



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

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**Towards the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the  
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

Thematic Seminar on Pillar II: non-proliferation

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### *INTRODUCTORY REMARKS*

I thank you the distinguished representative of Mongolia -who by the way has been doing an excellent job as coordinator of the IV Conference of States Parties- Thank you again for all your efforts.

And I would like to thank also the organizers for convening such a relevant thematic seminar on non-proliferation, as we are getting closer to the commencement of the X Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation which outcome, in my opinion, would define most of the dynamics between its States Parties in the years to come.

We all hope that would be for good, albeit the difficult current context.

### *PRESENTATION*

Now, I would like to be very concise in my presentation and to focus on why nuclear weapon free zones are still relevant and how they have greatly contributed to the nuclear non-proliferation regime established more than fifty years ago, and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) as one of its founding stones, and what we expect for the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

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*Dear Colleagues,*

The creation of nuclear-weapons-free zones is one of the milestones in International Law and they are supported by almost the entirety of the international community, through the many resolutions adopted on yearly basis at the United Nations General Assembly, and constitute one of the most important contributions to the implementation and strengthening of the NPT. They are also considered as historical marks.

For instance, in 2019, we commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and of the establishment of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), and 2019 marked also the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty. To this day five Zones have been established, to which we add Mongolia as a

nuclear-weapon-free state, a status formally recognized by the United Nations in 2001.

The relevance of these zones resides in the fact that they conform, notwithstanding all individual and regional distinctions, a block of 116 States that prohibited nuclear weapons in their regions. By way of consequence, those States would not be counted as supporters of nuclear weapons. All the five Treaties that create the Zones mention nuclear disarmament as the ultimate goal.

Each of the Treaties clearly defines the geographical space to which it applies and the obligations undertaken by its States party. All States belonging to nuclear-weapon-free zones are also parties to the NPT, being also bound by safeguards agreements concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

These States are, therefore, subject to multiple commitments derived from their renunciation of nuclear weapons, which is key to preserve their own security.

We cannot forget the fact that today there still exist around 14 thousand nuclear weapons, thousands of them deployed. For this reason, we continue being involved in the discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation through the political and legal stature that provides our belonging to a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

## II

Regarding on what we expect from the 2020 NPT Review Conference, all the 33 States Parties to Tlatelolco consider that all efforts must be exhausted to achieve the success of the Review Conference, even if most of the disarmament community remains to some extent sceptical.

More particularly, OPANAL and its Member States consider that some essential aspects should be taken as benchmarks, for instance:

1. 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.

2. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, once in force, will join the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the NPT on the road towards the elimination of these weapons of mass destruction. The proscription of nuclear weapons is a step in the road towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.
3. The obligation established in article VI of the NPT must be fulfilled by each Party to the Treaty.
4. Nuclear-weapon States must eliminate any role for nuclear weapons in their security doctrines and policies. Non-nuclear-weapon States that are covered by extended nuclear deterrence policies by means of military alliances should seek alternative security policies.
5. The qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and development of new types of these weapons must cease, as these constitute actions inconsistent with the obligation to adopt effective measures towards nuclear disarmament and contravene the spirit and objectives of the NPT. The Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones represent a legal and concrete achievement of the utmost importance in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament; therefore, the establishment of such regimes in new regions should be actively supported.
6. Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones established by means of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the respective regions and recognized by the United Nations General Assembly must be respected by all States without any reservations or limitations.
7. The States Parties to additional protocols to the treaties establishing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones should seek, in contact with the States Parties to such zones, the solution to existing controversies created by declarations that harm the effectiveness of the Zones in order to give full and unequivocal security assurances to the States belonging to Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones.

8. It remains a priority to convene the international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, an integral and important part of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.
9. The convening of periodic conferences of the States belonging to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia is important for the strengthening of such Zones and can contribute to the creation of new Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, including in the Middle East.

Finally, regarding the issue of establishing further zones free of nuclear weapons, it took 35 years for all the 33 states of our region to fully participate in the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. Nonetheless, it is important to keep always in mind that the zone within its area of application has been valid, and in force since 1969.

This experience could be taken into account for the creation of other zones as, for example, in the Middle East. For this reason, we welcomed the commencement of this process by the convening, in 2019, of the “Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and weapon of mass destruction”, held from 18 to 22 November 2019.

We believe this is an important step in the right direction and OPANAL and its Member States will be closely following its future development.

*Dear colleagues,*

These are some of the views of OPANAL, and we do believe that a meaningful Final Document of the 2020 Review Conference has to reflect, among others, some of the ideas and concepts that we have been discussing during this reunion.

Thank you.

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