



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

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**Commemoration of the 45th Anniversary of the Signing of the
Treaty of Tlatelolco**

Address by

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Mexico City
14 February 2012

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Honourable Members of the Presidium,

Ambassador Patricia Espinosa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of México;

Ambassador Gioconda Ubeda, Secretary General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL);

Ambassador Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, Under-Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico;

Mr. Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization;

Ambassador Sergio Duarte, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs;

Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Dr. Leonardo Almagro Lemes, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay;

Dr. Enrique Castillo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Costa Rica and President Pro-Tempore of OPANAL Council;

Distinguished authorities who join us today at this historic venue;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Please accept a very warm welcome on behalf of Dr. José Narro Robles, Rector of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, who very much wanted to be here, but due to prior commitments could not be present in this important meeting.

I would like to welcome you to Tlatelolco University Cultural Centre; venue that offers the appropriate conditions to develop a strategic project of our House of Studies. This magnificent architectural complex served as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Headquarters for nearly four decades and became part of the University Heritage, in 2006, creating a great cultural space to revitalise community life in the northern areas of Mexico City. Furthermore, it would expand the scope of institutional academic programmes and contribute to compliance with a core principle of the University spirit: *the widest possible dissemination of the benefits of culture and knowledge.*

Today, this iconic venue hosts the Commemorative Event on the occasion of the 45th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, also known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco; taking place in this very auditorium named after an exemplary Mexican and former UNAM student, His Excellency Alfonso García Robles. Diplomat and legal expert of

high ability and recognized competence, who played a crucial role in designing and orchestrating the Treaty, whose primary objective is to contribute to putting an end to the arms race, particularly regarding nuclear arms, and to promote the consolidation of universal peace based on States' sovereignty, mutual respect and good neighbouring among them.

García Robles' contributions to disarmament were greatly relevant; they performed important functions in strengthening such aspiration in the sphere of the United Nations. In 1982, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for the intense activity developed over the course of his career in favour of denuclearization and disarmament.

The Treaty in its crucial aspects establishes that *the Contracting Parties undertake to use exclusively for peaceful purposes the nuclear materials and facilities that are under their jurisdiction, to prohibit and prevent, in their respective territories, the testing, use, manufacture, production or acquisition of any nuclear weapons, directly or indirectly*. This indicates the need for the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean to comply with the international responsibility to keep their territories forever free from nuclear weapons; consequently avoiding the waste of resources in the development of such devices and simultaneously calling for protection of their peoples against potential attacks of this nature.

The essence of this document strove to promote the wellbeing and progress of their peoples through cooperation in order to achieve some of humanity's most cherished ideals: the consolidation of a permanent peace based on equal rights, economic equity and social justice, according to the Principles and Purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Charter of the Organization of American States.

Nowadays, these aspirations are still valid; hence the importance of the event after 45 years over the establishment of the responsibilities embodied in the Treaty of Tlatelolco. In this day and age, it is absolutely essential to reiterate the importance of the Treaty's high-level principles that we gather to commemorate today. The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) is honoured to host, in this iconic venue, such a significant event, due to the sensitive nature of the issues to be addressed. On behalf of the Rector of UNAM and with a desire for success in this celebration, once more, Welcome to Tlatelolco University Cultural Centre.
Congratulations.

Dr. Carlos Arámburo de la Hoz
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