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**STATEMENT OF GUATEMALA AT THE MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL  
ON MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY:  
NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

(April 19, 2012)

Madame President,

Thank you for convening this meeting on topics related, supposedly, to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The “supposedly” reflects our disappointment that after several days of discussing a draft text of an outcome document which would have crystallized the result of our deliberations, nothing is left on the matter of nuclear non-proliferation. At any rate, we appreciate the conceptual note circulated by your delegation to substantiate our debate, which by itself has the merit of focusing on the differences – the marked differences – that persist on the matter between the members of this Council.

In spite of the above, recent circumstances have demonstrated that it has become more pressing and necessary than ever before to advance on the road towards a world free of nuclear weapons, an objective that your own Head of State, Madame President, has articulated in a visionary manner as the ultimate goal that we must aspire to. Nuclear disarmament is the only sensible way to reach a more secure world. Nothing would contribute more to reducing the risks of nuclear weapon proliferation than their total elimination.

Madame President,

On the issues under our consideration today, Guatemala's position is reflected by that of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), captured in the document circulated under the symbol S/2012/223. Allow me, however, to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Guatemala reaffirms the existence and validity of the norms that underlie the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as the commitments we have been undertaking, especially in the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty, the most recent in 2010. It is true that the new challenges that the present juncture poses have generated divergent perceptions regarding what next steps to take, we cannot lose sight that the Treaty was adopted as the cornerstone for disarmament, arms control, and the prevention of non proliferation of nuclear weapons. Guatemala promotes the universality of the NPT and the strict observance of each of its dispositions. We stress that compliance is legally binding and that all Parties are dedicated to give clear signals of their commitments to the letter and spirit of this international juridical instrument.

In addition, we believe that it is imperative to maintain the moratorium on nuclear tests until the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) enters into force. We wish to take this opportunity to renew the support of our country to this Treaty, which we signed on 20 September 1999 and which we ratified on 12 January 2012.

We are still short of finding the means to strengthen actions in favor of nuclear disarmament, which requires above all an expression of clear political will on the part of States that possess nuclear weapons, as well as a set of concrete actions, time-bound and verifiable, which will permit us to abandon the rhetoric which seeks to force us to recognize progress although nuclear weapons not only continue to exist in exorbitant quantities, but also their scope is ever widening.

Madame President,

Although we perceive certain positive political signs emanating from States that possess nuclear weapons which suggest their renewed commitment to nuclear disarmament at the bilateral and multilateral levels, we hope that the same can be translated into concrete measures in the near future. In this regard, we believe that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the United States of America and the Russian Federation is a step in the right direction. We also believe that the initiatives in favor of nuclear security and the agreements reached between the countries participating in the Summits of Washington and Seoul constitute an important contribution to the on-going process of revision of the doctrines of security related to nuclear weapons.

We are convinced that to make sure that these agreements lead to the best possible results, we must always take into account that just as we need to make progress on nuclear disarmament, in the same vein we must make progress on non-proliferation. In this regards, on the one hand those States that do not possess nuclear weapons are also obligated to comply with their own responsibilities in accordance with the Non-proliferation Treaty, reaffirming their commitment to not become possessors of nuclear weapons, but exercising their inalienable right to accede, develop and participate, in the future, in nuclear technologies for exclusively pacific uses.

On the other hand, nuclear terrorism and the illicit trafficking of nuclear material constitute a grave threat to security, which must be addressed through a global commitment. It is fundamental that all States comply with what was agreed in resolution 1540 (2004) of this Council.

Finally, all these measures, both regarding disarmament and non-proliferation, must be implemented en a propitious environment for verification and transparency, with an aim to recuperate confidence between the Parties to the Treaty. We therefore underline the function carried out by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the verification and exclusive use of nuclear energy with pacific aims.

Madame President,

Guatemala is proud to be part of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zone and has served as an example and inspiration for the creation of other such zones. A nuclear-weapon-free zone has thus been consolidated in Latin America and the Caribbean, which also seeks to ensure that this area is not at risk of a nuclear threat.

In closing, Mr. President, we wish to affirm that this meeting affords an opportunity for evaluating the will of all the parties to live up to their commitments and the expectations they have generated. We must not back away from these commitments. It is on the basis of this bargain that all the States parties to the treaty should advance towards agreement of a common agenda to preserve international peace and security. Thank you.