

MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST NUCLEAR TESTS

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The science is clear. In a series of international conferences in Oslo, Norway (2013), Nayarit, Mexico (2014), and Vienna, Austria (2015), compelling evidence confirmed that the use and testing of nuclear weapons have devastating immediate, mid- and long-term effects. Over the last 75 years, more than 2,000 nuclear tests in several parts of the world have left a legacy of serious health and environmental consequences. Radioactive contamination from these tests has disproportionately affected women and children, seeped into food supplies and, to this day, continues to be measurable in the atmosphere.

Mexico has persistently promoted and defended the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as its cornerstone. As Mexicans, we are proud to have kept Latin America and the Caribbean free from nuclear testing and, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, prohibited all nuclear weapons in the region.

There are, however, grounds for serious concern today. As stated by UN Secretary General António Guterres, “The nuclear menace is once again on the rise. A complete ban on nuclear testing is an essential step in preventing the qualitative and quantitative improvement of nuclear weapons and in achieving nuclear disarmament.”

Mexico considers it imperative that all States refrain from carrying out nuclear weapon test explosions, or any other non-explosive experiment, including subcritical experiments for the improvement of nuclear weapons, as such actions are contrary to the spirit and purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Moreover, it is urgent that the 8 States included in Annex 2 to the CTBT that have not yet ratified the Treaty do so without further delay.

The strict observance of the NPT, the entry into force of the CTBT, as well as of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), are not ends unto themselves, but rather steps towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. Given the overwhelming global crisis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is immoral to continue allocating vast resources to the upkeep and modernization of nuclear arsenals.

It is our moral and legal obligation to ensure that no nuclear test takes place ever again. We owe it to the Hibakusha, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and to the countless victims of nuclear testing.

29 August 2020