



Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in  
Latin America and the Caribbean

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

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**PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE  
2015 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE  
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION  
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)**

**SECOND SESSION**

**General debate**

*Address by*  
**AMBASSADOR GIOCONDA UBEDA**  
**OPANAL SECRETARY-GENERAL**

Geneva, Switzerland  
24 April 2013

Mr. Chairman,

May I congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the next NPT Review Conference and wish you every success in your important task.

I cannot fail to mention that the spirit of the first session held in Vienna last year was more positive than this year's. Even if there are reasons causing this spirit, which are attributable to the uneven efficiency of the NPT and the growing tensions in the international arena, we must not lose sight of the finish line, where we find encouraging progress. Let us imagine that we are in the middle of a river and all we see is the riverside where we started from, and we cannot go back there, it would be better to move towards the other side, knowing that we can get there with positivity and perseverance, regardless how difficult it might be.

Certainly, the obvious imbalance in the implementation of the NPT and the 2010 Action Plan, the slowness in the processes, especially regarding nuclear disarmament, as well as the postponement of the Conference on the establishment of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East are alarming factors, and even more so if the IX NPT Review Conference is scheduled for 2015. However, this should not cloud our vision or our efforts towards a nuclear-weapon-free world; the aspiration that we all here share.

If we were to continue with the analogy, on the other side of the river is the Conference recently held in Oslo that introduced the humanitarian vision of the use of nuclear weapons, bringing a breath of fresh air to these debates, a breath full of hope. By exposing the catastrophic consequences of using any nuclear weapon, the raising of awareness regarding the threat that they pose to the world would be promoted. Humanity should not continue under this risk as a consequence of the security policies lacking an alternative to replace nuclear deterrence doctrines with more effective measures, with truly safe measures for humanity as a whole. Precisely, this is one of the greatest global challenges.

We welcome the offer of Mexico to convene a follow-up conference on this issue, a country well known for its leadership in nuclear disarmament.

Another positive factor has been the Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2012, in which it resolves to establish "*an open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations*"; which shall receive the contribution of international organizations and civil society. We congratulate Costa Rica on its appointment to chair the works of this working-group. We wish it every success in its important task and express our interest in contributing to the ongoing consultations to carry out its mandate. We hope that this Resolution shall be the beginning of a space of cooperation between state and non-state actors that work for peace and nuclear disarmament.

Also approaching on the horizon is the High level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly to be held in New York, on 26 September. The Heads of State of Latin American and Caribbean

countries, within the framework of the 1<sup>st</sup> CELAC Summit held in Chile last January, stressed the commitment of States to actively participate in this meeting with a common position.

Mr. Chairman,

Progress has also been recorded regarding the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones; including the political declarations regarding Mongolia's self-declared nuclear-weapon-free status signed by the P5. We are hopeful that soon the Additional Protocol to the Treaty of Bagkok will be signed by the Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS), and that the negotiations on the Additional Protocol to the Treaty establishing the NWFZ in Central Asia will begin. We also hope that the ratification process of Additional Protocols to the Treaties of Pelindaba and Rarotonga is concluded by all the NWS.

Concerning the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, OPANAL urges the P5 that issued interpretative declarations upon signature and/or ratification of the Additional Protocols, to modify or withdraw them, especially those that affect the denuclearized status that the region adopted since 1967. Although we understand that the only absolute guarantee is the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

We reiterate our conviction that the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a contribution to regional and global peace and security; hence, although we join the regrets about the postponement of the 2012 Conference on the establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East, we welcome with optimism the decision of Finland, as the facilitator, to continue with the efforts to make this possible. We reiterate to Ambassador Jaako Laajava our willingness to continue to share experiences that could be relevant to these processes.

We also hope that the III NWFZs Conference scheduled for 2015, under the leadership of Indonesia, will make progress through concrete measures for cooperation and coordination between and among Zones.

Back to the NPT, and from a constructive perspective, we would expect to see progress in 2015 on the implementation of measures adopted in 2010. We acknowledge and encourage the initiatives for nuclear armament reduction. However, we consider that it is also necessary to promote multilateral negotiations on total and complete Nuclear Disarmament; this would lead to the reduction of the deep asymmetry in the implementation of the three pillars of the NPT. At the same time, it would reduce the risk of continuing to fracture the international architecture built from this Treaty, which is precisely why it is called the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. By not taking forward nuclear disarmament would be comparable to imagining the NPT as a two-sided triangle.

Moreover, OPANAL once more urges those States that have neither signed nor ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so, especially Annex II States.

With the spirit to see the future positively, I am pleased to reiterate that Latin American and Caribbean States adopted the 2011 Declaration, a document that I presented to the UNGA First Committee in that same year, in which they agreed to join the efforts of the international

community to take forward the negotiation on a legally-binding instrument aimed at prohibiting nuclear weapons. Today, this consensus is one of the guidelines of the Agency's agenda, which is based on the indivisibility of Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament, with the premise of the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to reaffirm that OPANAL will continue to implement its Peace, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education Programmes, in conjunction with governments and civil society.

To conclude, we congratulate Ambassador Enrique Román Morey on his appointment as Chairman of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We wish him every success on his mission; above all, we have the firm hope that the winds that will embrace us in New York City would be real spring winds, renaissance winds of a new season that leads to the creation of a world without the threat of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic consequences that would derived from their use.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.