



Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network
for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation

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**Latin American and Caribbean leaders to Work for
Regional Security, Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation**

Buenos Aires, June 18, 2013 –Political and diplomatic leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean, including former foreign and defense ministers (see attached list) have signed a joint statement to announce the creation of a Leadership Network that will seek to promote policies to enhance regional and world security, to help reduce all forms of nuclear risks and to advance towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation will address concerns relating to enhancement and deployment of current nuclear arsenals in the world, risks of acquisition or use of a nuclear device by new states or by terrorists, as well as regional vulnerabilities that potentially could contribute to such catastrophic events.

Irma Argüello, President of the NPSGlobal Foundation, who will lead the Network from Buenos Aires, said that the group felt compelled to act due to the progressive erosion of global security in the post Cold War era, and the lack of progress in the world in addressing an array of complex nuclear issues.

“Governments and the public in our region tend to see these threats as very far from their realities,” Argüello said. “But the truth is that any nuclear incident is global in nature, no matter where it occurred. We would not escape the international chaos and therefore we would experience the catastrophic political, economic and social impacts derived from it.”

In addition to highlighting the worldwide risks of a nuclear incident, the regional group will work to assure that regional weaknesses in the 33-nation area do not play into the hands of criminals or terrorists involved in clandestine efforts to spread or steal nuclear weapons, materials or technology.

The nations of Latin America and the Caribbean created a nuclear-weapons free zone when they signed the Tlatelolco Treaty in 1969. It was the first such zone in a populated region.

The Leadership Network, with founding representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Uruguay and the Caribbean Community - CARICOM, hopes to revive the spirit of Tlatelolco, dealing with those issues which dominate the post Cold War nuclear agenda.

“The international outlook is discouraging,” said Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, former United Nations Under Secretary for Disarmament Affairs. “Since the mid-90s attempts to negotiate and adopt concrete and effective multilateral action on these issues have repeatedly faced stubborn obstacles.”

In order to help overcome these obstacles, the Leadership Network will work on measures to:

- Promote nuclear disarmament and arms control as a step required to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. (At present, nine countries own a total of some 17,000 nuclear weapons. They are deployed in 14 countries or circulate the world's oceans).
- Prevent the spread of nuclear arms and weapons-usable materials to more countries.
- Strengthen regional security in all forms to prevent nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking as well as to improve the regional nuclear weapons free zone.
- Develop regional capacity through awareness, understanding and education.

Camilo Reyes Rodríguez, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, said that this is a crucial moment in the efforts for nuclear disarmament. "Today there is no conceivable justification for the vast amount of resources dedicated to maintaining or developing nuclear arsenals," he said, and added: "We believe the world should immediately outlaw nuclear weapons, in the same way that this has been done with chemical and biological weapons."

While advocating the elimination of nuclear weapons, the group also stands for equal access for all to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The NPSGlobal Foundation in Argentina will serve as the institutional anchor of the Leadership Network. The group's first activity will be at a world conference organized by the Nuclear Security Project in Singapore, June 25-26.

More than 40 top-level advocates of a nuclear-free world will attend the meeting including former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans (convener of the Asia Pacific Leadership Network) and former UK Defense Secretary, Lord Des Browne (convener of the European Leadership Network).

Read the entire inaugural statement at: <http://bit.ly/1bOVI1D>

The LALN Members

Sergio Abreu, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and current Senator of Uruguay.

Irma Argüello, President of the NPSGlobal Foundation – Nonproliferation for Global Security, Argentina.

Álvaro Bermúdez, former Director of Energy and Nuclear Technology of Uruguay.

Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, former United Nations Under Secretary for Disarmament Affairs and member of the Brazil's diplomatic service.

Sergio González Gálvez, former Deputy Secretary of External Relations and member of the Mexico's diplomatic service.

Oswaldo Jarrín, former Minister of Defense of Ecuador.

José Horacio Jaunarena, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.

Miguel Marín Bosch, former Alternate Permanent Representative to the United Nations and member of the Mexican diplomatic service.

José Pampuro, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.

Jaime Ravinet de la Fuente, former Minister of Defense of Chile.

Camilo Reyes Rodríguez, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, former Minister of Science and Technology and member of the Brazil's diplomatic service.

Noel Sinclair, Permanent Observer of the Caribbean Community -CARICOM to the United Nations and member of the Guyana's diplomatic service.

