



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

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**56th Regular Session of the General Conference of the  
International Atomic Energy Agency**

*Remarks by*

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your election as Chair of this General Conference, I wish you every success in the discharge of your duties. I would also like to congratulate the newly designated Members of the IAEA Board of Governors; particularly those designated for the Latin American and the Caribbean region, Argentina, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Brazil. Furthermore, we welcome the application for membership of Trinidad and Tobago.

This General Conference is a propitious occasion to explain the relationship between the IAEA and OPANAL, which has evolved over the past five decades along with a universal legal and complex architecture seeking to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation regime.

This relationship started in the 1960s during the negotiation and drafting processes of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was signed in 1967. Although the scopes of both agencies are different in many respects, there is a primary bond that connects them. I am referring to the functions and powers of the IAEA provided for in the Control System established by the Treaty, for the purpose of verifying compliance with the obligations of States Parties under the Treaty, and the obligations of Signatory States to its two Additional Protocols. On the one hand, OPANAL Member States committed themselves to using nuclear material and facilities exclusively for peaceful purposes; on the other hand, Nuclear-Weapon-States (P5) committed themselves to respecting the military denuclearized status of the Zone, and not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against any State Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

In order to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Control System included the obligation of States Parties to negotiate safeguards agreements with the IAEA, even before the signing of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). OPANAL was given authority to request the IAEA to carry out special inspections in order to ensure the objectives of the Treaty which go beyond safeguards.

Besides the functions given to the IAEA within the Treaty framework, the relation with the NWFZ in Latin America and the Caribbean grew in the early 1990s with the signing of the Quadripartite Agreement between Argentina, Brazil, ABACC and the IAEA. From a bilateral angle, this Agreement and the creation of ABACC strengthen the regional Control System.

Despite the fact that OPANAL has not had to request the IAEA to carry out special inspections, according to the System of Tlatelolco they are inherent in the non-proliferation regime and in the negative security assurances. States Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco are committed to this regime, and Signatory States to Additional Protocols are committed to those security assurances. This gives rise to the vital importance, for OPANAL, of maintaining and strengthening the bond between both agencies, recovering the relationship within the complex universal architecture that revolves around the IAEA today.

The presence of OPANAL at the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety, held in June 2011, and its dynamic participation in the *“IAEA Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East”* in November of the same year, represented a starting

point for the revitalization of the bond between both agencies. The presence and message of Mr. Yukiya Amano, IAEA Director-General, at the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, held in Mexico City on 14 February this year, marked an important step in this regard; particularly, a step towards the recovery of direct dialogue and mutual recognition. In his remarks, Mr. Amano recalled that at the time when the Treaty of Tlatelolco established the first NWFZ in the world, there was no experience to learn from, stressing that “Importantly for the international nuclear safeguards regime, the Treaty enshrined a requirement that all parties should conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA.”

As we all know, there are currently five NWFZs in the world, being recognized as an important contribution to regional and global peace and security; as an effective means of non-proliferation and disarmament. In the regime created by NWFZs, the IAEA is not linked to each Zone in exactly the same manner, but it does play an essential role in each one of them. The Treaty of Tlatelolco was necessary for the incorporation of safeguards and also for “assigning a broader role to the IAEA, in support of NWFZs.” Therefore, the mandate given 12 years ago to the IAEA to convene a Forum on the creation of a NWFZ in the Middle East was not accidental.

Mr. Chairman,

We will continue to build a closer partnership with the IAEA in order to strengthen the Control System of the NWFZ in Latin America and the Caribbean. We will continue to contribute to the non-proliferation regime; and we will continue to work to ensure the benefit of using and developing nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes to the 33 Member States of OPANAL. We will continue to aim towards the reason for the existence of the Zone, to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Thank you