



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

**General Conference**

XXVIII Session  
3 November 2023  
Agenda item 6

Original: Spanish  
*Courtesy translation*

**Statement by the Republic of Panama**

Your Excellency Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL),

Your Excellency Mr. Oscar Lorenzo Arnold, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belize to Mexico and President of the Council,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Representatives of the delegations of the Member States of this collegiate body and to the Observer States, members of the Secretariat, good morning, everyone.

First of all, we would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala for hosting the community of States that make up the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), and to convey the greetings of H.E. Janaina Tewaney Mencomo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, for the deference to the proper functioning of the Agency.

We have taken note of the important progress detailed in this meeting and I reaffirm the willingness of the Republic of Panama to support the actions carried out by this organization.

Excellencies; Distinguished Delegates,

The Republic of Panama appreciates the support expressed by the approval of our candidacy for one of the two Vice-Presidencies of this General Conference and reiterates its commitment to contribute to efforts to end the arms race, particularly nuclear ones, contributing to the achievement of a world in peace, based on the sovereign equality of States, mutual respect and good neighbourliness; upon our entry as a new Member of the Council, we wish to endorse the fulfilment of the obligations of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

It is important for our country to recognize the work done by the Member States of the Council that preceded us, Belize, Honduras and Nicaragua, for the excellence they have done and whose mandate is about to end.

On the other hand, we welcome the election of Argentina and Mexico, Member States of the Council for the subsequent four years, a period that will begin from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2027 and with which we will join efforts to ensure the proper functioning of the Control System, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Tlatelolco in terms of the powers conferred on the Council and those emanating from the General Conference.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Panama, as a signatory to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, once again supports the efforts made by OPANAL, reiterates that it is a party to other legal instruments such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), all aimed at nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, observing International Law and the two instruments that seek international peace and security, in order to achieve a world free of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

The Republic of Panama believes that dialogue and negotiation are indispensable ways to achieve peace and believes that regional groups such as the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) can propose new ideas and agree on solutions from our perspective in order to avoid more complex escalations, confirming the principles outlined in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and consolidating the spirit of regional cooperation as a corollary of our basic commitment.

Panama observes with great concern the erosion of international security, and in this regard, it has been demonstrated that the validity of our Organization is becoming more relevant; by promoting a non-aggression pact, nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, with the importance of being guarantors, as signatory countries, of the non-use, stockpiling or transport of nuclear weapons, which takes on a more preponderant meaning in these times.

Therefore, we urge everyone to redouble their efforts to restore peace and stability in our region and the world, to agree on ideals aimed at establishing the conditions required for their

sustainability, and to seek consensual answers to the challenges we face today, and which are of primary interest to all States.

Excellencies:

As you are aware, the Republic of Panama aspires to occupy a position before the United Nations Security Council for the period 2025-2026, recalling that we gained experience as a member of the Security Council in five different periods, the most recent being in 2007-2008, during which it held the Presidency of that Council in complex international circumstances.

We aspire to be a liaison between the permanent members of the Security Council, understanding the importance of representing the strategic interests of other Member States to the Security Council, with the maxim of achieving optimal conflict prevention and management.

At this time, in the midst of a world in turmoil, escalating conflicts and the complex global crisis in which we are immersed, whose main challenge is to find an iota of reflection, to undertake joint actions aimed at the establishment of peace and security, including to restore the balance of power, we depend on an increasingly assertive multilateralism that it is capable of self-evaluating the processes of institutional dialogue and mediation that exist in the United Nations and in our regional organizations, where the ideals of OPANAL converge.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

In accordance with the above, we urge to continue strengthening the mechanism, renewing our commitment to International Peace and Security, on the premise that we will increase efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, which seek to undermine human life and the environment; being constant in the multilateral commitment to the disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, sends an unequivocal message of respect for international instruments and international law that we promote.

Thank you very much.