



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

General Conference

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Agenda item 6

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Courtesy translation

Statement by France

Your Excellency, Mr. Minister, Your Excellency, Mr. Secretary-General, Your Excellency, Mr. President, etc.

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors,

Distinguished members of the diplomatic corps,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the government of Guatemala and OPANAL for organizing this special session here in Guatemala, at the National Palace of Culture.

France has always considered that one of the significant avenues for disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation lies in a regional approach. Therefore, this new meeting of OPANAL is, for my country, an important occasion to reaffirm its commitment to the Tlatelolco Treaty, of which France ratified both protocols in 1992 and 1974.

France's commitment to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean is largely part of its efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament, of which the security assurances it has provided are an integral part. The current context of the war in Ukraine shows the importance of these security guarantees and their fulfilment. I wish to reiterate here the centrality and primacy of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as the cornerstone of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regimes, and of the commitments within this framework.

As you are well aware, France granted security guarantees to more than a hundred non-nuclear-weapon States within the framework of the protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, which it then extended to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT and respectful of their non-proliferation commitments. The reservations and interpretative declarations issued on Protocol II are clear and fully in this framework.

On the other hand, France also completed its ratification of Protocol I to the Treaty with a declaration, practically entirely accepted by the law of treaties.

The purpose of this declaration is to specify that France admits a zone of territorial application of the Treaty including the territorial sea, airspace, and any other place in which a State Party to the Treaty exercises its sovereignty, in accordance with its legislation and in compliance with Article 3 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. France is thus adhering to the territorial scope of a treaty traditionally accepted in international law.

This declaration also specifies that, in accordance with a consistent position regularly expressed, the obligations of Protocol I do not apply to transit through French territories located in the Treaty area and to other French territories. It is up to each State, in the free exercise of its sovereignty, whether or not to authorize this type of transit.

Finally, France wishes to reiterate that the prohibitions mentioned in the Treaty of Tlatelolco refer to nuclear weapons. Therefore, nuclear naval propulsion does not fall within the scope of this treaty.

Thank you.