



LALN

Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network
for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation

Statement

Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation

On the Comprehensive Reduction of Nuclear Risks March of 2014

In terms of reductions of nuclear risks, the prevalence of interests of states or groups of states, over those of the international community as a whole has over time caused practical difficulties in the negotiation and execution of effective multilateral actions. This situation has led to a clear stress between the commitments of states possessing nuclear weapons and those without them. Thus, the actions of nuclear disarmament and of nonproliferation, rather than being synergic to an ultimate end, namely the total elimination of nuclear weapons, have transformed into the tangible representation of divergent interests.

In this sense the countries with nuclear weapons, in pursuit of their security doctrines, remain reluctant to fulfill the disarmament commitments they assumed in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and even more, they dismiss even the possibility of debating a binding legal instrument which, in line with the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion, may establish the illegality of nuclear weapons on an international basis. The paradigm of nuclear deterrence as a source of global power and respect is as strong as it ever was. It deeply contaminates any and all disarmament proposals. While it is true that over the years there have been reductions in the total number of nuclear weapons, these have not been sufficient, when compared to the significant investments to modernize and increase the devastating power of the arsenals, or when contrasted with the ongoing production of fissile materials for military use in some countries.

From the arms control point of view, seen not as an end in and of itself but rather as a necessary step toward nuclear disarmament, proposals like a binding commitment of "no first use" by nuclear-armed states, or the granting of "negative security assurances to the non-nuclear weapon states," also do not gather the required support.

In this respect, we are especially concerned about the absence of the majority of the nuclear-armed states from the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Nayarit, Mexico in February of this year. In our understanding, that failure to attend is an alarming reluctance of these states, not only to take action but also to enter into dialogue.

Regarding the nonproliferation commitments, to which nuclear-armed states subordinate future disarmament, with a few exceptions compliance has been extensive. Nevertheless, in the absence of concrete progress in disarmament, the lack of enthusiasm and fatigue of states without nuclear weapons – and without the intention to acquire them- become increasingly clear in relation to taking on more obligations or accepting proposals that set limits to their rights to fully develop nuclear energy for peaceful uses.

Amidst these profound dilemmas which are being faced by all states in common, the documented intention of non-state actors to obtain nuclear weapons or the nuclear materials required to produce them, represents a strong wake-up call that should be heard by all the members of the international community.

In this context of increasing risks the political process of the Nuclear Security Summits, launched in Washington in 2010, has attracted international attention to its prime objective of fostering individual and joint actions to protect nuclear materials and installations from the threat of nuclear terrorism and any criminal use. In this way, the Third Nuclear Security Summit, to be held in The Hague during this month of March, which will gather leaders from 53 states and four international organizations, opens promising expectations that these objectives might be advanced and realized.

Nevertheless, even while recognizing the progress in nuclear security as the result of commitments undertaken within the framework of the Summits, we do believe that there are still major challenges that the participating leaders should turn into opportunities.

It is important to keep in mind at all times the catastrophic consequences that would be entailed by the potential use of a sophisticated or improvised nuclear weapon, by states or non-state actors, as such an event would be of global in nature and it would not discriminate between those possessing, or not possessing, nuclear weapons. Therefore, the need to define integrated strategies to effectively reduce nuclear risks is both, indispensable and urgent.

In light of the above mentioned, the signatories listed below, members of the Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation -LALN, wish to make it clear that:

1. We believe that the reduction of nuclear risks should be carried out in an integrated and multi-dimensional way, both balanced and inclusive, among all international actors. In this sense, we believe that the strategies for nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and nuclear security should be articulated as whole, preserving the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy. This requires shared responsibilities by all states, both those with nuclear weapons and those without them.
2. We recognize the important role of non-governmental social actors in the generation of strategies to reduce nuclear risks as well as in their implementation
3. We call on all states, irrespective of their condition of possessors or non-possessors of nuclear weapons, to participate in the different initiatives for the reduction of nuclear risks. In addition, to establish paths for cooperative work based on the best interest of the international community. We respectfully and firmly urge nuclear-armed states to participate in the forums for dialogue and negotiation in which the paths to total disarmament are debated, along with the required arms control measures, and that they give their participation in such forums the same emphasis that they give to their participation in the efforts for nonproliferation and nuclear security.
4. In particular, we encourage all nuclear-armed states to attend the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in Vienna late in 2014, and to join the debate that will take place there, as well.
5. Concerning the opportunities offered by the upcoming Third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, we call on the participating leaders to:
 - Continue promoting universal adherence to the binding legal instruments on nuclear security, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, its 2005 amendment (which has not yet entered into force due to the lack of ratifications) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

- Lay the foundations for a more stable and efficient global system for nuclear security able to transcend the Summits' process and to ensure that the efforts made can be strengthened and completed in the future.
- State unequivocally in favor of the need to include nuclear materials and installations of non-civilian (or military) use as an integral part of any realistic and effective approach to prevent nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking. It is important to take into account that the totality of the 17,000 existing nuclear weapons and the 85 percent of weapons-usable materials (highly enriched uranium and separated plutonium) are currently stored in non-civilian facilities.
- Promote the adoption by states of binding, minimum nuclear security standards which result in assurances to the international community regarding the responsible protection of each state's materials and installations.
- Develop strategies of inclusion, and promote the commitment of all those states that have not been participating in the Summit process, up to now. In this sense, the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, represented by Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico, should take on the challenge of providing information, support and inclusion to the other 29 non-participant states.

Our Leadership Network - LALN included in its Statement at the Nayarit Conference the majority of the concepts pointed out here. It only remains to add that one of our greatest aims as a group is to help ensure from Latin America and the Caribbean that no security vulnerability in our region could be exploited, directly or indirectly, by agents of terrorism or of proliferation seeking to achieve their purposes.

We have no doubt that nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and nuclear security must be treated as parts of an integrated system for the reduction of nuclear risks, and as such, that these efforts should be harmonized within the framework of shared responsibilities among all states and non-governmental actors.

We believe that the change of old paradigms for new ideas that give priority to genuine global interest in peaceful coexistence between nations, will open new opportunities to overcome the dilemmas posed by the total elimination of nuclear weapons and of the weapons-usable materials necessary to produce them, both "sine qua non" conditions for an improved global security.

The Leadership Network – LALN especially urges governments and social actors in Latin America and the Caribbean, tied by the spirit of Tlatelolco, to redouble their efforts to work together and with other regions for the integrated reduction of nuclear risks.

Dialogue, transparency of intentions, prudence and equanimity are the bases to successfully walk the arduous but achievable path to a more secure world.

Released on March 10, 2014

[Signed]

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Irma Argüello, President of the NPSGlobal Foundation – Nonproliferation for Global Security, Argentina.

Álvaro Bermúdez, former Director of Energy and Nuclear Technology of Uruguay.

Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, former United Nations Under Secretary for Disarmament Affairs and member of Brazil's diplomatic service.

Sergio González Gálvez, former Deputy Secretary of External Relations and member of Mexico's diplomatic service.

Oswaldo Jarrin, former Minister of Defense of Ecuador.

José Horacio Jaunarena, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.

Ricardo López Murphy, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.

Miguel Marín Bosch, former Alternate Permanent Representative to the United Nations and member of Mexico's diplomatic service.

José Pampuro, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.

Jaime Ravinet de la Fuente, former Minister of Defense of Chile.

Camilo Reyes Rodríguez, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, former Minister of Science and Technology and member of Brazil's diplomatic service.

Noel Sinclair, Permanent Observer of the Caribbean Community - CARICOM to the United Nations and member of Guyana's diplomatic service.

