



OPANAL
Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
Secretariat

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Statement *by*

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President of the Council of OPANAL

Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
in Latin America and the Caribbean
(OPANAL)

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Mr Chairman,

On behalf of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), I express to you our compliments for your election as Chairman of the First Committee. It is always a pleasure to work under the guidance of a very distinguished diplomat from our Latin American and the Caribbean region. You can count on the support of OPANAL in all your efforts. I also bring warm regards from the Secretary-General of OPANAL, Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares.

I would also like to extend our greetings to the members of the Bureau and the Secretariat whom we thank for their dedicated work

Mr. Chairman,

At the end of the General Debate, having heard numerous interventions by Member States, the turn comes to intergovernmental organizations, which at the First Committee are usually in a very limited number.

In fact, few intergovernmental organizations deal with the subjects matter of the First Committee. OPANAL is, perhaps, the only one entirely devoted to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

As it happens every three years, this session of the UN General Assembly is expected to adopt a resolution, under item 92 of the agenda, on the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The draft resolution was first established at OPANAL Headquarters and its incumbent to Mexico, as Depositary State, to conduct consultations that will lead, as in previous occasions, to the adoption of the resolution, without a vote.

On 26 September 2019, the Member States of OPANAL issued a Declaration on the occasion of the *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*, as they have been doing since the General Assembly established this commemoration in 2013. It is a very complete declaration covering the main aspects concerning the problem of nuclear weapons.

Another example of our action, this year, was the Position Paper submitted to the Third Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. As you know, the Treaty of Tlatelolco is a precursor to the NPT. Hence, the interest of OPANAL Member States to preserve and strengthen the NPT by means of a successful Review Conference.

All these documents issued by OPANAL consist of negotiated language reflecting the consensus of the region.

Mr. Chairman,

Last year, OPANAL introduced through our coordinator in New York –the Brazilian Mission- a draft resolution convening the Fourth Conference of States Parties and Signatories to the Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones. This is another important event for the next year. OPANAL is fully committed to the success of this important event coordinated by Mongolia. OPANAL formulated a number of suggestions that could improve the communication and cooperation among the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

I mention for instance: 1) Greater cooperation with the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs; 2) A new comprehensive study on the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones; 3) A joint annual resolution at the United Nations General Assembly of all nuclear-weapon-free zones; 4) Focal points or a consultative group to have regular exchange of information, etc.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Among many other activities, I would like to highlight our concrete and effective efforts in terms of disarmament and non-proliferation education. In the last two years, OPANAL has organized four courses on disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, that took place in Uruguay, Bolivia, Guatemala and Nicaragua. It may seem limited, but it is of great importance that around 150 government officials in those countries received complete information and training on this matter. To that, we may add, our internship program which is also part of our educational program.

Thank you.