

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

24 April 2012

Original: English

First session

Vienna, 30 April-11 May 2012

Nuclear-weapon-free zones

Working paper submitted by the members of the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

1. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons reaffirms that the Treaty recognizes “the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories”, which the Group considers as a contribution towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, the group is of the firm belief that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones does not substitute legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings of the nuclear-weapon States for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

2. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcomes the efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world and calls for cooperation and broad consultations in order to achieve agreements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned. In this regard, the Group continues to consider the nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the treaties of Tlatelolco (Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean), Rarotonga (South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty), Bangkok (Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone), Pelindaba (African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty) and Semipalatinsk (Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia) as a positive step and important measure towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

3. In this regard, the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and calls for the full implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, which is an integral and essential part of the package of decisions reached without a vote that enabled the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995. In the view of the Group, this resolution remains valid until its objectives are achieved.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 26 April 2013.

** The present working paper is being issued without formal editing.



4. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcomes the entry into force of the Semipalatinsk and Pelindaba treaties respectively on 21 March 2009 and 15 July 2009 and considers the establishment of these zones as an effective contribution to strengthening regional and global peace and security.

5. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty reiterates that, in the context of the nuclear-weapon-free zones, it is essential that the nuclear-weapon States provide unconditional, non-discriminatory and concrete legal assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zone concerned. In this regard, the Group strongly calls for the withdrawal of any related reservations or unilateral interpretative declarations that are incompatible with the object and purpose of such treaties. The Group further calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligations towards the achievement of the objectives of the treaties to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and their protocols.

6. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty emphasizes the need to strengthen the integrity of the statute of denuclearization provided for in the Treaty of Tlatelolco by a review of the declarations that were formulated by the nuclear-weapon States parties to protocols I and II for possible withdrawal or modification.

7. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty urges States to conclude agreements with a view to establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not exist in accordance with the provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (see A/S-10/4) and the principles and guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its 1999 substantive session. In this context, the Group considers that the further institutionalization of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status would be an important measure towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime in that region.

8. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcomes the conclusion of the consultations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the nuclear-weapon States on the Protocol of the Bangkok Treaty and urges the nuclear-weapon States to become parties to the Protocol of the Treaty as soon as possible. In this context, the Group looks forward to the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty on SEANFWZ by the five nuclear-weapon States in July 2012.

9. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty stresses the importance of the signature and ratification by the nuclear-weapon States, that have not yet done so, of the relevant protocols to the treaties of Pelindaba, Rarotonga and Semipalatinsk in order to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in the territories of the States parties to these treaties, as envisaged in article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

10. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty, while noting with satisfaction the convening of the Second Conference of the States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Established Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia in New York, on 30 April 2010, calls on the States parties and signatories to the treaties on nuclear-weapons-free zones to implement further ways and means of cooperation among themselves, their treaty agencies and other interested States.