



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

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**Declaration of the Member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear
Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean**
OPANAL

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
(26 September 2020)

The member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL),

Maintaining their historic commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons,

Reaffirming that a world without nuclear weapons is essential for the accomplishment of the priority objectives of humanity, those being peace, security, development, and the protection of the environment,

Recognising that to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons is a responsibility shared by all Member States of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, States must refrain in their international relations 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,

Reaffirming that the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, a violation of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law, and constitute a crime against humanity,

Proud to belong to Latin America and the Caribbean, the first densely populated region in the world which, by means of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)¹, established a nuclear-weapon-free zone on 14 February 1967,

¹ http://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Treaty_Tlatelolco.pdf

Recalling that the Treaty of Tlatelolco has been strictly complied with by its States Party for more than 50 years, relying on the permanent work of OPANAL, the only international intergovernmental organization specializing in non-proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons,

Recalling also that the First Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly dedicated to Disarmament, in 1978, in its Final Document (A/S-10/2) stated that “nuclear weapons pose the greatest existing danger for humanity and for the survival of civilization”, and are far from contributing to strengthen international security, on the contrary, they diminish it; a situation that has not changed until this day.

Reiterating the full validity of the declarations on nuclear disarmament adopted by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) on 20 August 2013, in Buenos Aires; on 29 January 2014, in Havana; on 29 January 2015, in Belen; on 27 January 2016, in Quito; and on 25 January, in Punta Cana,

Conscious that the Treaty of Tlatelolco and OPANAL are political, legal and institutional references for the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones,

Reiterating also their conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is closely related to the maintenance of international peace and security and that the prohibition of nuclear weapons in different regions, adopted by sovereign decision of States comprised therein, has a beneficial influence over other regions,

Emphasising their rejection of nuclear weapons, which, after 75 years of existence and use, continue to pose a risk to international peace and security, as well as a significant threat to environment which may render the whole earth uninhabitable, considering that no State has the physical and technical capacities to face catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

Remembering that this year marks the 75th Anniversary of the first atomic detonation (Trinity test), on 16 July, and the first military use of atomic bombs against the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on 6 and 9 August, respectively.

Highlighting the importance of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 12 December 2019: 74/42 “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear

weapons”²; and 74/47 “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”³, which represent important political advances towards the delegitimization of nuclear weapons,

Convinced that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)⁴ continues to be the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime,

Fully aware of the obligation set forth in Article VI of the NPT and the unequivocal commitment of nuclear weapon States to negotiate effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control,

Recalling that the prohibition of nuclear weapons is a means to contribute to the elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner within clearly established timeframes and that the elimination is the only truly effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons,

The Member States of OPANAL,

Join in the commemoration, on 26 September 2020, of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, established by resolution 68/32 (2013)⁵ of the United Nations General Assembly;

Invite the international community to commemorate once again this International Day as part of the global efforts towards achieving the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and urge governments, parliaments and civil society to take further action each year to commemorate this International Day;

On this occasion, the Member States:

1. **Reiterate** their concern over the existence of more than thirteen thousand nuclear weapons that pose an unacceptable threat to humankind, a danger that becomes more serious day by day.

² <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/42>

³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/47>

⁴ <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/npt>

⁵ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/68/32>

2. **Recall** that this concern is reflected in numerous resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, such as Res. 1 (I) of 24 January 1946⁶; in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament (SSOD-I), of 1978⁷; as well as in the preamble of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean of 1967; and in the preamble of the NPT of 1968; and in the preamble of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, of 2017⁸.
3. **Firmly demand** that nuclear weapons not be used again, under any circumstances by any actor, which can only be assured by the prohibition and the subsequent transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination of all nuclear weapons.
4. **Reiterate** the call upon all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their security and defence doctrines and policies and to comply fully with their legal obligations and unequivocal commitments to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay.
5. **Call upon** non-nuclear weapon States that are covered by extended nuclear deterrence policies by means of military alliances to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons from their security and defense policies.
6. **Urge** that nuclear-weapon States cease the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons arsenals, the development of new types of these weapons, and of new scenarios and procedures for the development and employment of new types of such weapons, what is inconsistent with the obligation to adopt effective measures towards nuclear disarmament.
7. **Recall** the mutually reinforcing relationship of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation treaties.
8. **Recall** their participation in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which currently has 84 Signatories and 45 States Party, and that prohibits the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

⁶ [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1\(1\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1(1))

⁷ <https://undocs.org/en/A/S-10/4>

⁸ <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/tpnw>

9. **Consider** that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)⁹, once in force, will join the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) on the path towards the elimination of these weapons of mass destruction in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner and within clearly established time frames.
10. **Express** their concern for the erosion of the treaty-based disarmament architecture and firmly support all bilateral, regional or multilateral instruments that contribute to achieve nuclear disarmament and call upon all States to promote and strengthen international peace and security.
11. **Highlight** the importance to preserve the bilateral arms control instruments that have contributed to peace and international security, and consequently encourage the parties to establish negotiations on the extension of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, known as the “New START”,
12. **Call upon** all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear weapon test explosions, or any other non-explosive experiment, including subcritical experiments for the improvement of nuclear weapons; such actions are contrary to the spirit and purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and undermine its desired impact as a nuclear disarmament measure.
13. **Urge** the States included in Annex II to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty that have not ratified it to take necessary measures to do so without further delay¹⁰
14. Encourage Nuclear-Weapon States to provide unequivocal and legally binding guarantees of non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against the States parties of nuclear-weapon-free zones.
15. **Urge** all States not parties to the NPT to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States, without further delay and without conditions¹¹.

⁹ <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/ctbt>

¹⁰ The People’s Republic of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United States of America, the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the State of Israel, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

¹¹ The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Republic of India, the State of Israel, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of South Sudan.

16. ***Underline*** the responsibility of all States Parties for the full implementation of the NPT, and ***urge*** the nuclear-weapon States to take immediate action for the full and effective implementation of article VI in compliance with their obligations.
17. ***Welcome and congratulate*** for the appointment of Ambassador Gustavo Rodolfo Zlauvinien, of Argentina, as President-Designate of the X NPT Review Conference. They also, take note of the postponement of the Conference, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and express their determination to work for the success of it once the parties achieve agreement on the new dates of its convening.
18. ***Reaffirm*** the legally binding obligations reached 50 years ago with the entry into force of the NPT and ***consider*** that the commitments undertaken at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference¹² and the 2000¹³ and 2010¹⁴ Review Conferences remain valid.
19. ***Recognize*** the essential role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and of the safeguards agreements in the implementation of the NPT and the Treaty of Tlatelolco.
20. ***Welcome and congratulate*** for the election of the first Latin-American Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi, and stress his relevant work to face various global challenges of the Agency and reiterate their firm support to contribute to the success of his term, promoting close collaboration and cooperation with OPANAL.
21. ***Urge*** to make efforts to overcome the *impasse* of more than two decades of the Conference on Disarmament, in order to fulfill its mandate.
22. ***Confirm*** the inalienable right of all States to develop, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.
23. ***Urge*** nuclear-weapon States that made interpretative declarations concerning Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco which are contrary to the spirit of the Treaty, to examine the proposals made by OPANAL with the aim of resolving this problem, giving full and unequivocal security assurances to the States that comprise the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well

¹² NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I)

¹³ NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II)

¹⁴ NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)*

as to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the zone of application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

24. **Encourage** the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones by means of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned and **stress** the importance of these zones as a contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.
25. **Regret** the failure, after more than two decades, to comply with the resolution on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East¹⁵, an integral part of the commitments of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT, and of the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the NPT.
26. **Take note of** the First Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held in November 2019, and reaffirm the objective of creating a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the region, in accordance with the relevant UN General Assembly resolutions.
27. **Reiterate** their commitment to continue to promote the dialogue and cooperation among Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, including Mongolia, through, *inter alia*, the convening of a Fourth Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, in accordance with the resolution 73/71, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, on 13 December 2018¹⁶, which will be convened in 2021, on a date determined by the 75th UN General Assembly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to contribute to the success of the Conference.
28. **Commemorate** the 75th anniversary of the nuclear bombings against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and, taking into consideration its humanitarian impact, **stress** their determination to work for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, which still remain a latent destruction risk for the planet and a risk for peace and international security.

¹⁵ NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), Annex.

¹⁶ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/71>

29. **Reiterate further** their conviction that the dissemination of information concerning the danger posed by nuclear weapons is essential so that the entire civil society may join the efforts for the elimination of nuclear weapons.
30. **Reaffirm** the importance of the “United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education”¹⁷, adopted by the Resolution 57/60 of the United Nations General Assembly, in its LVII session (2002)¹⁸ and **commit themselves** to continue working on the implementation of programmes of education on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, convinced that they are effective means to contribute to the consolidation of international peace and security.
31. **Consider** the sixth edition of the Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation for diplomats from Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs of Mexico and the Institute Matias Romero, in close collaboration with the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) – Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, and the OPANAL, held virtually from 6 to 17 July 2020, with the participation of representatives from 25 countries, a significant contribution of the region to the international peace and security.
32. **Reiterate** the commitment of the States of the region, endorsed in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, to continue to promote nuclear disarmament as a priority objective and to contribute to general and complete disarmament in order to favour the strengthening of confidence among nations.

26 September 2020.

¹⁷ <https://undocs.org/en/A/57/124>

¹⁸ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/57/60>