

# **Implementing the United Nations Secretary-General's five-point plan: Costa Rica and the Nuclear Weapons Convention**

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Good morning

1. Ladies and Gentlemen, today I would like to share with you, some of the actions and proposals of my country, Costa Rica, to promote a Nuclear Weapons Convention – a global treaty prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons – one of the key calls from the United Nations Secretary-General's five-point plan for nuclear disarmament.
2. In 1996 the International Court of Justice concluded unanimously that: "There exists an obligation to pursue and bring to a conclusion negotiations in good faith on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.
3. The United Nations General Assembly called on all States to implement the International Court of Justice decision by commencing multilateral negotiations that would conclude in a Nuclear Weapons Convention.
4. In 1997, Costa Rica, which participated in the 1996 International Court Case, submitted a Model Nuclear Weapons Convention to the United Nations Secretary-General for distribution to all United Nations Member States. The Model Nuclear Weapons Convention is a draft treaty which explores the legal, technical and political elements for achieving and maintaining a nuclear free world. The Model Convention demonstrates in a practical way that nuclear disarmament is possible.
5. As such, the Model Convention has helped build support for nuclear abolition from a wide range of respected figures, including those who formerly supported nuclear deterrence.

6. Costa Rica, in conjunction with Malaysia, has also promoted thinking about the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention in the Non-Proliferation Treaty process through substantive working papers in 2000 and 2005. These papers outlined the way a Nuclear Weapons Convention could be successfully negotiated, and explored the elements that could be developed and implemented even before the complete Convention is able to be concluded.
7. However, it was not until Costa Rica and Malaysia submitted a revised and updated Model Nuclear Weapons Convention to the United Nations Secretary General in 2007, that the voices for nuclear abolition started to become more powerful than those holding onto nuclear weapons, and that specific support came for the Nuclear Weapons Convention from across the political spectrum including from the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission and from the United Nations Secretary-General in his five-point plan for nuclear disarmament.
8. Parliamentarians can play a vital role in building support for the nuclear weapons convention by endorsing the Parliamentarians Statement Supporting a Nuclear Weapons Convention, initiating hearings or debates on the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention in parliament, and adopting resolutions in support. The recent European Parliament resolution supporting a Nuclear Weapons Convention and the Inter-Parliamentary Union resolution supporting the UN Secretary-General's five-point plan, are welcome, and can be used to support other parliamentary actions.
9. Let me briefly describe what is contained within the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention.
10. The model convention prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. States possessing nuclear weapons will be required to destroy their arsenals in a series of phases over fifteen years.
11. The treaty also prohibits the production of weapons usable fissile material and requires delivery vehicles to be destroyed or converted to make them non-nuclear capable.
12. The treaty includes an agency that will be established to implement the treaty.

13. [The treaty verification that will include declarations and reports from States, routine inspections, challenge inspections, fixed on-site sensors, satellite photography, radionuclide sampling and other remote sensors, information sharing with other organizations, and citizen reporting.]
14. The treaty includes provisions for consultation, cooperation and fact-finding to clarify and resolve questions of interpretation with respect to compliance and other matters. Likewise the treaty provides incentives for compliance plus a series of graduated responses for non-compliance beginning with consultation and clarification, negotiation, and, if required, sanctions or recourse to the U.N. General Assembly and Security Council.
15. The treaty obligations will apply to individuals as well as States to ensure accountability, personal responsibility and to protect against violations of the treaty.
16. The treaty outlines a series of five phases for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Steps in these phases include gradual reductions in stockpiles, taking nuclear weapons off alert, removing weapons from deployment, removing nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles, disabling the warheads, removing and disfiguring the "pits" and placing the fissile material under international control.
17. The treaty recognizes the nuclear-proliferation risk of nuclear energy and nuclear fuel-cycle activities. However, it does not prohibit nuclear energy. Rather, it places additional controls on nuclear energy. It also includes an optional protocol which would establish a program of energy assistance for States Parties choosing not to develop nuclear energy or to phase out existing nuclear energy programs.
18. In its definition of nuclear weapons the treaty includes nuclear explosive devices, weapons which include nuclear explosive devices as a component, and radiological weapons. Radiological weapons are defined in such a way as to possibly include depleted uranium weapons. It is the perspective of Costa Rica that any weapon producing or dispersing radiological substances should be prohibited, including depleted uranium weapons. I have taken steps in the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly to ensure that depleted uranium weapons are now prohibited along with prior bans on nuclear explosive devices and radiological weapons.

19. Costa Rica's promotion of the Nuclear Weapons Convention follows on from its leadership along with Mexico in the creation of a Latin American and Caribbean Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in 1968, and is part of Costa Rica's support for human rights – for example through hosting the Inter-American Court of Human Rights – and our wider promotion of peace, demilitarisation and development.
20. In 1948 Costa Rica abolished the armed forces and enshrined this in Article 12 of the Constitution. Our country has benefited from this through not wasting precious human and economic resources on the military and instead being able to invest these resources in social and economic development.
21. In 1987 Costa Rican President Oscar Arias received the Nobel Peace Prize for leading Costa Rican efforts to resolve the Central American military conflicts.
22. Costa Rica has also taken a lead in the Arms Trade Treaty to cut the flow of weapons in the región, and has initiated the Costa Rica Consensus – to provide incentives for countries to reduce their military budgets. In November last year, President Arias called a special session of the UN Security Council – over which he presided – to call for the implementation of the obligation under Article 26 of the UN Charter to prepare plans for disarmament in order to ensure the least possible diversion of resources from human needs to the militaries.
23. Parliamentarians can play a key role in supporting these initiatives by challenging the military expenditures in their own countries, and by encouraging their governments to support the Costa Rican initiatives in the United Nations. The joint statement by the PNND Co-Presidents on International Women's Day for Disarmament last year was a very positive action on this issue.
24. I believe that that it is possible for states to exist and thrive without maintaining armed forces and mass destruction weapons, and that we can settle our disputes peacefully using the wide range of international mechanisms and legal law instruments now available and proving to be even more effective than in the past.
25. Let's take the challenge to work together, to achieve a nuclear weapons convention and to make our common vision a reality for the future, the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Thank you very much.