



Organismo para la Proscripción de las Armas Nucleares  
en la América Latina y el Caribe (OPANAL)

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**PRESS RELEASE**

- **UN Secretary-General met with OPANAL Secretary-General**
- **Both leaders shared impressions of the creation of a Nuclear-Weapon- Free Zone in the Middle East, as Latin America did so in 1967.**

Ambassador Gioconda Ubeda, Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), met today, in New York City, with Mr. Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General.

Both leaders shared impressions of the process of building a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East and of the International Conference convened for that purpose in Finland, in December 2012. The UN Secretary-General expressed the importance of having the experience of OPANAL in this process; therefore communication channels will remain open. He also expressed his appreciation for the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean (NWFZ) as the first Zone established in a densely populated area and as a point of reference for the creation of four more Zones around the world: South Pacific, Africa, Southeast Asia and Central Asia.

Ambassador Ubeda reiterated the commitment of OPANAL and its Member States to share with Middle East Nations the best practices and lessons learned during the long and complex consolidation process of the NWFZ; recalling that it was 35 years after the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, in 1967, when the last Member State fully incorporated itself into the Zone, in 2002.

The UN Secretary-General thanked Ambassador Ubeda for OPANAL efforts to reactivate the nuclear disarmament agenda, and for its actions to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. He stressed in particular OPANAL efforts to move forward towards building a nuclear-weapons-free world. To conclude, Ambassador Ubeda, Costa Rican national, recalled that when the Latin American and Caribbean States created the NWFZ, they set their ultimate goal: to liberate the world from the threat posed by nuclear weapons. She also added that until this goal is achieved, OPANAL and its Member States will have much work ahead.

The meeting between the two secretaries-general was held within the framework of the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) was created by the Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1969 and has its headquarters in Mexico City. All 33 States in the region are Members of the NWFZ.

New York City, 11 October, 2012.