



OPANAL GENERAL CONFERENCE

XXIV Special Session

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CG/E/04/2016

Report of the Secretary-General

Introduction

The IX Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) failed to adopt a final document. There is therefore no record of any follow-up of the decisions adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference on all the three areas of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Nor there are any decisions for the future.

The specific reason for the failure of the Conference were the proposals on the draft final document regarding the establishment of a nuclear-weapon and all other weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference it was agreed to implement a process that would lead to the convening of an international conference in 2012 for the establishment of said zone in the Middle East. Although the Conference did not take place, the position of a facilitator was still in existence up to 2015, and the decision made in 2010 had not been discarded. The entire conference process lapsed after no decision was adopted in the Review Conference.

From the standpoint of non-proliferation, the four States possessing nuclear weapons that are not Parties to the NPT have not changed their positions, thus keeping themselves out of the Treaty. Moreover, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continues to expand its arsenal and its means of delivery.

The five Nuclear-Weapon States did not take any actions to comply with Article VI of the NPT in relation to disarmament. On the contrary, the plans to modernize nuclear arsenals continue.

Despite these negative events, significant progress was made in 2016, possibly the most relevant progress in the last two decades, which was the result of the work of the Open-Ended-Working Group (OEWG) established through Resolution [A/Res/70/33](#) "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations".

OPANAL participated actively in the work of the OEWG, which met in Geneva, through the submission of a working paper (Document [A/C.286/WP.40](#)) and the participation of the Secretary-General in the second session of the Group, as described in this report. Moreover, the OPANAL Member States participated actively in the different sessions of the Working-Group, showing once again the unity and leadership of the region in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

This year, the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly adopted the draft resolution contained in document [A/C.1/71/L.41](#) “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. In operative paragraph 8 of this resolution, the General Assembly of the United Nations “Decides to convene in 2017 a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination”. Through operative paragraph 10 it was decided that the conference shall convene in New York from 27 to 31 March and from 15 June to 7 July 2017, “with the participation and contribution of international organizations”. OPANAL will certainly be ready to participate in this Conference in the coming year.

To conclude, it is worth noting that for the third consecutive year the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States – CELAC – adopted a special declaration on nuclear disarmament, which reflects the position of the 33 States in favour of the negotiation for a legally binding instrument banning nuclear weapons. This goal seems more attainable with the convening of the United Nations conference in 2017.

The following are the most important matters reflecting the work of the Secretary-General of OPANAL and the Secretariat: external relations of OPANAL, the Control System of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education, 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, cooperation among Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

I. External relations of OPANAL

Throughout the year, the Secretary-General was invited to participate in different international events on behalf of the Agency.

The following are among the most relevant events:

a) Open-Ended-Working Group established through Resolution A/Res/70/33 “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations” (Geneva, 2016)¹

The Secretariat sent to the Member States document Inf.09/2016 “*Compilación de la Secretaría del OPANAL sobre la primera sesión del Grupo de trabajo de composición abierta para hacer avanzar las negociaciones multilaterales de desarme nuclear (22-26 febrero 2016)*” (Spanish only).

Moreover, the Secretariat prepared an informative text that underlined the articles of the Treaty of Tlatelolco that could be of special interest in the discussions of the Working Group. All the Member States received document entitled “Working paper submitted by the Secretariat of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) presented to the second session of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations (OEWG) established by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/33” (2-13 May 2016) (Doc. Inf.10/2016Corr – Note S-150/2016, dated 22 March 2016)

The document was sent through letter S-170/2016, dated 5 April 2016, to the Chairman of the Group, the Permanent Representative of Thailand, His Excellency Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi. Afterwards, Argentina, in its capacity as Coordinator of OPANAL in Geneva, presented said document to be circulated as a document of the Working Group ([A/C.286/WP.40](#)) entitled “Treaty of Tlatelolco: A disarmament instrument”.

Moreover, the Secretary-General participated in the second session of the OEWG, on 10-13 May 2016, and delivered a statement through Document Inf.17/2016 on 11 May 2016.

The Secretariat followed very closely the work of the OEWG and was always ready to assist the Member States in their active participation in the OEWG.

¹ In OPANAL General Conference Resolution CG/Res.02/2015, “External relations of OPANAL”, operative paragraph 3, section a, the Secretary-General was instructed “to participate in the Open-Ended Working Group established through Resolution “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, adopted by the First Committee of the LXX United Nations General Assembly”.

b) Participation in the LXXI Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Secretary-General attended the United Nations General Assembly First Committee from 10 to 14 October 2016. On 11 October 2016, the Secretary-General participated in the general debate (Doc. Inf.21/2016Rev.). Moreover, on 14 October 2016, the Secretary-General met with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High-Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr Kim Won-soo. Moreover, Chile, in its capacity as Pro-Tempore President for the Latin American and Caribbean Group – GRULAC – in New York, convened a meeting exclusively on OPANAL matters. Also on 14 October 2016, the Secretary-General participated in the panel entitled “Commencing negotiations for a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons in 2017”, organized by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and cosponsored by the Permanent Missions of Brazil and Guatemala.

c) Relation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)²

On 5 February 2016, the Council of OPANAL welcomed the IAEA Director-General, Ambassador Yukiya Amano, in a Special Session. At this Session, the Secretary-General of OPANAL presented remarks to Director-General Amano (Doc. Inf.05/2016) on the intrinsic relationship between both international agencies. It is worth noting that the origin of the relationship between both agencies is contained in the very Control System of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Moreover, the Secretary-General of OPANAL was invited to participate in the 60th Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that was held on 26-30 September 2016. The Permanent Mission of Mexico in Vienna, in its capacity as OPANAL Coordinator, delivered a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General (Doc. Inf.20/2016).

² In OPANAL General Conference Resolution CG/Res.02/2015, “External relations of OPANAL”, operative paragraph 3, section b, the Secretary-General was instructed “to study ways of developing the relationship of OPANAL with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the International Atomic Energy Agency, based on the mandates adopted by the Member States”.

II. Control System

Among the different functions vested upon the Secretary-General, the ultimate function is to ensure “the proper operation of the Control System established by this Treaty, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty and the decisions taken by the General Conference”³.

In this regard, throughout the year and at all meetings of the Council, the Secretary-General informed on the status of compliance with Article 14 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which refers to the obligation of the States Party to submit “semi-annual reports stating that no activity prohibited under this Treaty has occurred in their respective territories”⁴.

Detailed information on compliance with Article 14 is included in Document C/32/2016Rev., “Activities of the Council in 2015. Report to the General Conference”.

Reminder letters were sent to the Member States by the Secretary-General highlighting the need for full compliance with Article 14, which is the core of the Control System. These letters were sent to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States on 27 January, 29 March and 9 August 2016. In these letters the Secretary-General reiterated the importance to fully comply with the obligation established by Article 14 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, on the occasion of the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco to be celebrated on 14 February 2017.

³ Article 11, section 3, Treaty of Tlatelolco

⁴ Article 14, section 1, Treaty of Tlatelolco

III. Nuclear disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education

Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education has always been of great interest to the Member States and, therefore, the Secretary-General and the Secretariat continues to promote initiatives in this regard. It is possible to identify four areas in which the Secretary-General and the Secretariat have participated actively, these are:

a) Outreach activities with academic institutions:

The Secretary-General was invited and accepted to participate in two academic activities held at different Universities:

- ❖ Master Lecture “*Los retos de la región en cuanto a los temas de desarme nuclear y la seguridad internacional*”, at Universidad Anáhuac, Mexico City, on 11 February 2016;
- ❖ Workshop “*Espacio Acción Pública 2016 – Objetivo: Seguridad*”, organized by the Department of International Relations and Political Sciences of the *Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP)*, on 18 February 2016.

Moreover, the Secretariat welcomed two groups of University students from

- ❖ *Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP)*, on 5 April 2016; and
- ❖ *Universidad Autónoma de México*, on 27 October 2016.

b) Interviews:

This year, the Secretary-General was interviewed on four different occasions by:

- ❖ TV programme – “*Vértice Internacional*” “*Canal del Congreso*”, on 28 March 2016;
- ❖ TV programme – “*360° Una visión global de Iberoamérica*” “*Canal Iberoamericano*”, on 31 March 2016;
- ❖ TV programme – “*Paralelo 23*”, *ForoTV, Televisa*, on 26 September 2016;
- ❖ TV programme – “*Historias de vida*” *sobre Alfonso García Robles y el Tratado de Tlatelolco*, *OnceTV*, on 25 October 2016.

c) Courses:

For the third consecutive year, OPANAL cosponsored the “Summer School of Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation”⁵, which was held on 4-8 July 2016. The Secretariat provided logistical support and one Officer of the Secretariat participated as a speaker in one of the panels.

Moreover, to promote the implementation of the OPANAL Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education Course in the territories of two Member States, the Secretary-General contacted two experts, who may serve as instructors: Ambassador Sergio Duarte and Ms Angela Kane, both of them former United Nations High Representatives for Disarmament Affairs. Ambassador Duarte and Ms Kane have confirmed their interest in participating in the delivery of the course, they now await confirmation of the dates to be proposed by the Member States hosting the course in order to confirm their participation.

As described in the “Activities of the Council in 2015. Report to the General Conference” (Doc. C/32/2016Rev), three Member States communicated to the Secretariat and the Council their interest to host the course, those being Uruguay, Brazil and Mexico. Considering that the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is fast approaching, the Secretary-General requested that the three Member States proposed three possible dates for the implementation of the course commencing from March 2017.

d) Internship Programme:

As part of the different initiatives to promote a rapprochement with the Member States from the Caribbean that do not have Permanent Representation in Mexico, the Secretary-General has promoted the Internship Programme earmarked for Member States in the Caribbean with the sponsorship of the Government of the Netherlands, in its capacity as a State Party to Additional Protocol I to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This year, the programme was successful and the Secretariat welcomed Ms Tamara Elizabeth Taylor and Ms Tabitha Lou Anna Barnwell, from Jamaica and Guyana, respectively, for the first and second half of the year 2016.

On numerous occasions, the Secretary-General invited the Member States “to publicize the internship programme of the Secretariat and to nominate eligible candidates”⁶. It is expected that next year the Internship Programme will continue to bear positive results.

⁵ CG/Res.01/2015, “Report of the Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education”, operative paragraph 4 of which reads as follows: “To continue to support the Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico”.

⁶ CG/Res.01/2015, “Report of the Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education”, operative paragraph 5, section b.

IV. 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco

Through Resolution CG/Res.11/2015 “50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco”, the General Conference resolved that the Member States issue a political declaration, that a high-level International Seminar be organized, and that the XXV Session of the General conference be held at the ministerial level, in Mexico City, on 13 and 14 February 2017.

Throughout the year, the Secretary-General directed the preparations for this commemoration. The delegation of Mexico presented the first version of the “Draft Ministerial Declaration on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) (Doc. C/17/2016). The text was discussed in three technical meetings held on 16 June, 4 August and 3 November 2016. The Draft Ministerial Declaration on the 50th Anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) (Doc. C/17/2016Rev.5) will be submitted to the General Conference for adoption at its XXV Session (14 February 2017).

The Secretary-General presented to the Council the programme for the International Seminar (Doc. C/08/2016). The Seminar will be held on 13 February 2017 and will address two general subjects: “Strategic context” and “Disarmament and non-proliferation”. The Seminar will be held at the headquarters of the Inter American Conference on Social Security (CISS), where the Treaty of Tlatelolco was discussed and adopted 50 years ago.

The invitations to the panelists were extended in advance, taking into consideration their own schedules/agendas. Invitations were also extended to the Member States of OPANAL, the Representatives of other Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, international organizations, civil society organizations and institutions related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. These are listed in Document C/25/2016Rev.2.

The XXV Session of the General Conference will be held on 14 February 2017 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico. The Secretary-General has worked in the preparations for the aforementioned Session of the General Conference in coordination with the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In August 2016, the Secretary-General and the President of the Council extended letters convening the aforementioned Session of the General Conference to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 33 Member States. Moreover, invitations were extended to the States Party to Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to the Representatives of the NWFZs and Mongolia, to international organizations and non-governmental organizations. These are listed in Document C/20/2016Rev.4.

V. Plan of cooperation among the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia⁷

The Working Plan of the Council for 2016 (Doc. C/02/2016) includes the preparation of a Plan of cooperation among the NWFZs and Mongolia. The initial idea was for the Secretary-General to present a proposal on the matter to the Council. The international context however was not conducive for such cooperation.

The Third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to the Treaties that establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, was held on 24 April 2015. This Conference was unable to adopt a final document due to procedural matters. This is one of the reasons for the lack of progress in the contact between OPANAL and the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

Moreover, the lack of institutionalization of the other Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones continues to be a challenge for the establishment of a more effective communication channel.

One of the more relevant events related to the regime established by the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones took place during the sessions of the Open-Ended-Working Group established through Resolution [A/Res/70/33](#) “Taking forwards multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, which met in Geneva in 2016.

The delegations of Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Philippines, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, and Zambia presented a working paper to the OEWG entitled “Addressing nuclear disarmament: recommendations from the perspective of nuclear-weapon-free zones” (Doc. [A/AC.286/WP.34/Rev1](#)), the text of which contains the experience of nuclear-weapon-free zones that could be of interest to the work of the OEWG.

The aforementioned document was relevant as it stated that NWFZs, as collective political bodies, “should have an outward attitude and should not merely be considered as areas of retreat from nuclear weapons politics”. Certainly, OPANAL Member States agree with this statement.

The conclusions and recommendations of the OEWG, which are reflected in Resolution [A/C.1/71/L.41](#) adopted by a wide majority of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee, were enriched with the example of the NWFZs in the negotiation of a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

⁷ CG/Res.02/2015, “External relations of OPANAL”, operative paragraph 5 of which reads as follows “to invite the Council to elaborate a plan to establish more frequent and dynamic contact with the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia”.

It is expected that the United Nations conference that will negotiate said legal instrument in 2017, as decided through Resolution [A/C.1/71/L.41](#), should have an extensive and constructive participation from the NWFZ States.

Moreover, in order to continue with the rapprochement between the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, invitations were extended to the Representatives of other NWFZs and Mongolia to attend the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to take place within the framework of the XXV Session of the General Conference.

VI. Personnel and headquarters of the Secretariat:

As stated in Article 11 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, section 1, “The Secretariat shall consist of a Secretary General, who shall be the chief administrative officer of the Agency, and of such staff as the Agency may require [...]”, and section 2, “The staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Secretary-General, in accordance with rules laid down by the General Conference.”

Pursuant to Article 37 of the “Standards to govern the operations of the Secretariat” (Document CG/E/666), the Secretary-General informs of the List of Personnel of the Agency as described below:

Name	Post	Form of appointment	Date of commencement	Nationality
Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares	Secretario General	Elected by the General Conference for a 4-year period (2014-2017)	1 January 2014	Brazilian
Noemí Rodríguez Velázquez	Translations and Publishing Officer	Fixed contract	1 May 2012	Mexican
Jorge Alberto López Lechuga	Research and Communications Officer	Fixed contract	1 April 2013	Mexican
Fabiola Gil Rodríguez	International Relations Officer	Fixed contract	7 January 2013	Costa Rican
Renato de Almeida Arão Galhardi	Programme Officer	Fixed contract	1 June 2016	Brazilian
Elizabeth Lemus Avilés	Programme Officer	Fixed contract	1 August 2016	Mexican
Israel David Ramírez Flores	General Services	Fixed contract	18 October 2010	Mexican

It is worth noting that this year there were two changes in the personnel of the Secretariat. In February 2016, Ms Claudia Salgado presented her resignation to the Agency for personal reasons. It was subsequently necessary to address some difficulties in the administrative area.

The Secretariat announced the vacancy for a “Programme Officer” to all the Member States, through Note S-119/2016, dated on 25 February 2016, which was also advertised on the Agency’s website. The Secretariat received 71 applications. After conducting a review of all applications received, eleven candidates were shortlisted having met the minimal requirements established by the Agency in the vacancy notice. Those shortlisted were required to take an examination at the Agency Headquarters, on 28 April 2016.

Based on the results of the examination and according to the current needs of the Agency, in exercise of his powers, the Secretary-General appointed Mr Renato de Almeida Arão Galhardi to fill the vacancy of Programme Officer as from 1 June 2016. The Secretary-General also decided to appoint Ms Elizabeth Lemus Avilés as Programme Officer as from 1 August 2016.

In September 2016, it was necessary for the Secretary-General to terminate the services of Mr Fernando García Quintero, who held the position of Accountant and Administrative Assistant.

The Secretariat provided the necessary services for the holding of 5 meetings of the Committee on Contributions and Administrative and Budgetary Matters (CCAAP) (27 working documents), and of 7 meetings of the Council (35 working documents). As of 3 November 2016, the Secretariat has produced 643 communications and 21 informative documents.

Since May 2015, the Secretariat has relocated to *Calle Milton 61, Colonia Anzures, Mexico City*. Though more appropriate, the new Headquarters do not allow for the expansion of the activities of the Agency. Moreover, the Agency signed a two-year lease contract (2015-2017) and is subject to the provisions of the Mexican legislation.

The interest to overcome this precarious situation remains, it could be solved by the granting of permanent headquarters by the Host State.