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STATEMENT OF SUSAN F. BURK

**U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY
DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates and Friends of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Thank you for the opportunity to address this Fifteenth Regular General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). I am honored to represent the United States at this conference.

Earlier this year, on February 14, my government was privileged to participate in the Extraordinary session of OPANAL called to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The United States representative to that meeting, Ambassador Thomas Graham, read a statement from President Clinton to those gathered for that celebration. In congratulating the parties on the anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, President Clinton noted the extraordinary foresight of the Treaty's drafters who, as he said, "were among the first to take up the challenge posed by the dangers" of nuclear weapons proliferation and "to codify what is now an international norm of nuclear nonproliferation." The President's message further reaffirmed continued United States' support for the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

The United States' association with the Treaty of Tlatelolco began in the 1960s when the United States attended negotiating sessions as an observer. Since then, we have become party to the Treaty's two Additional Protocols. And we have welcomed each new Party to the Treaty as further progress towards its full entry into force. Today, the Treaty of Tlatelolco is in force for nearly every state eligible to join, and its Additional Protocols are in force for all eligible states. Today, the model for nuclear weapon free zones established by the Treaty has been embraced in whole or in part by states in the South Pacific, Africa, and

Southeast Asia who have negotiated regional nuclear weapon free zone treaties that meet their specific regional security needs. The proponents of initiatives for other nuclear weapon free zones will surely look to Tlatelolco for inspiration and ideas. We would encourage them to do so.

We are now in a period of unprecedented progress for international peace and disarmament. And the list of achievements - both multilateral and bilateral - since the last OPANAL regular General Conference in 1995 is an impressive one.

Just two years ago, more than 170 parties to the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) agreed to extend that agreement indefinitely and without conditions, making it a permanent part of the international security architecture. The NPT parties also adopted a set of "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament" which represent a blueprint or agenda for future efforts to achieve the full realization and effective implementation of the provisions of the NPT.

Progress continues to be made towards the widely supported goal of universal adherence to the NPT. In particular, my government welcomed Brazil's announcement on June 20 that it intends to submit the NPT to its Congress for ratification. This is an extremely important development for the NPT and for the international nonproliferation regime. The United States looks forward to Brazil's full participation in the NPT regime, in particular its strengthened review process.

Since last September, more than 140 states have signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in New York, an historic measure intended to end all nuclear explosive testing for all time and a measure explicitly called for in the NPT Principles and Objectives. Last year, as well, the United States and the other nuclear weapon states signed the Protocols to the Treaties of Rarotonga and Pelindaba, adding our tangible support to the nuclear weapon free zones created by these agreements in the South Pacific and Africa and giving effect to the NPT Principles and Objectives call for "the cooperation of all nuclear

weapon states and their respect and support for the relevant protocols" as necessary for the maximum effectiveness of nuclear weapon free zones. Just last month, a United States delegation traveled to Malaysia for consultations with the parties to the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty toward a Treaty and Protocol that conform to The longstanding U.S. criteria for supporting such zones.

The Tlatelolco and NPT Treaties are complementary instruments, and reinforce each other both politically and technically. The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) just recently decided formally that a safeguards agreement concluded pursuant to either of these Treaties satisfied the safeguards requirements of the other. In May of this year, the members of the IAEA Board of Governors adopted a new Model Protocol to strengthen the safeguards system upon which both the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the NPT rely for verification of compliance. This Model Protocol is the result of the international community joining together to promote a shared nonproliferation objective, in this case strengthening the ability of the IAEA to detect undeclared nuclear activities. The United States has indicated its willingness to accept the Protocol in its entirety, to make it legally binding, and to apply all of its provisions except where they involve information or locations of direct national security significance.

Bilaterally, the United States continues to work together with the Russian Federation in the pursuit of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons. The START I Treaty entered into force in December 1994. Implementation of the Treaty is running well ahead of schedule; as of January 1997, both parties have already reduced their strategic nuclear warheads below those limits that must be met by December 1997, and are close to the limits set to take effect in December 1999.

On January 26, 1996, the United States Senate voted to give its advice and consent to ratification of the START II Treaty, which is designed to achieve further deep reductions. In a Joint Statement at their March 1997 summit, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin

underscored the importance of prompt ratification of the START II Treaty by the State Duma of the Russian Federation and reached an understanding to begin negotiations on START III immediately after START II enters into force. In addition to further reducing the levels of strategic weapons by 30-45 percent of START II levels, the Presidents agreed that START III will include measures relating to transparency of strategic nuclear warhead inventories and the destruction of strategic nuclear warheads.

All of these accomplishments contribute to our security. Equally important, each step makes it possible to take the next step to diminish the threat of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. An important next step that deserves our immediate attention is the negotiation of a ban on producing fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. A Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty has long been on the international arms control agenda and the time is ripe to secure it. Just as the CTBT serves as a qualitative constraint on new nuclear weapons, the Cutoff Treaty will be a quantitative constraint as it seeks to limit the availability of the nuclear material essential for such weapons.

The states represented here today have embraced the goals of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament through their adherence to nuclear weapon free zone treaties, the NPT, the CTBT and other instruments. The goals and objectives of these many mutually-reinforcing agreements are as vital today as when they were negotiated. All of us have a responsibility to ensure that the progress we have achieved collectively and individually to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is not reversed or otherwise diminished by complacency, inaction or inattention. The United States reaffirms its unwavering commitment to do its part to continue to support this Treaty and other efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate the risk of nuclear weapons in all regions for all time.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to address this Fifteenth Regular Session of the OPANAL General Conference.