

Statement by Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean - Treaty of Tlatelolco, February 14, 2023

Trinidad and Tobago joins the chorus of fellow Member States of OPANAL in commemorating the 56th Anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This year also marks the 56th anniversary of Trinidad and Tobago's signature of the Treaty and our membership in OPANAL, and we are so proud to belong to the first declared Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the world.

As a proud non-nuclear weapon state, Trinidad and Tobago is convinced that achieving the objective of totally eliminating nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is essential to guaranteeing international peace and security for the benefit of all humanity, and we maintain the view that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the UN Charter and International Law, including International Humanitarian Law.

Trinidad and Tobago has continually demonstrated unwavering support for the non-proliferation regime by signing on to the relevant international and regional instruments, and by participating in relevant international fora. Most recently, Trinidad and Tobago was among the first states to ratify the historic Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, even before its entry into force in January 2021, and endorsed the CELAC Special Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament in January 2023 which reaffirmed the importance of collaboration and cooperation between CELAC and OPANAL.

I am reminded of the legacy of the late Alfonso García Robles who, in concluding his acceptance speech when the Nobel Peace Prize was conferred on him in 1982, stated "Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation". Against this backdrop is the existential threat that now confronts us and as Member States of this august body, let us remain robust in our commitment to work together towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.