



Misión Permanente de la República Dominicana  
ante las Naciones Unidas



## **Statement by H.E. Mr. José Alfonso Blanco**

**Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic on behalf of the  
Central American Integration System (SICA)**

**General Debate of the First Committee**

**77<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

**New York, 3 October, 2022**

Mister President,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the eight Member States of the Central American Integration System (SICA): Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and my country the Dominican Republic.
2. We wish to congratulate you, Ambassador Mohan Pieris, and all the members of the Bureau for your election. You can count on the support of the SICA Member States for the successful conclusion of this Session.
3. We, the member countries of SICA, parties to the Treaty on Democratic Security, which this year commemorates its 26th anniversary of implementation, wish to reiterate our conviction that international peace and security will be achieved through respect for and adherence to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, above all by refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.
4. It will also be relevant to apply multidimensional approaches to the strengthening of democracy, institutions and unrestricted respect for all human rights. At the same time, we wish to reiterate our long-standing commitment to general and complete disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy; aspects which we consider of great relevance to the maintenance of international peace, security and stability.

Mr. President,

5. Our countries continue to work towards a new, single, comprehensive and indivisible regional security model, inspired by our previous achievements. Nevertheless, the challenges that the region continues to face in terms of security remain complex, especially in the area of public safety. Violence is highly related to the presence of illicit markets, which are the product of different manifestations of transnational organized crime, such as the illicit trafficking in arms, their ammunition and components.



6. Recognizing the continuing threat of illicit markets in conventional arms, their parts, ammunition and components, their misuse and excessive and destabilizing accumulation, as a manifestation of transnational organized crime; as well as the implications of the lack of controls on the arms trade in different regions of the world; the Member States of SICA will continue to focus on the prevention of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, incorporating into our respective national legislation the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), promoting the implementation of effective controls to reduce and eradicate the diversion of arms to non-State actors or unauthorized users, which in most cases are strongly linked to transnational organized crime. We call for a balanced, transparent and objective application of the relevant international instruments in this area, always within the framework of respect for the principles contained in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

7. We reiterate that, for the successful implementation of the PoA and of our national legislations in this circuit, international assistance and cooperation are indispensable conditions.

8. At the same time, we call for the continued implementation of obligations and commitments relating to ammunition under relevant regional and international instruments, such as the PoA and its ITI.

9. In this regard, the Member States of SICA welcome the final document adopted by consensus at the Eighth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS8) on the UN Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York from June 27 to July 1 of this year.

Mr. President,

10. The member countries of SICA reaffirm the need to advance towards the objective of complete, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament, in the interests of and to achieve a sustainable world free of nuclear weapons. We express our opposition to the improvement of existing nuclear weapons and to the development of new types; which is inconsistent with the obligation of nuclear



disarmament and non-proliferation. We reiterate the need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies.

11. We are proud to be part of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), an instrument that established the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated area globally. It is for this reason that we can attest to the contribution of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones to the achievement of a world free of weapons of mass destruction and the threat they pose to any territory in the world.

12. For this reason, also, we welcome the two sessions of the Conference for the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East and look forward to its third session.

Mr. President,

13. For the SICA member countries, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of global efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to encourage the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to promote the objective of nuclear disarmament.

14. We reaffirm the commitment of our States to the NPT, and to the full implementation of its three fundamental pillars. We also reaffirm the inalienable right of States to develop research, production and peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT.

15. We regret and note with concern that the Tenth NPT Review Conference concluded without reaching the consensus necessary to adopt a final document that would allow progress in the implementation of the Treaty, despite the valuable participation of the majority of the States Parties and the efforts made by the Chairmanship.

16. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to comply with their unequivocal obligations to eliminate their nuclear arsenals, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, and the commitments derived from their Review Conferences. We reaffirm



that the NPT does not establish any right to indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by any State, as the Treaty establishes a transitional status.

17. At the same time, as states that respect and are committed to Article VI of the NPT, we believe that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which entered into force on January 22 of 2021, will add to and strengthen the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime and the path towards the elimination of these weapons of mass destruction in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner.

18. We welcome the successful holding of the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, June 21-23, 2022, and we further welcome its conclusions: the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action. Thus, we will work constructively and proactively at its next Meeting of States Parties.

19. We also welcome the recent ratifications of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by two of our Member States, the Republic of Guatemala on June 13, 2022 and the Dominican Republic on September 22, 2022. It is worth noting that with these ratifications, Central America is the first sub-region in the world to adhere to this important instrument, which makes us proud and reaffirms our historic position of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, in favor of the maintenance of international peace and security.

20. We reaffirm our strong condemnation of any kind of nuclear test anywhere and by anyone and urge all States to refrain from any kind of nuclear weapon test. Nuclear tests only undermine international peace, security and stability and put the lives of millions of people at risk and cause incalculable damage to the environment. Moreover, they are contrary to the objective and purpose of the disarmament and non proliferation regime, to the obligations and provisions contained in the NPT.

21. We reiterate the importance of and the need for an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We call on those States which are party to Annex II of the Treaty to accelerate the process of signature



and/or ratification of this international instrument of high relevance to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, without further delay.

22. The SICA member countries underline their firm conviction that the complete elimination of chemical and biological weapons is a priority in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we emphasize the importance of universalization through the accession of all States to the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons, and the importance of full implementation by the States Parties of all its provisions and requirements.

Mr. President,

23. Taking into account the relationship between disarmament and development, the important role of security and the fight against new and traditional threats to peace, the consequences of which pose a risk to the social and economic development of our countries, we are convinced that an adequate treatment of these scourges will contribute to the promotion of stability and governance.

24. The COVID-19 pandemic has generated major challenges worldwide, including those of a budgetary nature. The member countries of SICA are concerned about the constant increase in conventional arms transfers since 2000, and consequently about excessive military spending, which reached a record \$2.1 trillion in 2021. In this regard, we call for the resources used in favor of an arms race to be allocated to strengthen our work towards achieving the objectives of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, and to achieve a more just, peaceful and stable world.

25. We call for the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and we call on the remaining parties, as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency, to continue discussions to ensure the full and effective implementation of this agreement. SICA stresses that this Agreement demonstrated once again that dialogue and multilateral diplomacy are the only effective way to resolve differences between States

26. The issue of anti-personnel mines continues to demand the attention of the international community. SICA stresses the importance of cooperation in mine



clearance and victim assistance and hopes that the successes achieved in recent years will continue.

27. SICA supports all international efforts to reduce the suffering caused by cluster munitions and their use against the civilian population, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. It also recognizes and appreciates the willingness of all States to take immediate, multilaterally agreed action with respect to the humanitarian consequences posed by cluster munitions.

28. We favor the strengthening of international norms applicable to States in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, promoting actions and strategies to strengthen cyber security and prevent crime and cyberattacks, and taking into account that an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment is essential for all.

29. In this regard, we note with satisfaction the work of the three substantive sessions of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on the Security of Information and Communication Technologies and their Use 2021-2025, and the adoption by consensus of the document "Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security" (A/77/275), which contains the first progress report of the OEWG discussions.

Mr. President,

30. We recognize the value of the Disarmament Commission as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, and its role as a deliberative body. In this context, we welcome the convening of the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, from 4-21 April 2022, after three years of inactivity. We hope that its work will continue with consistency and that it will be able to fulfill its mandate to submit recommendations to the General Assembly.

31. SICA urges all members of the Conference on Disarmament to demonstrate their political will to ensure the commencement of its substantive work without further delay. We call for the inclusion in its program of work that promotes progress in nuclear disarmament, including the negotiation of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances, as



well as on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and a non-discriminatory treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that serve non-proliferation and disarmament purposes.

32. Furthermore, we would like to highlight the important work carried out by the United Nations Regional Center for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), as well as the assistance it provides to countries of the region in implementing disarmament measures in various areas. At the same time, to all the efforts undertaken by different disarmament agencies of the United Nations system with this same purpose.

Thank you.