**INTERVENTION BY THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA**

**XXVI SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF OPANAL**

**Thank you very much Mr. President,**

**Mr. Secretary-General,**

**Member State Colleagues,**

To begin, I greet and thank the Argentine Embassy for the courtesy of hosting this important work session, which is carried out in compliance with our obligations as member countries of OPANAL.

The delegation of Bolivia, on this occasion wishes to thank and congratulate the Secretary-General, Ambassador Luiz Felipe de Macedo Soares, for his work and leadership. Actions that allow us to comply with the interests of our common agenda. Likewise, we recognize the important and valuable contribution of his entire team.

For the Plurinational State of Bolivia, to be one of the 33 Member States of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is a source of pride, as it signifies political commitment and effective action that has managed to guarantee for 5 decades that the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean, remains free of nuclear weapons.

We know well that to achieve nuclear disarmament on the global level is one of the oldest objectives that we have as an international community. However, we are concerning that we are currently facing:

* Resumption of nuclear tests
* Modernisation Programmes
* Creation of new types of nuclear weapon vectors and,
* The expansion and constant threats of use of nuclear weapons, in a scenario of political tensions, armed conflicts and terrorism.

Some countries, unfortunately, are in the race to reinforce their nuclear potential, arguing their need to “recapitalise” their capacity, through the modernisation of some elements and the incorporation of new types of weapons.

In this sense, it is alarming that official international discussions continue to utilise paradoxical arguments that indicate that: when weapons of mass destruction are in the hands of the great powers, they are interpreted as a legitimate source of military power, political prestige and even a stabilising force. While, when they are in the hands of other countries, they are considered as a threat to the existence of the international community.

Both affirmations, instead of helping to build a real regime of international security, are rather debilitating it. Whenever weapons of mass destruction are intrinsically dangerous, irrespective of the hands in which they are… “As long as there is only one State that has this kind of weapon in its arsenal, others will want to have them and there will be the risk that one day they are used, intentionally or accidentally, for the attack or defence… Which would be catastrophic”.

Therefore, the disarmament work of Latin America and the Caribbean and its commitment to the total prohibition and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, are essential for this struggle, making OPANAL a living and active actor.

The success of our Treaty and its resilience has generated worldwide recognition of the work that we do as a region. That is why it is important to continue with the contribution of OPANAL in distinct multilateral forums, as a Delegation we ponder upon the contributions that we are making, for example, in the Preparatory Committee for the Conference of Parties of 2020, in charge of the Review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Bolivia, within the framework of its commitment and pacifist vocation, has also been carrying out a series of actions at the international level. Permit me very briefly to indicate that during the 2017 and 2018 administration, my country assumed on two occasions the Presidency of the Security Council in the framework of the seat that we occupy as a non-permanent member of this highest body. Within the prioritized agenda, the topic of Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons of mass destruction was treated with special effort.

Likewise, a few days ago, on 7 and 8 November, Bolivia hosted the Regional Conference on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 for Latin America and Caribbean States. This session hosted 17 countries of the region and different Organizations specialized in security issues, among these OPANAL. On this occasion, the exchange of best practices and ways of strengthening national capabilities in terms of the commitments to Resolution 1540 were addressed.

Also, in a few days, on 3 to 7 December, we will have the honour of hosting in Bolivia, the “Course on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” offered annually by OPANAL. In turn, there will be a high-level discussion that will be chaired by our S.G. and accompanied by different Bolivian authorities. These activities will be directed to public functionaries, students of the diplomatic academic, journalists and other persons involved in the subject. This will be done with the objective of contributing to education and promotion of values, actions and goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, through the formation of new cadres on the topic.

Finally, in April of this year, President Evo Morales signed the attachment to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, thus ratifying our commitment and political will to have a more active role in one of the most important issues for humanity, how to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons in pursuit of social justice.

Thank you