



**ORGANISMO PARA LA PROSCRIPCIÓN DE LAS ARMAS NUCLEARES  
EN LA AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

- **OPANAL Member States will celebrate the 45th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the World.**
- **The Commemorative Event and the International Seminar renew the political will to join forces in order to achieve a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World.**

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) will hold commemorative activities on 14-15 February on the occasion of the 45th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, instrument that gave birth to the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the World, established in a highly populated area. This event, capturing the political will of States during the Cold War, has been one of the most important political contributions of the Region to the World in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The significance of this commemoration is enhanced not only by the historical contribution to regional and global peace and security, but also by the vigour of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and OPANAL's regional and global agenda. Today, more than ever before, is necessary to join efforts in order to move irreversibly forward with efficacious instruments towards a nuclear-weapon-free world; being this the highest aspiration of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, declaring that Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) were not an end in themselves, but rather a means for achieving this purpose. Resolutions taken by the Region's 33 States captured in the Treaty will remain in force until the final objective is reached.

It is still a long way away from it; therefore the belief and actions must be robust and progressive, aware of the necessity to have all actors joining forces.

The opening event, the Commemoration of the 45th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, is convened by OPANAL and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico. It will be held on the morning of Tuesday February 14 (9:30 am) at Alfonso García Robles Auditorium of the University Cultural Centre Tlatelolco, with the attendance of world eminent personalities in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Yukiya Amano; the High-Representative of the United Nations for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Segio Duarte on behalf of the United Nations Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon; the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-ban Treaty (CTBTO), Mr. Tibor Tôth; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, Dr. Enrique Castillo in his capacity as President Pro-Tempore of OPANAL's Council; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Ambassador Patricia Espinoza C.; the rector of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Dr. José Narro Robles and the Secretary General of OPANAL, Ambassador Gioconda Ubeda.

The Commemorative Event will close with a distinguished lecture by Ambassador Sergio Duarte on "The importance of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in the nuclear disarmament process."

At 12:30hrs at the same venue, the International Seminar "The experience of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean and the perspective towards 2015 and beyond" will start, in which high representatives from Member States to the Treaty of Tlatelolco will take part, together with Signatory States to Additional Protocols, as the United States, the Russian Federation and the Netherlands; also representatives from other NWFZ as Kazakhstan, Indonesia, New Zealand and Australia; high representatives from International Organizations related to the subject; representatives from international NGOs and academic staff. The Seminar will conclude on Wednesday February 15 at 14:30 hrs.

Programmes to both activities are attached. For more information, please contact Mr. Jorge López Lechuga, OPANAL Press Officer. [jorge.lopez@opanal.org](mailto:jorge.lopez@opanal.org)

According to Resolution 3472 (XXX) of the UN General Assembly, *“a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone shall, as a general rule, be deemed to be any zone, recognized as such by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which any group of States, in the free exercise of their sovereignty, has established by virtue of a treaty or convention...”* Nowadays, there exist five NWFZs (Latin America and the Caribbean, South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia) a total of 114 countries. Each Zone has its own characteristics, about the NWFZ in Latin America and the Caribbean, a system formed by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, its Additional Protocols I and II, through which Nuclear-Weapon States (the United States, China, France, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation) committed themselves not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States that are party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and not to deploy such weapons in their territory, as it happened over the Cold War.

Nuclear weapons constitute a blatant threat to the survival of humankind; Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones represent a decisive step towards a world free of such menace. Today's challenge is to continue joining forces to achieve this legitimate and essential aspiration.

Mexico City, February 2, 2012.