22 May 2015), Mexico has continued to participate in the various forums that address the nuclear disarmament agenda.

United Nations General Assembly

17. Mexico coordinated the work of the New Agenda Coalition¹ during the second half of 2015, which included submitting to the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, held in 2014, a draft resolution entitled, “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”, adopted as resolution 69/37 by 169 votes to 7, with 5 abstentions. It is worth noting that this resolution is the only one considered by the General Assembly that addresses in detail the commitments made by the nuclear-weapon States in the 13 steps towards disarmament adopted in 2000 within the framework of the Treaty, and which proposes concrete measures to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. The Coalition maintains that, to comply with those commitments, there should be multilateral negotiations on effective measures to halt the arms race in compliance with the Treaty, including the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

¹ Comprising Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa.

18. Mexico also coordinated the drafting of the statements made by the Coalition during the general debate and the thematic debate on nuclear disarmament in the First Committee at the aforementioned session.

19. Furthermore, Mexico also submitted four other draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session:

(a) United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, adopted without a vote as resolution 69/65, submitted biennially in collaboration with Japan, pursuant to which reports are submitted on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 2002 United Nations study on this matter. For Mexico, education and the promotion of the values, activities and objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation are essential to the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world. The most significant activities carried out by Mexico in relation to nuclear disarmament are the inclusion of material on disarmament and non-proliferation in the curricula of the Ministries of Defence and of the Navy and the holding of a summer course on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for Latin American diplomats, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the James Martin Centre for Non-Proliferation Studies;

(b) United Nations Disarmament Information Programme, adopted without a vote as resolution 69/71, submitted biennially in collaboration with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, aimed at disseminating information on arms control and disarmament in order to provide the necessary tools for States, international organizations, civil society and research institutes to participate fully in deliberations and negotiations on disarmament held in the various United Nations bodies, and assisting them in complying with treaties and contributing to agreed mechanisms for transparency;

(c) Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, adopted as resolution 69/41 by 154 votes to 5, with 20 abstentions, submitted for the first time in 2012, together with Austria and Norway, in order to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and end the paralysis in the United Nations disarmament machinery. Note also:

(i) In 2012, together with Austria and Norway, Mexico submitted resolution 67/56 entitled, "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", by which an open-ended working group was established. The group met three times in 2013 (14-24 May, 27 June and 19-30 August) during the recess periods of the Conference on Disarmament and was chaired by Costa Rica. The goal was to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, and representatives from some 70 countries, many of them non-members of the Conference on Disarmament, participated, along with international organizations and civil society;

(ii) During the deliberations, the participants recognized the persistent lack, for more than a decade, of concrete outcomes from multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations held within the framework of the United Nations, and they stressed the importance and urgency of making substantial progress on disarmament and non-proliferation. In order to ensure continuity in the work of the Group, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/46 at its sixty-eighth session, calling on countries to submit a report on the matter in 2014. In

that regard, on behalf of Austria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Slovenia and Switzerland, Ireland submitted resolution 69/41 by which it was decided to review in 2015 “progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, to take stock of all relevant efforts undertaken and to further explore options for taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, including if necessary through the Working Group”;

(d) Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, adopted as resolution 69/81 by 179 votes to 1 and three abstentions, submitted annually together with Australia and New Zealand, addressing the entry into force of the Treaty, urging the eight States whose accession and/or ratification is needed, pursuant to Annex 2 to the Treaty, to do so as soon as possible, as a fundamental step toward nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

20. Mexico took part in the meeting convened by the Secretary-General in New York on 26 September 2014 to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, in order to raise the awareness of the international community of the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity of their total elimination, by mobilizing international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. In Mexico City, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs observed the day by inviting the diplomatic corps accredited in Mexico to a screening of the film “In my lifetime”, which addresses the history of the nuclear era.

Conference on Disarmament

21. From 19 January to 15 February 2015, Mexico assumed the rotating presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, the forum established by the General Assembly for the negotiation of binding disarmament agreements. The Conference has neither adopted nor implemented a programme of work since 1996, meaning that no new nuclear disarmament agreements have been negotiated in almost 20 years.

22. Mexico submitted for consideration by the member States a draft programme of work for the Conference for the whole year, based on the agenda items, including the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; the prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters (such as the prohibition of nuclear weapons); the prevention of an arms race in outer space; effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons; the comprehensive programme of disarmament; and transparency in armament. However, it was once again impossible to adopt the programme of work owing to the forum’s consensus rule, because it grants the 65 members of the Conference a de facto power of veto.

23. Mexico also submitted two draft decisions which were rejected, concerning participation by civil society at the Conference and the establishment of a working group to review the methods of work.

Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

24. As a State party and the headquarters of the Agency (the only one with its headquarters in Mexico) established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), for which it is the depositary, Mexico has played an active role in the sessions of the OPANAL Council, as a full member, since 1 January 2014 (its term will end on 31 December 2017). Accordingly, it presided over the work of the Agency in the months of May and June of 2014 and March and April of 2015.

25. It also took part in the twenty-third special session of the General Conference of OPANAL, held in Mexico City in November 2014, at which Mexico reiterated its position in favour of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is worth noting that given the fact that the Treaty of Tlatelolco already prohibited nuclear weapons in the region, its parties promote global prohibition, in line with the Treaty itself and with the commitments assumed by CELAC.
