



**AGENCY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

SECRETARIAT

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**Commemoration of the 45th Anniversary of the Signing of the
Treaty of Tlatelolco**

Message from

Mr. Ban Ki-moon

Secretary-General of the United Nations

Delivered by Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

Mexico City
14 February 2012

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL****MESSAGE ON THE 45th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO
Mexico City, 14 February 2012**

Delivered by Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

I offer best wishes to all who have gathered to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

I still recall with pleasure my visit to Mexico City in 2008, when I had the honour to chair a session of the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to visit OPANAL's headquarters.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco has earned international recognition as one of the most historic achievements in the history of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

It established the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, the first treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons from an entire densely populated region.

It broke new ground by establishing OPANAL as a regional nuclear verification agency with a unique mandate to verify compliance with the obligations of the treaty.

It established Protocols providing for the first legally binding security assurances from the nuclear-weapon States to members of the zone.

Even more remarkably, it achieved all of this at the height of the Cold War, thereby challenging the notion that nuclear weapons were indispensable in maintaining security.

These great achievements were the result of unprecedented cooperation among states at the regional level, reinforced by support they received from the world community, in particular the United Nations.

This support came in many forms, as seen most clearly in the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. My predecessor, Secretary-General U Thant, was personally engaged in promoting the establishment of this zone. And building on the success of this Treaty regime, the United Nations has actively promoted the establishment of other such regional nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world.

For all these reasons, the Treaty stands as a shining example of how a regional initiative can advance global norms relating to nuclear disarmament, nuclear-non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

It is my hope that today's commemoration will inspire new efforts from both within and outside this region to achieve the greatest disarmament and non-proliferation goal of all, a nuclear-weapon-free world.