



OPANAL
Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

Secretariat

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Statement of

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International Atomic Energy Agency

and

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Peru to
the IAEA and other International Organizations with headquarters in Vienna

on behalf of

Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini

Secretary General of OPANAL

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Vienna, Austria

Mr. /Ms. President:

As the Coordinator of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) at the International Atomic Energy Agency, and on behalf of the Secretary-General of OPANAL, Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, I express to you my sincerest congratulations for being elected to conduct the 65th session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Mr. / Ms. President:

The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean constitutes the first legally binding international instrument to prohibit the use and possession of nuclear weapons. This Treaty was opened for signature on 14 February 1967, it was signed and ratified by the 33 countries of the region and established the Latin American and the Caribbean Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

In order to ensure the compliance of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), established in 1969, is formed by three primary bodies - the General Conference, the Council and the Secretariat. Being the only international intergovernmental organization devoted exclusively to disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, OPANAL represents a political and intergovernmental forum where States Parties carry out consultations on the purposes, measures and procedures set forth in the Treaty.

More than five decades ago, Latin America and the Caribbean was declared the first region in the world committed to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes through an international legal instrument. The political and legal creation of the Latin American and Caribbean States inspired four other regions (Africa, Central Asia, South Pacific, Southeast Asia and Mongolia as a nuclear-weapon-free State) to follow that same path and establish their Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones.

Mr. /Ms. President:

The cooperation and coordination between OPANAL and the IAEA is essential for the operation of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as to guarantee the effectiveness of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This includes the Control System that ensures the obligations compliance from the Parties, which according to Article 12, is executed by both agencies.

In order to guarantee that nuclear energy programs of the Contracting Parties are used exclusively for peaceful purposes, the Article 13 of the Treaty compels the Contracting Parties to negotiate multilateral or bilateral agreements with IAEA for the application of Safeguards to their nuclear activities. Currently all the region, that is the 33 States Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, have safeguards agreements with the IAEA in force.

In accordance with Article 14 of the Treaty, each State Party must submit to the Agency semi-annual reports stating that no activity prohibited under the Treaty, has occurred in their respective territories. The reports are carried out within these time limits in an attempt to avoid creating an opportunity for the development of any activity prohibited by the Treaty..

According to Article 16 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the IAEA is authorized to carry out special inspections at the request of any Member State, with the intervention of the Secretary-General of OPANAL and with prior authorization of the Council.

In accordance with Article 19, OPANAL can conclude agreements with the IAEA in order to facilitate the efficient operation of the Control System. On October 3, 1972, both agencies signed the “Cooperation Agreement between the IAEA and OPANAL”, at the 16th session of the IAEA General Conference held in Mexico City, which has allowed OPANAL and the IAEA to closely co-operate and harmonize their efforts.

Mr. /Ms. President:

The Treaty of Tlatelolco has two Additional Protocols that are essential to ensure the region remains free of nuclear weapons. Additional Protocol I determines that the extra-regional States that have responsibility, de jure or de facto, for territories within the Zone respect its denuclearized status.

Additional Protocol II commits the Nuclear Weapon States -the five States mentioned as such in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons- to respect the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

In the case of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the two Additional Protocols have been ratified by all the States for whom said instruments were opened for signature. However, some States Parties to the Additional Protocols of the Treaty (in particular, the United States, the Russian Federation, France and the United Kingdom) have made interpretative declarations which constitute reservations and thus, reduce the effectiveness of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. A similar situation occurs in relation to other nuclear-weapon-free zones, which has been a matter of concern not only for the States of the zones but also for a significant part of the international community.

Since 2016, OPANAL has been offering these States a way out of the problem, by proposing to sign Adjustments which would eliminate any misunderstanding and would bring full respect to the Treaty. OPANAL Member States don't propose any additional commitment from Nuclear-Weapon-States other than a common understanding.

OPANAL Member States urge these four Nuclear Weapon States to reconsider their approach and carry out negotiations in good faith, in order to find a mutual agreed solution.

Protocols for other nuclear-weapons-free zones treaties have also been subject to reservations. Nuclear-Weapons-States should be open to reconsider their reservations in consultation with States belonging to nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Mr. /Ms. President:

In addition to the obligations established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, OPANAL has expanded its activities in the last years by promoting the participation of Member States at the international debates on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. An important example is the commemoration, by decision of the United Nations General Conference, of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, September 26, through a Declaration adopted by consensus of the Member States of OPANAL. These Declarations cover major issues on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including the essential role of the IAEA and safeguards agreements in the

implementation of the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as well as OPANAL's strong support for the IAEA, promoting close collaboration and cooperation with OPANAL. Said Declarations are circulated as an official document of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the General Conference of the IAEA, and the Conference on Disarmament. Latin America and the Caribbean is the only region that does so and this is due to the existence of OPANAL as a regional entity.

Mr. /Ms. President:

OPANAL and its Member States are committed to continue working together with the IAEA to ensure that the commitment of this Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone is maintained in the Latin American and Caribbean region to promote and safeguard international security based on the disarmament and non-proliferation of these weapons as it has been for more than 50 years.

Thank you.