



45th Anniversary
1967-2012

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

S/Inf.1091

General Debate

**FIRST PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
2015 NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Address by
**AMBASSADOR GIOCONDA UBEDA
OPANAL SECRETARY GENERAL**

Vienna, Austria
3 May 2012

Mr. Chairman,

May I extend our congratulations on your election as Chair for this First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the next NPT Conference and wish you every success in your deliberations.

45 years have passed since Latin American and Caribbean States signed the Treaty of Tlatelolco, in which they not only committed themselves to the military denuclearized regional status, but also they declared that the end goal of the Zone was to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. This is the spirit of our participation in this First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee: to work together for a world free of such threat.

Statements made in this general debate reiterate the same aspirations: the construction of a safe and peaceful world, without nuclear weapons. We might say that the similarities in the purposes are evident; the differences lie in the place where they are pronounced. Not a simple subject in the complex reality of international politics. To acknowledge and respect those differences are the basis for fruitful dialogue, necessary element to reach effective agreements in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We hope that this atmosphere prevails during the meeting as further advances are expected from this Conference than from the 2010 Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

OPANAL reaffirms the urgent need to move forward towards the primary goal of nuclear disarmament: to achieve the total and general elimination of nuclear weapons. In this respect, we highlight that the creation of NWFZs has been a contribution to this end. Thus, a contribution to regional and global peace and security.

We acknowledge the recent improvements made by each existing NWFZ and hope that Nuclear Weapon States (P5) will soon conclude the signing and/or ratification of Additional Protocols to NWFZ Treaties. Concerning the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which completed the ratification of its two Protocols more than two decades ago, urges NWS to withdraw or adapt the interpretative declarations made at the time of signing and/or ratification; thereby providing unconditional negative security assurances. Although we are convinced that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or misuse.

OPANAL considers very convenient that the Chairmanship of the Third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties establishing NWFZs and Mongolia will be led by Indonesia. We assure this delegation our collaboration to take, under their leadership, concrete steps towards the strengthening and consolidation of NWFZs and their common purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

It is the cause of great satisfaction that this year the Conference on the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone -or any other weapon of mass destruction- in the Middle East will be held, in pursuance of the resolution adopted in 1995. We recognized the efforts made by Finland

as Facilitator, we also reiterate Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, Under-Secretary of State, our very best wishes for the important mission that has been entrusted to him.

Acknowledging that this is a sovereign process of States in the Middle East region, we are very willing to share the experience of the NWFZ in Latin America and the Caribbean, as we did in the Forum convened by the IAEA Director-General at the end of last year. We hope that States in the Middle East will soon embark on the long and complex process that could lay the basis for a stable and enduring peace in that region.

Regarding the 33 Member States of OPANAL, I am delighted to share with you all that 31 States have ratified the CTBT, being Guatemala the latest to ratify such multilateral instrument. We continue to work to achieve, as soon as possible, the ratification of the CTBT by all Member States. We hope that States listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty adhere to it shortly.

All Members States of OPANAL issued a Declaration last year, presented during the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, in which they agree, inter alia, “to support the exhortation of the UN Secretary-General in his Five-Point-Proposal on nuclear disarmament, in which he urges all NPT parties, in particular the nuclear-weapon-states, to fulfil their obligation under the treaty to undertake negotiations on effective measures leading to nuclear disarmament.” In this respect, they also expressed “their determination to initiate the negotiations for a universal legally binding instrument aimed at prohibiting nuclear weapons; they committed themselves to joining forces in favour of the main objective.”

With this Declaration, Latin American and Caribbean States join forces with other States, International Organizations and Civil Society Organizations to achieve this aspiration of mankind.

Mr. Chairman,

Darkness does not last forever; when we begin to see the first rays of light we will know that morning has come. We hope that the next NPT Review Conference will make notorious progress in this legitimate aspiration: a nuclear-weapon-free world. Not an easy task, but possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman