



# OPANAL GENERAL CONFERENCE

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### **External Relations of OPANAL**

#### **Memorandum of the Secretary-General**

Article 9, of the Treaty of Tlatelolco lists among the functions of the General Conference that it:

“Shall be the competent organ to authorize the conclusion of agreements with Governments and other international organizations and bodies.”

Article 20 resumes and reinforces this provision, stating in paragraph 1 that:

“The Agency may also enter into relations with any international organization or body, especially any which may be established in the future to supervise disarmament or measures for the control of armaments in any part of the world”.

This mandate is comprehensive, open and with a forward-looking vision and includes governmental and non-governmental organizations, regional as well as global.

Articles 13, 16, and 19 of the Treaty confer a special role to the International Atomic Energy Agency – IAEA- as an integral part of the Control System.

Article 22 is careful to preserve States Party’s rights and obligations as members of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States.

Throughout its history, OPANAL has acted in compliance with those provisions set forth in the Treaty and is recognized by international organizations and agencies. Consequently, the Secretary-Generals or other representatives have participated in meetings within the framework of the aforementioned organizations and other fora. Likewise, documents have been submitted to those entities as initiatives of OPANAL or in response to specific consultations. Cooperation agreements have been signed with governmental and non-

governmental organizations. OPANAL counts with coordinators for its Member States at the United Nations (New York and Geneva) and at the IAEA (Vienna).

The reports of the Secretary General (Doc. CG/03/2015) and of the Council (Doc. C/018/2015), presented to the XXIV Regular Session of the General Conference, describe the recent efforts undertaken in the sphere of external relations of OPANAL.

Of special relevance is the decision of the Latin American and Caribbean Heads of State and Government to issue two Special Declarations on nuclear disarmament in the Summits of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States – CELAC, in 2014 and 2015. Additionally, the Declaration of the II CELAC Summit held in 2014 designated OPANAL as the “the specialized body in the region for articulating common positions and joint actions on nuclear disarmament” (paragraph 72). The creation of CELAC and the aforementioned declarations incorporated OPANAL into this Latin American and Caribbean political system recently established. Until then OPANAL had been the only organ composed of all the States of the region. The Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean is a political characteristic and an intrinsic part of the strategy of the region. Therefore, OPANAL has to be intimately related to CELAC.

This Memorandum addresses, in a very specific manner, issues relating to the external relations of OPANAL.

### **1. Community of Latin American and Caribbean States - CELAC**

As a result of the aforementioned developments, CELAC should include OPANAL in its activities. OPANAL should therefore take part in the following:

- the drafting of declarations and other CELAC documents relating to disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;
- the preparation of the statement by CELAC at the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly;
- CELAC Summits.

Although it may appear obvious, difficulties arise from the fact that CELAC and disarmament matters are often addressed through different areas at the Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

## **2. United Nations**

The resolutions adopted by a wide majority by the First Committee in the LXX Session of the United Nations General Assembly : “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”, and “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”, represent a re-launching of the efforts of the international community towards a world without nuclear weapons.

The following items ought to be of interest to Member States:

- Intensify the relationship between OPANAL and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA);
- Participation and contribution by OPANAL in the Open-ended Working-Group established through Resolution “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, which will meet for 15 days in 2016;
- Preparation by OPANAL of the first draft of the triennial Resolution “Consolidation of the Regime Established in the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)” to be adopted at the LXXI UNGA without prejudice to subsequent work by GRULAC in New York.

## **3. Organization of American States - OAS**

OPANAL has participated on various occasions in meetings of the Committee on Hemispheric Security, the last one by videoconference in March 2014. Other opportunities could be explored to present the concerns of the Member States of OPANAL relating to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Additionally, the OAS could serve as an additional point of contact between OPANAL and its Caribbean Member States, all of which are represented at the Pan-American Union.

It would be convenient that the Secretary-General visit the OAS headquarters, he would therefore have the opportunity to address the Permanent Council and meet with the new Secretary-General, Mr Luis Almagro.

## **4. International Atomic Energy Agency - IAEA**

The most recent visit of the Secretary-General of OPANAL to the IAEA occurred in 2012. In 2014, the OPANAL coordinator in Vienna, Ecuador, delivered the Secretary-General’s statement at the IAEA General Conference. Bearing in mind the preeminent role that the IAEA has within the Treaty of Tlatelolco, it is important to re-establish promptly, direct contact with the Agency in Vienna, where the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Organization – CTBTO – is also located, an organization with which OPANAL ought to have a direct relationship.

#### **5. Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accountability and Control of Nuclear Materials - ABACC**

The Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accountability and Control of Nuclear Materials is placed within the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, it has therefore a family relationship with OPANAL. For this reason, it is appropriate that the bonds of friendship between the two organizations should be strengthened by the two OPANAL Member States who are part of ABACC.

#### **6. Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and Mongolia – NWFZs**

Having created the political and legal concept of a NWFZ, our region was followed by the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Central Asia, subsequently joined by Mongolia. In our region, in Mexico City in 2005, the NWFZs held their first Conference bringing together all their member States, and a second Conference took place in 2010. However, the third Conference, held in New York in 2015, was unable to adopt a final document due to procedural reasons. This may jeopardize the continuity of a fertile initiative that is still at its nascent stages. The 116 States sharing the characteristic of having banned nuclear weapons through legal instruments can play a very influential role in disarmament and non-proliferation international politics. The lack of institutionalization in three NWFZs and the incipient operations of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) hinder contact between NWFZs.

Given its historical position, OPANAL should lead the movement of the NWFZs. To this end, it would be important that the Member States, and their Missions in New York in particular, promote efforts to start consultations among NWFZs Representatives. The Secretariat of OPANAL is ready to provide advice in the development of said efforts.

The proposals contained in this Memorandum must be understood as part of the preparations for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. It is essential that the commemorative events be made in an open manner to all Member States, reaching out of the region, and counting with the collaboration of all States and organizations in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Due to the fact that the central objective of the Treaty is the security of the region in a world free from nuclear weapons, OPANAL should become a more outward-looking institution.