



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

General Conference

XXVII Session
September 30, 2021
Agenda Item 6

Original: Spanish

Courtesy translation

Statement by Ambassador Ana Isabel Carillo Fabián

**Director General of International Multilateral and Economic Relations, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guatemala**

**At the XXVII Session of the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of
Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL).**

September 30, 2021

Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of this position at the XXVII Session of the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). You can count on Guatemala's full support for the successful conduct of the work of this session.

As a State Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to the objectives and purposes of the Treaty, full observance of its provisions, as well as the promotion of nuclear disarmament.

We must recall that February of this year was the 54th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty, thus, laying the foundations for the establishment of OPANAL, which has undoubtedly contributed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as to regional and global peace and security.

Mr. President,

Latin America and the Caribbean is the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone and has prompted the establishment of other nuclear-weapon zones around the world. Guatemala supports these initiatives and promotes the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, as they represent a substantial step towards the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

For this and many other reasons, Guatemala appreciates the effort and commitment of the Secretary General and all the officials of the OPANAL Secretariat, who work every day to bring the provisions of the Treaty to life. Likewise, a special recognition is made that during the COVID-19 pandemic adaptability has been demonstrated so that the works continue without delay.

We also thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico that over the years, together with OPANAL, have organized and sponsored "The Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation", as well as the organization and coordination of the international course and the internship program.

In addition to these efforts, we urge that all Member States make more categorical efforts to revitalize the Agency, through:

1. Promotion of a culture of education for peace, disarmament and non-proliferation;
2. Increasing OPANAL's participation in international forums;
3. Strengthening relations with multilateral disarmament and nuclear weapons agencies; and
4. Encouraging follow-up to interpretative declarations.

Mr. President,

The current international situation presents a complex scenario that exacerbates the concerns of the international community about the stability of international peace and security, and nuclear weapons play a prominent role in the context of these threats.

The financial resources allocated for the maintenance and improvement of nuclear arsenals, as well as for the development of new types of nuclear weapons, are noted with concern when the world is immersed in other emergencies, such as climate change, which requires priority attention because of the devastating effects it produces.

Nuclear weapons pose a threat to the survival of human beings, the environment, socio-economic development and the health of present and future generations. Likewise, the use or threat of use of these weapons constitutes a violation of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law and the Charter of the United Nations.

In that vein, Guatemala reiterates that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination, as well as that the prohibition facilitates the elimination of these weapons. In this spirit, my country welcomes the entry into force, on the 22nd of January of this year, of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Guatemala is in the final domestic phase of ratification of that instrument, which complements the existing legal framework on this subject in favour of world peace.

Mr. President,

At a complex juncture for achieving global peace and security, it is necessary to restore confidence between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States by strengthening alliances with the aim of advancing concrete and more decisive actions. We urge those countries that have made interpretative declarations to the Protocols to the Treaty to review them with regard to the constraints on the object and purpose of this instrument.

The Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone established by our Treaty consolidates us as a pioneering region that seeks peace and the preservation of life on the planet. Let us continue our work that has as its ultimate goal the total elimination of these threats.

I thank you.