
Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

26 June 2024

Original: English

ADVANCE UNEDITED VERSION

Second session

Geneva, 22 July–2 August 2024

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 this 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 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 Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status as a special case of a State that due to geopolitical location cannot form part of a regional traditional nuclear-weapon-free zone, and consider them as positive steps and important measures towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In this regard, the Group welcomes the efforts aimed at establishing other nuclear-weapon-free zones worldwide and calls for engagement by 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, NAM States Parties to the Treaty express their disappointment that as

a result of the opposition by the US, UK and Canada at the concluding session of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, 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 welcome United Nations General Assembly Decision 73/546 entitled “Convening a Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction” and acknowledges its constructive contribution. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcome the convening of the First Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons under the Presidency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the adoption of a Political Declaration, and also welcomes the convening of the Second Session of the Conference under the Presidency of the State of Kuwait and its outcomes, including inter alia the adoption of the rules of procedure and establishing an informal working committee, and the Third Session under the Presidency of the Republic of Lebanon and the adoption of its report and most recently its fourth session under the Presidency of the State of Libya and the final report it adopted including the agreement on developing an index of issues. The Group calls upon Israel to participate in the Conference and engage with it constructively and in good faith with a view to agreeing on arrangements freely arrived at by the countries of the region. We call upon any Nuclear Weapons State that hasn’t already done so, to attend the Conference and support its important work .

5. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty call on all the invited Members to the Conference to participate in an open and inclusive manner to elaborate a legally binding treaty on the establishment of the zone on the basis of consensus. The Group stresses that the 1995 resolution and other decisions on the subject adopted within the context of the Review Conferences remain valid until the objectives are achieved, and the implementation of decision 73/546 is without prejudice to their validity and shall not also be construed as their replacement.]

6. 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 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 to achieve the objectives of the treaties to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and their protocols.

7. 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 this 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 Weapons Free-Zones must be respected by all States without any reservations or limitations.

8. 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 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 step towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime in that region.

9. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty, recalling the convening of the Third Conference of the States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Established 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 and remains committed to convene the Fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, in accordance with the UN General Assembly Decision 76/575, with the objective to consider ways and means to enhance consultations and cooperation among nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia.

10. 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 Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia 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.
