STATEMENT

by

Senator the Honourable Dr Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the High Level Plenary Meeting to Commemorate and Promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

United Nations, New York
September 28, 2021
Mr President,

I welcome the opportunity to address this high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. I wish to express our appreciation to you, Mr President, for convening this meeting. Allow me to acknowledge the Secretary-General and to thank him for his well-known devotion to the cause of nuclear disarmament and for his participation today.

It is a known fact that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law including international humanitarian law. Seventy-six years ago the most destructive weapon of war ever employed by humankind resulted in indescribable devastation. Scientific evidence informs us that the use of the nuclear option has the potential to cause untold loss of life beyond the theatre of the conflict, while at the same time, inflicting catastrophic damage to our environment, the food supply and to our natural ecosystems.

Given these far-reaching implications that threaten our very existence on the planet, Trinidad and Tobago holds steadfast to the belief that in order to achieve sustainable international peace and security, there must be a commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr President,

As part of a region which established the first Nuclear Weapons Free Zone pursuant to the Treaty of Tlateloco, Trinidad and Tobago has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to the global non-proliferation regime. Trinidad and Tobago signed and ratified the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2019 and was pleased to join the international community in welcoming its entry into force earlier this year. We share the Secretary General’s view that the entry into force of the Treaty also represents a “strong demonstration of support for multilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament.”

As a Small Island Developing State, we rely on the rule of law, international agreements and on the strict observance by all States of the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in order to guarantee our right to a secure and peaceful existence. Trinidad and Tobago’s support for the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is in alignment with our National Development Strategy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We remain concerned that the continued build-up of arsenals by nuclear armed States could potentially place the world on a path that all States should commit to avoid. Trinidad and Tobago therefore welcomed the recent reaffirmation by two nuclear armed States of the principle “that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” That is why, Trinidad and Tobago continues to encourage States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, as it provides an option for immediate action on nuclear disarmament.
Mr President,

In closing, we urge members of the international community to undertake negotiations on nuclear disarmament in good faith and to work towards removing the threat of nuclear obliteration.

I thank you.