



OPANAL

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

Secretariat

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**FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2026 REVIEW
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-
PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

Statement by:

Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini

Secretary-General

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

OPANAL

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Mr. Chair,

In my capacity as the Secretary-General of Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you, Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen, on your election as Chairman of this Preparatory Committee.

I also convey warm greetings from OPANAL to the esteemed members of the Bureau and the Secretariat. As Secretary-General of OPANAL, I am pleased to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to support and contribute to a successful outcome under your capable leadership.

Mr. Chair,

The failure of the 2022 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final consensus document reflects the complex geopolitical landscape that poses significant challenges to international efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The absence of a substantive outcome underscores the urgency and complexity of the issues at hand. This challenging environment demands renewed political will, cooperation, commitment, and visionary leadership from all the States parties to the NPT to overcome these obstacles and work towards a safer, more stable world for current generations and generations to come.

While the lack of a consensus document adopted at the 2022 NPT Review Conference was discouraging, it also highlighted the need for renewing our efforts and commitment to dialogue and cooperation. Although current regional conflicts and a renewed global arms race continue to cast a shadow over the prospects for meaningful progress, OPANAL, through its Member States and the Secretariat, is committed to work collectively to contribute meaningfully to this review cycle.

Mr. Chair,

Latin America and the Caribbean is proud to be the first region in the world to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, inspiring other regions to follow suit. The Treaty of Tlatelolco stands as a testament to our collective commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

With all 33 countries from the region having signed and ratified the Treaty, and the five nuclear-weapon states and the Netherlands signing and ratifying its two Additional Protocols, the Treaty of Tlatelolco is fully effective. Nonetheless, the interpretative declarations made by France, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States to the Additional Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco represent reservations that may undermine the denuclearized status of the region.

OPANAL has been seeking to establish a dialogue mechanism with these States to find mutually agreed solution to this issue. We hope that this PrepCom will serve as a platform for further discussions on this matter.

During the next two weeks, the NPT through the focused work of its three committees, - disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy-, must be reinforced. This critical undertaking demands serious discussions and pragmatic cooperation to advance our common objectives. We hope this task is approached with determination and a sense of urgency, recognizing the challenges ahead as we strive for a safer global landscape.

Mr. Chair,

The Treaty of Tlatelolco, the NPT through its three pillars, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), establish norms of International Law, providing a suitable legal basis for the imperative process aimed at completely eliminating all nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable, and irreversible manner, once and for all. Notably, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) complements the prohibition norm set forth by the Treaty of Tlatelolco and serves as an effective measure to implement Article VI of the NPT.

The 33 OPANAL Member States, in their joint statements, have noted that *the TPNW has joined the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the NPT, on the path towards the elimination of these weapons of mass destruction in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner¹* and highlighted the importance of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)².

¹ Joint Communiqué on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. <https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Comunique-56-Eng.jpeg>

² Declaration of the Member States of OPANAL on the occasion of the “International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons issued on 26 September 2022”. https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Inf_30_2022Rev.4_eng.-Dec.26sept.2022.pdf

It is unfortunate that unlike previous NPT Review Conferences, the last one was not preceded by a Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia. The convening of periodic conferences of the States belonging to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia holds paramount importance for the robust strengthening of such Zones and the potential creation of new Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, particularly in regions like the Middle East.

Thus, I earnestly urge all States belonging to Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones to come together and agree on the dates for the IV Conference. Furthermore, I call upon them to collectively designate a coordinator for this pivotal gathering. While the current atypical situation should not set a precedent, it is imperative that we maintain continuity and progress in our efforts.

Our expectation is that prior the next Review Conference the IV Conference of Nuclear-Weapon Free Zones has been convened. This coordinated approach will not only strengthen existing Zones but also pave the way for the establishment of new ones, fostering global peace and security.

Mr. Chair,

Esteemed delegates,

As we deliberate during the next two weeks, let us approach our work with determination, pragmatism, and a sense of urgency, recognizing the importance of regional efforts towards nuclear disarmament. Together, through open dialogue and cooperation, a safer, more stable world, free from the threat of nuclear weapons, and ensure a sustainable future for all humankind, must be assured.

I thank you.