



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

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STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, distinguished Ambassador Carlos Alfonso Tomada, for your election as President of this XXVII General Conference of OPANAL. Congratulations and count on Costa Rica's support for your work during this day.

Likewise, I would like to extend my congratulations to the Representatives designated as Vice Presidents, the Ambassadors and representatives of Guatemala and Mexico, thank you very much for assuming this responsibility.

I would like to begin my brief speech by congratulating Mr. Secretary-General of OPANAL, Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, on his report, and at the same time, thanking him for his effort and work in strengthening OPANAL in these important moments, in these moments so decisive for the world.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Aníbal Cabral and our gratitude for his magnificent role as President of the Council of our Agency.

Costa Rica, original signatory of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, ratifies today its absolute commitment to the ideals and values that inform, which underpin the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the operation of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, that commitment of Costa Rica is totally rooted in our historical evolution and is a very significant part of the Costa Rican effort over many years to contribute to peace, international cooperation and disarmament.

Costa Rica decided to unilaterally eliminate the army as a permanent institution in our country, in our society, in 1948, and in that decision, Costa Rica also made the commitment

to turn - and has done so in times of crisis - to the inter-American system and to the instruments of international law to defend their integrity, sovereignty and democracy. 35 years later, Costa Rica also unilaterally proclaimed its perpetual, active and unarmed neutrality through the Presidential Declaration of November 1983, again with that decisive step, Costa Rica reaffirms its commitment to international disarmament, peace and security.

We actively join the effort to adopt and put into force the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and we are pleased that this very important international instrument has been able to enter into force as of January, this year. Only the absolute prohibition of the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, storage, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and other nuclear devices, as established in the Treaty, only that prohibition can guarantee the human species survival and the validity of its human rights.

On this occasion, Costa Rica reiterates, I repeat, its full commitment to the ideals and objectives of OPANAL and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, we remember that our country had the privilege and opportunity to actively contribute to the operation of OPANAL by having had the honor that Ambassador Emeritus Gioconda Uveda Rivera could be the Secretary General of OPANAL during a statutory period, thus contributing to the strengthening of the Agency during a difficult period.

On this occasion, we would like to end our message by reiterating our gratitude to Mexico, not only for being the permanent headquarters of OPANAL, but for being the main promoter in the figure of Ambassador Emeritus Alfonso García Robles, of the promulgation, adoption and entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Without the bright and accurate activity of Ambassador García Robles, surely, we wouldn't have obtained the achievements that have been achieved with the creation of OPANAL and the entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Thank you once again to Mexico for that permanent, original effort that has been repeated throughout all the years defending nuclear disarmament.

Thank you very much, Mr. President, and thank you very much to the Delegates for your attention.