



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

Conference General

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**XXVII GENERAL CONFERENCE OF OPANAL
STATEMENT BY PERU**

Thank you, Mr. President,

Mr. President, Vice-Presidents, Mr. Secretary-General, representatives of the Member States and observers,

I wish to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General and his team for organizing this General Conference and, through him, to the Government of Mexico for the support provided for its realization, for the first time in virtual format.

Mr. President,

Since our last meeting, the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed significant challenges on the work of our Agency, as throughout the world, but it has been satisfactory that, despite them, OPANAL has been able to remain active and even more so, strengthened its work in some aspects.

In particular, I would like to highlight the strengthening of ties with other Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and other important strategic partners, whose presence at this Conference we see with particular satisfaction.

Paradoxically, despite the circumstances of isolation, virtuality has allowed us to be closer and without prejudice to resuming the much-needed and irreplaceable face-to-face activities, we must continue to take advantage of this tool. Undoubtedly, the completion of the negotiations of a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Nuclear Energy

Commission (AFCONE) in this period is a sign of its usefulness. We must continue to work to deepen our integration and joint efforts with other NWFZs.

It is also worth highlighting the Agency's various initiatives in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education, in particular the internship programme and the Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which, once again thanks to virtual tools, achieved record participation.

An issue of great importance and concern, on which unfortunately there has been no significant progress in these two years, is that of the Interpretative Declarations to Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Although a Technical Group has been formed to rethink a strategy of rapprochement with those States that formulated them and I am fully confident that we will make progress soon on this issue, I wish to make a call upon to the representatives of the States parties to those Protocols -present at this meeting- to open up to dialogue, taking into account the efforts of OPANAL to approach in this regard in recent years.

Mr. President,

Peru reaffirms its unwavering commitment to disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and arms control as indispensable elements for the preservation of international peace and security. In that regard, my country is actively participating in all multilateral fora to contribute to achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

In particular in the case of OPANAL, I would like to emphasize that Peru has had the opportunity to coordinate the Agency in Vienna in recent years, bringing its voice to the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We appreciate this opportunity and do not doubt the success that our successor will have in carrying out this task.

By renewing Peru's commitment to OPANAL, an institutional reference at the international level in the field of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, we assure you that we will continue to play an active and proactive role in the Agency.

On a personal note, and as I am about to conclude my mission as Ambassador of Peru to Mexico and as Permanent Representative to OPANAL, I wish to express to each of you and to all those who are no longer with us but who over the years contributed to the best performance of my functions, either with their great professionalism or their human quality, a heartfelt gratitude and my best wishes for us to continue working from wherever we are to move towards disarmament, peace and global security.

Many thanks.