



OPANAL

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

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**Communiqué of the Member States of the
Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
(OPANAL)¹
on the occasion of the 55th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco**

14 February 2022

The 33 Member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL):

1. Commemorate this day the 55th Anniversary of the adoption of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco, and its effective contribution to nuclear disarmament.
2. Stress that the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated area, has served as a source of inspiration for four other regions in the world and Mongolia. Consider also that the Treaty and OPANAL are an important heritage of the international community and a political, legal and institutional reference for the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned.
3. Recall that, for more than five decades, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, with the permanent work of OPANAL, has guaranteed that Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as vast areas adjacent to their territories, are kept free of nuclear weapons, without prejudice to the exercise of the inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes also recognized in article IV of

¹ Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This Treaty is respected by the six States Party to the Additional Protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco: China, United States, France, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Russia.

4. Stress that militarily denuclearized zones do not constitute an end in themselves, but rather a highly relevant intermediate step towards nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under effective international control.
5. Reiterate their conviction that the establishment of militarily denuclearized zones, in accordance with article VII of the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is closely related to the maintenance of peace and security in the respective regions and that the military denuclearization of vast geographical zones, adopted by sovereign decision of States comprised therein, has exercised a beneficial influence on other regions.
6. Emphasize that the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones promote peace and stability at the regional and international levels by prohibiting the possession, acquisition, development, testing, manufacturing, production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear weapons; and reaffirm the supremacy of verifiable, irreversible, transparent and complete nuclear disarmament; and reiterate that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination.
7. Encourage the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones by means of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned and stress the importance of these zones as a contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.
8. Affirm that the unequivocal and legally binding guarantees to the States belonging to Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones against the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are a fundamental element for the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and constitute a legitimate interest of the international community.
9. Call on the four nuclear-weapon States that issued interpretative declarations to the Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco which are contrary to the letter and spirit of the

Treaty², to examine them together with OPANAL aiming at revising or eliminating them in order to provide full and unequivocal security assurances to the States of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean; and to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the region.

10. Reiterate their commitment to continue to promote the dialogue and cooperation among Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, including Mongolia, through, inter alia, the early convening, in 2022, of a fourth conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, and to contribute to its successful outcome.
11. Welcome the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between OPANAL and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) on 1 December 2021, which establishes a formal framework for cooperation between the nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Pelindaba.
12. Recall their participation in the adoption and entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that prohibits the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
13. Consider that, with its entry into force, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons joins the path towards the elimination of those weapons of mass destruction that have marked the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
14. Note that these three Treaties, as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), once in force, establish norms of International Law that are legally-binding on the States which signed and ratified them; these legal instruments are not mere declarations of intention, nor can they automatically produce the disappearance of nuclear weapons; however, they are a suitable legal basis for the process aimed at eliminating all nuclear weapons forever.
15. Recall the obligation derived from article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which commits each Party “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective

² France, Russia, United States and United Kingdom.

measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control”.

16. Reiterate their deep concern over the threat to the survival of humankind posed by the existence of nuclear weapons, as well as the catastrophic humanitarian impact and environmental consequences of their possible use or any intentional or accidental detonation.
17. Regret that the Tenth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has again been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, urge that this Conference be held as soon as possible, and express their determination to contribute to its success. Also, inspired by the purpose of achieving tangible progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons, call upon all States Parties to the NPT to make every effort for the consensus adoption of a final document that reaffirms the validity of the resolutions and commitments adopted in previous review cycles, and that establishes effective measures to achieve substantive progress to correct the imbalance in the full implementation of the provisions of the Treaty in its three pillars: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
18. Stress their great concern about the prevalent international situation, which is characterized by the increasing threat of use of nuclear weapons in a context of geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts and threats of terrorism, that occurs when there still are States possessing nuclear weapons, many of those on alert status. In that regard, firmly demand that nuclear-weapon States cease the qualitative improvement and modernization programs of their nuclear arsenals, the development of new types of such weapons and of new scenarios and procedures for the development and employment of new types of such weapons, which is inconsistent with the spirit and objective of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
19. Call for reflection on the vast amount of resources dedicated to the maintenance, development and modernization of nuclear arsenals and to consider whether these resources could be better utilized in pursuit of a better future as envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals.
20. Reiterate the commitment of the States of the region endorsed in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, to continue to promote nuclear disarmament as

a priority objective and to contribute to general and complete disarmament in order to favour the strengthening of confidence among nations.

21. Demand that nuclear weapons not be used again by any actor, under any circumstances, what can only be assured by the prohibition and the subsequent transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination of all nuclear weapons.