



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

UNGA70: First Committee
Thematic debate on nuclear weapons

Introduction of resolution on “Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas”

New Zealand statement

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Mr Chairperson

I have the honour to take the floor to introduce, as mentioned in the General Debate, the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", which New Zealand and Brazil will table once again this session.

Our draft resolution has been circulated to all delegations and I take this opportunity to comment briefly on its rationale and key elements.

The resolution reaffirms the conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones contributes towards realising the objectives of nuclear disarmament and welcomes the continued contribution that the Antarctic Treaty and the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba – all of which are now in force – are making towards freeing the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas covered by those treaties from nuclear weapons.

The resolution calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the outstanding Protocols to all Zones Treaties without reservations, unilateral interpretative declarations or delay. In order for the Zones to operate as intended, we also urge them to withdraw any existing reservations or interpretative declarations contrary to the object and purpose of the Treaties.

The resolution welcomes the steps taken to conclude further nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, and calls upon all States to consider all relevant proposals, including those reflected in its resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Recognising the value of interaction, our resolution calls upon the States parties and signatories to the existing nuclear-weapon-free

zone treaties to explore and implement further ways and means of cooperation among themselves and their treaty agencies, and encourages efforts to reinforce the coordination among nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this context, the resolution also welcomes the convening by Indonesia in April this year of the Third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

Mr Chairman,

As reflected in this resolution, New Zealand and Brazil place great importance on the contribution nuclear-weapon-free zones can make to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts – they are, after all, irrefutable evidence of the power of political will at a *regional* level to reject nuclear weapons.

Today, 115 States are parties and signatories to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. This reflects a collective appreciation that, by building the regional confidence that underpins peace and security, and by reinforcing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, such zones move us closer to the realisation of our ultimate objective – a world without nuclear weapons.

We encourage all Member States to support the draft resolution and reaffirm the importance of advancing all efforts towards achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.