



AGENCY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Conference on Disarmament

Message on the occasion of the 48th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco

read *by*

The Representation of the Argentinian Republic

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

On behalf *of*

Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares

Secretary-General of OPANAL

13 February, 2015

Nuclear arsenals represent the most imminent and direct threat posed to all peoples from all countries, without exception, and the victims would range from States that possess nuclear weapons to those that have no military forces.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, we will live under the risk that any explosion, accidental or intentional, would cause irreversible and catastrophic humanitarian and ecological consequences of global proportions. Preventing and eliminating this menace posed upon us is the highest and most imperative task for Humanity's survival; and yet, it still does not receive the necessary public attention.

The negotiators of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, opened for signature 48 years ago on 14 February 1967, and known thereafter as Treaty of Tlatelolco, had full conscience of this reality and of this paramount goal in international relations. They also possessed the vision to establish a legal instrument without precedent, one that is fully respected everywhere and that has served as a model for other regions.

The Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (NWFZ) in Latin America and the Caribbean established by the Treaty, is not an inward association limited to keep its realm without nuclear weapons. Its Member States have maintained the goal of nuclear disarmament as a pending task. As established in the Preamble of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, States Parties are convinced "That the privileged situation of the Signatory States, whose territories are wholly free from nuclear weapons, imposes upon them the inescapable duty of preserving that situation both in their own interests and for the good of mankind".

In order to ensure compliance, the Treaty of Tlatelolco established the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). For over 46 years, OPANAL has been the sole regional International Organization devoted to nuclear disarmament.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States with the acronym CELAC, has issued in its last two summits, in Havana, January 2014, and San José Costa Rica, a few weeks ago, special Declarations on nuclear disarmament. The positions of the Region were clearly stated at highest level. The need for the prompt negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons was one of them. The Heads of State and Government declared OPANAL as the specialized agency of the region on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Let us remember this day that nuclear disarmament under effective international control is a right for every human being which should be demanded as a common good.

The 48th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is an opportunity to honour a vital contribution of our region to international peace and security. As well, it serves as a reminder of one of Humanity's most pressing objectives.