

2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

15 June 2022

Original: English

New York, 1–26 August 2022

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 ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories, which the Group considers to be an important step towards strengthening nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regimes. The Group is, therefore, of the firm belief that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is not a substitute for nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that regard, the Group underlines the importance of the early fulfilment of the legal obligations of and unequivocal undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate all their nuclear weapons.
2. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcomes the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zones created under 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 Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone), Pelindaba (African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty) and Semipalatinsk (Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia) and the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia as a special case of a State that, because of its geopolitical location, cannot form part of a traditional regional nuclear-weapon-free zone, and considers them positive steps and important measures towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In that regard, the Group welcomes the efforts aimed at establishing other nuclear-weapon-free zones worldwide and calls for cooperation and broad consultation among the States of the regions concerned to conclude agreements establishing such zones.
3. In this context, 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 on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995. The resolution remains valid until its objectives are achieved.



Furthermore, the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty expresses its disappointment that, as a result of the opposition by the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada at the concluding session of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, consensus on measures regarding the process to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction was not achieved.

4. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcomes General Assembly decision 73/546 on convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The Group calls upon the Review Conference to welcome the successful convening of the first and second sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction pursuant to decision 73/546; endorse the outcomes of the second session, including, *inter alia*, the adoption of the rules of procedure and the establishment, on an informal basis, of a working committee; and call on all the invited members to the Conference to participate in an open and inclusive manner to elaborate a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the basis of consensus. The Group stresses that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and other relevant decisions adopted within the context of the Review Conferences remain valid until their objectives are achieved, and that the implementation of decision 73/546 is without prejudice to their validity and shall not also be construed as their replacement.

5. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty reiterates that, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons and in order to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, it is the legitimate right of all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty to receive effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The Group reaffirms that, in the context of the nuclear-weapon-free zones, it is also essential that all the nuclear-weapon States provide unconditional, non-discriminatory and concrete legal assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all non-nuclear-weapon States of the zone that are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In that 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 the treaties to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Group further calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligations to achieve the objectives of such treaties and their protocols.

6. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty, while commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, emphasizes the need to strengthen the integrity of the statute of denuclearization provided for in that Treaty by reviewing the declarations that were formulated by the nuclear-weapon States parties to Additional Protocols I and II thereto, for possible withdrawal or modification. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty reaffirms that nuclear-weapon-free zones must be respected by all States without any reservations or limitations.

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 relevant paragraphs of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the principles and guidelines adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its 1999 substantive session. In this context, the Group considers that the further institutionalization of the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia would

be an important step towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime in that region.

8. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty, recalling the convening of the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, held in New York on 24 April 2015, calls upon the States parties and signatories to those treaties to put in place further forms of cooperation among themselves, their treaty agencies and other interested States. The Group remains committed to the convening of a fourth conference of States parties and signatories to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [73/71](#), with the objective of considering ways and means to enhance consultations and cooperation among such States and Mongolia.

9. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty stresses the importance of the ratification by the nuclear-weapon States of the relevant protocols to the treaties of Pelindaba, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Semipalatinsk in order to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in the territories of the States parties to those treaties, as envisaged in article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
