

**Input by the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolution 79/241**

Nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) are effective regional approaches to nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, legally fencing off entire regions of the world from nuclear weapons. The 1975 United Nations study on the question of NWFZs in all its aspects recognized the quest by states to be totally free from the threat of nuclear weapons, and defined a NWFZ as an “internationally binding agreement among a group of states effectively prohibiting “the development, manufacturing, control, possession, testing or transporting of nuclear weapons within the zone, both by regional parties and NWS.” Six NWFZs currently exist<sup>i</sup> covering territories of all countries in the Southern Hemisphere and key regions in the North.

Prospects for additional NWFZs are slim since all areas of the world where nuclear weapons do not exist, or have been dismantled or withdrawn, are covered by existing NWFZs. Other regions include existing nuclear-weapon possessors, and current political conditions in these regions present significant challenges to the establishment of NWFZs. However, with renewed commitment and appropriate adjustment, existing NWFZs can continue to make major contributions to regional and global nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

- i. African states that have not yet done so should promptly ratify the Pelindaba Treaty;<sup>ii</sup>
- ii. Zonal states should implement all commitments under their respective Treaty obligations;
- iii. NWS that have not done so should ratify and remain committed to all their respective legally binding commitments under the protocols to existing Zonal treaties;
- iv. Zonal parties should effectively cooperate to act as like-minded states in multilateral fora, such as the NPT review process;
- v. All NWFZ parties should ratify the CTBT since they are already legally bound not to allow testing on their territories. Conversely, all CTBT parties that are part of NWFZs should ratify the respective Zonal treaties;<sup>iii</sup>
- vi. All Zonal parties should sign and ratify the TPNW since their NWFZ commitments are in line with a global ban on nuclear weapons;<sup>iv</sup>
- vii. Existing NWFZ parties should take joint steps to improve safeguards and physical protection to which their nuclear facilities and materials, including meeting the physical protection standards in IAEA INFCIRC/225 and the Convention on the 1979 Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM) and its 2005 Amendment;
- viii. Where applicable, Zonal states should consider including a highly-enriched-uranium-free dimension in the implementation of the respective Zonal treaties.

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<sup>i</sup> Latin America and the Caribbean (1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco); South Pacific (1985 Treaty of Rarotonga); Southeast Asia (1995 Treaty of Bangkok); Africa (1996 Treaty of Pelindaba, Mongolia (Single State NWFZ recognized by the 2000 UNGA) and the 2006 Central Asian NWFZ treaty

<sup>ii</sup> 43 State parties, 10 signature States and 1 State that have not signed

<sup>iii</sup> Seven (7) African States have ratified the CTBT but have not yet ratified the Pelindaba Treaty. One (1) African State have not signed either one of these treaties. One (1) State party to the Treaty of Rarotonga has not yet ratified the CTBT.

<sup>iv</sup> Thirteen (13) State parties to the Pelindaba Treaty and five (5) State parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco have signed but not yet ratified the TPNW.