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## **SPECIAL DECLARATION 17: on the 20 Years of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty CTBT**

The Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Quito, Ecuador, on occasion of the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016:

1. Reaffirm their support to consolidating Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, formally proclaimed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> CELAC Summit, held in Havana, in January 2014, in which we declared the obligation of the States of the region to continue promoting nuclear disarmament as a primary goal and to contribute to the general and complete disarmament and to the strengthening of the confidence among nations;
2. Affirm that a universal and effectively verifiable Treaty constitutes a fundamental instrument in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and also emphasize the central role of the CTBT in the regime of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation;
3. Reiterate, on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty CTBT, the vital importance and urgency of the entry into force of the Treaty;
4. Reiterate the call to the eight remaining States mentioned in Annex 2 of the Treaty, whose ratification is needed for the entry into force of the CTBT, to subscribe to and/or ratify it, without further delay, and urge those States to take initiatives to further its ratification;
5. Declare their rejection to all types of nuclear weapons tests and all strategic concepts justifying the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, or the promotion and establishment of military and political alliances based on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence policies;
6. Reiterate, also, that cessation of all test explosions of nuclear weapons and all other nuclear explosions, by restricting the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the manufacture of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects;

7. Insist that all States shall refrain from carrying out nuclear tests, other nuclear explosions, or any other relevant non-explosive testing, including sub-critical experiments and those conducted through simulation aiming to develop and improve nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Such actions are contrary to the object and purpose of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, to the obligations and provisions contained in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and against the spirit and the letter of the CTBT, thereby undermining its impact as a measure of nuclear disarmament;
8. Pending the entry into force of the treaty, they urge to maintain all current moratoriums on test explosions of nuclear weapons, and at the same time they reiterate that these measures do not have the same permanent and legally binding effect that could be achieved with the entry into force of the CTBT to put an end to all nuclear weapons tests and any other type of nuclear tests or relevant non-explosive tests;
9. Reaffirm the commitment of the countries of the region to continue providing to the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) political and material support needed to analyze in the most efficient and economical way all its tasks, including to further develop all elements of the verification regime;
10. Are pleased that, in addition to the provisions of its mandate, the International Monitoring System and International Data Centre of the CTBT verification regime have also proved useful to produce tangible civilian and scientific benefits, including tsunami warning systems and possibly other disaster alert systems, bearing in mind the objective of the Treaty as a vital instrument of the regime of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament;
11. Commit to continue working for the early entry into force of the CTBT and urge all States to remain seized of this issue at the highest political level. In this regard, call the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO to foster communication channels that allow the States of the region to address matters related to the entry into force of the instrument and the functioning of the organization, dealing with the manifestations that have been made in that regard, protected by the law of treaties, specially the Vienna Convention of 1969.

Quito, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016.