



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

**General Conference**

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**27<sup>TH</sup> ORDINARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
AGENCY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN  
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN– OPANAL**

**MEXICO CITY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2021  
STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY**

Thank you very much Mr. President,

The Republic of Paraguay welcomes the convening of this General Conference, this time in virtual format, which allows more actors from all latitudes to raise awareness of the real and serious threat posed by nuclear weapons to our region.

Mr. President,

The COVID-19 pandemic and its profound impact in the world have shown us that we cannot ignore the growing danger that nuclear weapons and their destructive power poses to life on our planet. For some countries it is synonymous to security, but for the vast majority it represents just the opposite, an existential risk that puts our collective security and the well-being of present and future generations at deadlock.

The entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the beginning of this year, to which Paraguay is a party, is an important step towards the elimination of this type of weapons, because it not only frames it in a legal, long-lasting and binding framework that contributes to nuclear disarmament, but also complements it with the Treaty of Tlatelolco. It has marked a milestone in the evolution of international law, as it is based on

the recognition of the humanitarian suffering caused by nuclear weapons and their catastrophic consequences for human health, the economy and the environment.

With the convening of the Tenth NPT Review Conference and the First Meeting of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, next year will be central to the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation machinery and we must not let it pass up to engage the international community into concrete action. My country will actively participate in discussions with other States and civil society organizations and we encourage other countries to maintain momentum and specially to continue with the preparations to ensure the success of the inaugural TPNW meeting and to work towards the implementation of its obligations and universalization.

Mr. President,

Women have contributed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts and their role is key to moving forward. However, much remains to be done to achieve equal opportunities and women empowerment in these areas. It is not enough to ensure greater representation of women in forums, it is also essential that they have an effective, full and equal influence on negotiations and decision-making processes on nuclear weapons. This requires investing in resources and implementing policies that prepare women as experts on these issues.

There is no future without education, and today there is a greater need to train and sensitize the younger generations to address the new challenges of nuclear weapons. OPANAL has done much in this field, but we must redouble efforts to reach a wider audience, using interactive educational methods that arouse interest and spread knowledge. One proposal to achieve this is by creating a virtual training centre through which online courses and workshops on disarmament and non-proliferation issues are provided.

The effectiveness of the Treaty of Tlatelolco lies in its control system based on IAEA safeguards and semi-annual reporting. The latter goes beyond being a mere additional mechanism, but constitutes a measure to promote trust between our countries and with regard

to third countries. Strict compliance with this commitment therefore ensures the effective functioning of the treaty and ensures our status as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Mr. President,

Paraguay wishes to express its support to the management of the current Secretary-General of OPANAL, Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, who is knowledgeable about Paraguay, and whose initiatives we have accompanied during his tenure. I also take this opportunity to highlight and thank the valuable work of the Secretariat staff for the excellent preparation of this General Conference, in particular for making available the relevant documentation, in these difficult times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In conclusion, Paraguay renews its firm commitment to continue contributing to the work of OPANAL aimed at ensuring the absence of nuclear weapons and the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the region.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.