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General Statement on behalf of the Group of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by H.E. Mr. Jorge Valero, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations Office in Geneva

**At the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the
2020 Review Conference of the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation on Nuclear Weapons**

General Debate

Geneva, 23 April 2018

Mr. Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, I congratulate you on your election to chair the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference and assures you of its cooperation.
2. The preparatory committee sessions are indeed an opportunity for us to evaluate the implementation of undertakings of the States Parties under the Treaty, and identify the areas in which, and the means through which, further progress should be sought in the future to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty and to achieve its universality.

Mr. Chairman

3. The Group reaffirms once again its principled positions on nuclear disarmament, which is its highest priority, and remains extremely concerned at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use, in particular taking into account the development of so-called usable nuclear weapons.
4. The Group reaffirms its principled positions on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. The Group believes that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing and are essential for strengthening international peace and security. Non-proliferation derives its legitimacy from the



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larger objective of nuclear disarmament. Pursuing non-proliferation alone while ignoring nuclear disarmament obligations is both counterproductive and unsustainable. The Group emphasizes that proliferation concerns are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements.

5. We welcome the multilateral efforts towards nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Moreover, we take note of the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017 at the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. It is hoped that when entered into force, the Treaty would contribute to furthering the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.
6. The Group stresses the urgent necessity of negotiating and bringing to a conclusion, a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, containing also a phased program for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame.
7. Recalling the commitment made by some Nuclear Weapon States (NWS), under action 4 of the 2010 action plan, the Group stresses that reductions in deployment and operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons. The Group reaffirms the importance of the application by Nuclear Weapon States of the principles of transparency, irreversibility, and international verifiability, in all measures related to the fulfillment of their nuclear disarmament obligations and undertaking.
8. Full compliance of the NWS with their nuclear disarmament undertakings is imperative, and will enhance confidence in the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Each article of the Treaty is binding on all States Parties at all times and in all circumstances.
9. The Group reiterates its deep concern over the greatest threat to peace and security posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and those military doctrines of the NWS and NATO that set out rationales for the use or threat of use of such weapons. The Group rejects such doctrines cannot be justified on any grounds. We once again renew our strong call upon the NWS to fully and urgently comply with their legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons without further delay. The Group notes with grave concern the current extensive investment, by the nuclear-weapon States, on modernization of their nuclear forces and developing more effective and newer,



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including low-yield nuclear warheads, which, by increasing the role of these inhumane weapons in their military doctrines, lowers the threshold for the actual use of nuclear weapons. The Group strongly calls for putting an immediate end to this trend that in fact is a new nuclear-arms race.

10. The Group stresses once again that the indefinite extension of the Treaty does not imply the indefinite possession of nuclear arsenals. Any such assumption is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Treaty. It strongly calls for the implementation of article VI of the Treaty. This is an explicit legal obligation of all the Parties and its implementation is neither optional nor conditional.
11. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group calls for the early commencement of negotiations on effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding security assurances to all Non-Nuclear Weapon States by all the Nuclear Weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances as a matter of high priority. The Group expresses concern that despite long standing requests by the Non-Nuclear Weapon States to receive such legally binding universal assurances, no tangible progress has been achieved in this regard.
12. The Group calls for reaffirmation by the Review Conference that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be a crime against humanity and a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular international humanitarian law.

Mr. Chairman,

13. We are also of the firm belief that non-proliferation policies should not undermine the inalienable rights of States to acquire, have access to, import or export nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.
14. We reaffirm the inalienable right of each State to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy, including the sovereign right to develop full national nuclear fuel cycle, for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
15. The Group recognizes that the IAEA is the sole competent authority for verification of compliance with the obligations under the respective safeguard agreements of



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the Member States, and that the IAEA has a statutory mandate in the area of the establishment of safeguarded worldwide disarmament

16. We express our full confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of the IAEA and strongly reject any politically motivated attempts by any State to politicize the work of the IAEA, including its technical cooperation programme, in violation of its Statute, as well as any pressure or interference in the Agency's activities which could jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of the IAEA and the inalienable right of developing countries to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.
17. We underline the importance of universalization of the Treaty and call upon all nonparties to the Treaty to accede to the Treaty, whiteout any condition and further delay as non-nuclear-weapon States, and place all their nuclear facilities and activities under IAEA full-scope safeguards. All States Parties should make every effort to achieve this goal and refrain from taking any actions that could negatively affect prospects for the universality of the Treaty.
18. Strict observance of and adherence to IAEA comprehensive safeguards and to the Treaty are conditions for any cooperation in the nuclear area with States not parties to the Treaty. All States parties to the Treaty shall refrain from the transfer of nuclear technology and materials to States not party to the Treaty unless these conditions are met.

Mr. Chairman,

19. We regret the failure of the 9th NPT Review Conference to reach consensus on a final outcome document despite the efforts made by NAM delegations. Given the fact that the upcoming Review Conference coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, every effort should be made by all States to avoid another failure. This is dependent, to a large extent, on the demonstration of genuine political will and exercising flexibility by the NWS. This failure should serve as a stimulus to work harder towards achieving nuclear disarmament, the ultimate objective of the NPT. We stress the importance of fulfilling the commitments made at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Treaty, on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
20. Calling for the establishment of such zones where they do not exist, the Group once again expresses its longstanding strong support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Group further underlines the prime



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importance 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 NPT in 1995. The Group is of the strong view that the resolution should be implemented without any further delay, and reaffirms that the Resolution remains valid until its objectives are fully achieved.

21. Expressing deep concern over the long delay in its implementation, we urge the three co-sponsors of the Resolution to fulfill their special responsibility in taking all necessary measures to fully implement it without any further delay.
22. We express profound disappointment at the fact, only due to the rejection of Israel, that the 2012 scheduled Conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East did not convene despite the consensus decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. This runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 Resolution, and violates the collective agreement reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.
23. The Group expresses its disappointment that, as the result of opposition by the US, UK and Canada in the 2015 NPT Review Conference, consensus on new measures regarding the implementation of the 1995 resolution was not achieved. This could undermine efforts towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime as a whole. The Group is concerned that the persistent lack of implementation of the 1995 resolution, contrary to the decisions made at the relevant Review Conferences of the Treaty, undermines the effectiveness and credibility of the Treaty and disrupts the delicate balance between its three pillars, taking into account that the indefinite extension of the Treaty is inextricably linked to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.
24. The Group strongly supports the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. As a priority step to this end, they reaffirmed the need for the speedy establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East. Pending its establishment, The Group demands that Israel, the only non-party to the NPT in the region renounce any possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without precondition and further delay, place promptly all its nuclear facilities under IAEA full-scope safeguards. The Group expresses great concern over the acquisition of nuclear capability by Israel, which poses a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighboring and other States, and condemns Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. The Group also calls for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the



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extension of assistance in the nuclear related scientific or technological fields to Israel.

25. In this regard, the Group underlines the importance of the demands and practical proposals contained in the Working Paper submitted by the Group to the Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East as contained in document NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.16, and calls for their full endorsement and implementation without delay.

Mr. Chairman,

26. As a substantive contribution to the Preparatory Committee's work, the Group has submitted nine Working Papers, which represent our detailed positions of on the various related issues.
27. Underscoring the importance and urgency of renewed political will by all States parties to achieve a successful conclusion of the 2020 review process, the Group stands ready to engage constructively towards this objective and attain a peaceful and secure world for present and future generations.

Thank you.