PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

by

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FIRST SECRETARY

DURING THE FIRST COMMITTEE THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS

73RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Thank you Mr. Chair.

Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statement delivered by Jamaica on behalf of the Caribbean Community on this thematic cluster.

We remain convinced that it is only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction that international peace and security can be guaranteed.

My delegation emphasizes that nuclear weapons have no place in security doctrines. The outdated paradigm of national security must be replaced by one of human security.

Mr. Chairman,

The prestige of a country should not be associated with its destructive capability, but rather, with its ability to build and maintain peace.

In this connection, Trinidad and Tobago supports all efforts to achieve the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

It is noteworthy that the Conference on Disarmament through decision CD/2119, decided to establish subsidiary bodies that could also consider emerging and other issues relevant to the substantive work of the Conference. While we welcome this development, we note that the CD has not resumed negotiations. Additionally, the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty would be effective in prohibiting the production of fissile material, but negotiations in this regard are yet to be launched in the CD, which has been paralyzed for many years.

Mr. Chairman,

The CTBT has an essential role within the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The Treaty's stated objectives are disarmament and the prevention of further nuclear weapon modernization and subsequent arms races. However, the CTBT is over 20 years old and has yet to enter into force. We, therefore, look forward to its entry into force.

Additionally, we expect that the third session in 2019 of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT will produce more tangible results, in keeping with the stated commitment of States parties to the full and effective implementation of the decision and resolution adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, the Final Document of the 2000 Conference and the conclusions and recommendations for follow-up actions of the 2010 Review Conference, including the action plan. We look to the Review Conference in 2020 and urge those countries that are not yet parties to the Treaty to consider doing so.
Mr. Chairman,

Trinidad and Tobago, as part of CARICOM, participated in United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination. As small island developing state with porous borders and limited resources with which to secure them, we are cognizant of the extreme risks posed by any use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons.

My delegation believed that the treaty banning nuclear weapons would not only complement current norms and reinforce existing legal instruments, including the NPT, but it would also close loopholes in the current legal regime that enable States to participate in activities associated with nuclear weapons or to claim a perceived benefit from their existence.

Trinidad and Tobago worked with like-minded States on the Articles on ‘Positive Obligations’ in the Treaty since we situated our support for a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation.

These “positive obligations” or “remedial measures” on victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation and assistance provide an opportunity to address the ongoing threat of nuclear weapons activities to human rights, sustainable development and the environment. It is my delegation’s belief that these positive obligations will set a standard for addressing the humanitarian consequences of any weapon.

By declaring nuclear weapons as an affront to humanity, the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons establishes a collective responsibility for all of humanity to address their ongoing harm. None of the Treaty’s positive obligations threaten existing bilateral or multilateral arrangements addressing these problems and would not preclude affected states pursuing redress for harms through other peaceful means.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation acknowledges and commends the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which continues to play an indispensable role in support of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Further, my delegation welcomes the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament and we further welcome the three carefully articulated priority areas which form the bedrock of the Agenda: that is, disarmament to save humanity, disarmament to save lives, and disarmament for future generations. We assure the Secretary-General of our full support as he takes the agenda forward.

Mr. Chairman,
My delegation wishes to highlight the important role of civil society and academia in the advancement of the goal of *inter alia*, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and will continue this important partnership.

I thank you.