



Statement by Nicaragua on behalf of the Member States
of the Central American Integration System (SICA)
General Debate of the First Committee

9 October 2019

Mr. 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, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Nicaragua.

2. We would like to congratulate you and all the members of the Bureau on your election. You can count on the support of the SICA Member States.

3. We are meeting at an exceptional time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a health crisis that has generated serious socio-economic consequences worldwide, including the loss of a large number of irreparable human lives, we express our solidarity and support for



the families who have lost their loved ones. This crisis has highlighted that the response to the great global challenges must be through a multilateralism based on strong ties and international cooperation.

4. We, the Member States of SICA, regret that the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the work of the First Committee's agenda, and we call for the continuation of our commitment and, despite the challenges of the moment, for the fulfilment of the mandates we have assumed in the framework of the work of the disarmament machinery, including the humanitarian consequences of the use of weapons, armed conflicts, and other matters that put international peace and security at risk.

5. We, the member countries of SICA, parties to the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security, 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.

6. 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 arms control; aspects which we consider of great relevance to the maintenance of international peace, security and stability.

Mr. President,

7. Our countries continue to work towards a new, single, comprehensive and indivisible regional security model, inspired by our previous achievements. However, we continue to take on public security challenges in a responsible manner. Violence is highly related to the presence of illicit markets, which are the product of different manifestations of transnational organized crime, such as trafficking in arms, munitions and their components.

8. Recognizing the continuing threat of illicit markets in conventional arms, their parts and components and their excessive accumulation, as a manifestation of transnational organized crime; and the implications for the lack of controls in different regions of the world on the arms trade; 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 and the International Tracing Instrument, 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.

9. We reiterate that, for the successful implementation of the Program of Action and of our national

legislations in this circuit, international assistance and cooperation are indispensable conditions.

10. 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 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and its International Tracing Instrument.

Mr. President,

11. The member countries of SICA reaffirm the need to advance towards the objective of nuclear disarmament 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.

12. We are proud to be part of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the

Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the first instrument to create a global nuclear-weapon-free zone. 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.

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. We will work constructively and proactively towards achieving a document supporting these commitments and obligations at the NPT Review Conference in 2021.

15. At the same time, as states that respect and are committed to Article 6 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, we believe that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons 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.

16. 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. On the other hand, they are contrary to the objective and purpose of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, to the obligations and provisions contained in the NPT.

17. 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.

Mr. President,

18. 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,

19. 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.

20. 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 \$1.9 trillion in 2019. 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.

21. We call for the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan and call on the remaining parties, as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency, to continue implementation for the full resolution of this problem. SICA stresses that this Agreement demonstrated once again that dialogue and negotiation are the only effective way to resolve the dispute between States.

22. 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.

23. 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 problems caused by cluster munitions.

24. 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 cyber-attacks, and taking into account that an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment is essential for all.

Mr. President,

25. We recognize the value of the Disarmament Commission as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, and its role as a deliberative body. We regret its impasse and the inability of the Disarmament Commission to convene its organizational and substantive sessions in 2019 in a formal framework, and hope that the delegations concerned can resolve these issues as soon as possible, so that the Disarmament Commission can hold its substantive sessions in 2021 in an appropriate manner and fulfil its mandate by adopting the agreed substantive recommendations.

26. 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.

27. Furthermore, we would like to highlight the important work carried out by the United Nations Regional Centre 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 very much.
