



OPANAL
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Intervention of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay

Thank you, Mr. President, good morning, everyone. First of all, I would like to thank the government of Guatemala for its hospitality in organizing this event, which really makes clear the importance of having the possibility of each member state being able to host it in the future so that this is known not only at the level of headquarters in Mexico, but in each of our countries because it really is an issue that sadly does not have the dissemination that it should have.

Secondly, I am grateful for the honor of having the Vice Presidency. I also accompany and greet my colleague from Argentina and the Secretary General, congratulating Mr. Flávio Roberto Bonzanini for the organization.

Dear Observer representatives, dear delegates,

Today we are celebrating a new session of the General Conference of OPANAL, in a year in which multilateral diplomacy has been tested again, following the serious conflicts triggered at the international level in the world, and that without a doubt jeopardize international peace and security.

As a region, a pioneer in legally instituting the prohibition of disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, we must carry on with the mission of increasingly strengthening our Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and declaring our commitment and leadership regarding disarmament and non-proliferation. In this respect, I believe that it is necessary that we continue to raise our voice in the face of the normalization of nuclear rhetoric, the expansion and modernization of nuclear arsenals by those States that possess weapons and that are a threat to the international disarmament regime, as well as international peace and security.

Uruguay, Mr. President, faithful to its pacifist vocation, and its condition as a State that does not possess nuclear weapons, considers it appropriate to reaffirm in this General Conference, the unshakable commitment of our country to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, including the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Uruguay's adhesion to the multilateral regulatory framework finds its best complement in the implementation of a foreign policy that has been taken as State policy, to promote the need to continue advancing in international negotiations in order to achieve general and complete disarmament under the strict international regime that we have been fulfilling.

The mere existence of nuclear weapons constitutes a real and latent danger to the security and survival of mankind. Therefore, we firmly reiterate that the use and threat of nuclear weapons constitute a crime against humanity and a serious violation of International Law, humanitarian law and the UN Charter, where I allow myself to recall the words of Albert Einstein when he said: "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones".

The growing international tensions force us to redouble our efforts to keep away this threat without losing sight of the final goal of the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons in an irreversible, verifiable, and transparent manner. Without preconditions or reservations, and within a multilaterally agreed time frame.

They also remind us, Mr. President, that it is necessary to have unequivocal and legally binding guarantees, on the part of the Nuclear Weapons States, against the use and the threat of use of this weapon.

Uruguay wishes to highlight once again the importance and essential role of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the safeguard agreements in the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, an essential pillar in the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, for which we also highlight the observance of the right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as established in Article 4 of the NPT as a fundamental part of these agreements.

Mr. President,

Uruguay considers that the Non-Proliferation Treaty constitutes a milestone in nuclear disarmament, a significant commitment of international peace and security, and that it should be the goal of disarmament, and of humanitarian law against the irreversible damage that these weapons cause.

Uruguay proudly integrates this first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated area of the planet and a source of inspiration for the establishment of other similar zones. As I pointed

out at the beginning of my speech, strengthening this zone and the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, both internally and externally, will be essential to continue facing up to the challenges that this represents.

Therefore, we are pleased with the dialogue channels established by the OPANAL Council, with the four States parties that made interpretative declarations to Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and we urge to continue in order to achieve progress on this issue.

Likewise, we will continue working to revitalize the work of OPANAL, for which we understand it is paramount to advance in strengthening the General Secretariat and give them any means that are possible to fulfill its tasks, as well as the work methods that will facilitate the inclusivity of all State Parties and the efficiency, interactivity, and transparency of the deliberations of the OPANAL bodies.

Dear delegates and representatives,

In front of the challenges the world faces, today more than ever, the OPANAL Member States are called to redouble our efforts to continue honoring the historical commitment that this region assumed in promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to advance towards a safer and freer world of nuclear weapons.

Thank you very much.