



## **General Conference**

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### **Statement by Argentina**

First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the staff of the Secretariat of OPANAL, as well as the Members of the Council, for their intense work throughout this year.

As it is known, my country signed the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 27 September 1967 and ratified it on 18 January 1994. The Argentine commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation has been unflinching since that first date and, as consequence, has actively participated in OPANAL, throughout these years.

Argentina has traditionally taken the issue of nuclear disarmament as a priority and has made significant efforts in this area, reflecting a clear and sustained commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Within this framework, our country maintains an active nuclear program for exclusively peaceful purposes, thus it produces and exports nuclear technology within the framework of the strictest respect for the rules enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

For Argentina, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains as the cornerstone of the regime of disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The three pillars of the Treaty are the reflection of the legal and political framework underpinning nuclear strategies of all our countries, both nuclear-weapons and non-nuclear-weapons States. At the same time, this framework receives substantial content and meaning from the international context in which it is inserted, which today is clearly full of

challenges and questionings about how to move forward as a global community with shared goals.

General and complete disarmament, internationally verifiable and guaranteeing its irreversibility is a challenge that, in order to be effective, the international community should address constructively and on the basis of broad consensus.

The next 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which my country will chair, will be the next opportunity to promote this joint work.

Latin America and the Caribbean pioneered the establishment of the planet's first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone through the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

However, Latin America and the Caribbean was until now the only region in the world that had not had the opportunity to lead the International Atomic Energy Agency in its more than 60 years of existence.

That is why we welcome the election of Ambassador Rafael Grossi to the position of Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as we thank the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for the significant support provided in the election process.

Ambassador Grossi will contribute the necessary technical expertise and diplomatic leadership to ensure that the IAEA remains the indispensable and indisputable international institution in the nuclear field, maintaining its strong reputation and projecting it into future challenges.

The election of Ambassador Grossi is also a recognition to the Latin American and Caribbean region and its contribution, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, to international peace and security.

Argentina permanently holds a position of clear support for the establishment and consolidation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, in the understanding that they constitute important contributions to peace and security for the States that are part of them. In this

regard, the contribution of the Treaty of Tlatelolco has been real and effective, as it strengthened our regional commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament and, through its system of Protocols, managed to bind nuclear-weapons countries in order for them to not diminish the status of our region as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

Nonetheless, we should continue working so that the interpretative declarations to the Protocols to the Treaty are withdrawn or revised, in accordance with the text of the instrument. We highlight the effort that the Secretariat has been doing in this regard.

Finally, we would like to reiterate the importance of the submission of semiannual reports in observance of Article 14 of the Treaty, in order to fully and effectively comply with that obligation.

As it is known, part of the Argentine national territory, specifically the Malvinas Islands, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands, and the surrounding maritime areas, are illegally occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, so the Argentine Republic is in fact prevented from accessing that portion of its territory. Consequently, my country does not know whether the Treaty is effectively enforced in the aforementioned part of its national territory.