



OPANAL
AGENCY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN

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**Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of
Pelindaba Statement by the Secretary General of the Agency for
the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the
Caribbean**

H.E. Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini

- *His Excellency, Messaoud Baaliouamer, Executive Secretary of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE)*
- *Distinguished authorities of the African Union*
- *Excellencies,*
- *Dear colleagues and friends,*

First of all, allow me to congratulate you for convening this Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba, and for allowing me to send this video message in my capacity of Secretary General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). I am optimistic that next Conference I will be able to attend, in-person, and have also the possibility to greet each one of you.

Secondly, I want to briefly refer to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between AFCONE and OPANAL, which successful conclusion we announced last year. As we are now finalizing with our Cooperation Action Plan, I would like to emphasize on the importance of the full and effective implementation of our MoU, as it will allow us to better coordinate initiatives and joint political positionings in relevant multilateral disarmament fora. I make vows that the international meetings scheduled, for this year, will mark a first occasion to do so.

Thirdly, the Treaty of Pelindaba and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as two of the five treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, are relevant driving forces in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Both treaties are critical reminders to the international community about the threat to humankind that represents the existence of more than 13, 000 nuclear weapons, let alone the return of the menace of a potential nuclear war, but more importantly, that the vast majority of States demand a global nuclear-weapon-free zone as it is the only guarantee of long-term peace and security.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate the support of OPANAL to AFCONE and all States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba. I am certain that our continuous cooperation and information exchange on best practices and lessons learned will greatly benefit our two regions and the nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the Treaty of Pelindaba and the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

I thank you for your attention.