



OPANAL

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

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**Communiqué of the Member States of the
Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
(OPANAL)
on the occasion of the 53rd Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco
14 February 2020**

The 33 Member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL):

1. Commemorate this day the 53rd Anniversary of the adoption of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco.
2. Recall that, for more than five decades, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, with the permanent work of OPANAL, has guaranteed that Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as vast areas adjacent to their territories, are kept free of nuclear weapons, without prejudice to the exercise of the inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This Treaty is respected by the six States Party to the Additional Protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco: China, United States, France, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Russia.
3. Stress that the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated area, has served as a source of inspiration for four other regions in the world. Consider also that the Treaty and OPANAL are an important heritage of the international community and a political, legal and institutional reference for the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned.

4. Stress that militarily denuclearized zones do not constitute an end in themselves, but rather a highly relevant intermediate step towards nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under effective international control.
5. Reiterate their conviction that the establishment of militarily denuclearized zones is closely related to the maintenance of peace and security in the respective regions and that the military denuclearization of vast geographical zones, adopted by sovereign decision of States comprised therein, has exercised a beneficial influence on other regions.
6. Emphasize that the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones promote peace and stability at the regional and international levels by prohibiting the possession, acquisition, development, testing, manufacturing, production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear weapons; and reaffirm the supremacy of verifiable, irreversible, transparent and complete nuclear disarmament; and reiterate that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination.
7. Reiterate their commitment to continue to promote the dialogue and cooperation among Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, including Mongolia, through, inter alia, the convening, on 24 April 2020, of a fourth conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, in accordance with the resolution 73/71, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, on 13 December 2018, and to contribute to its successful outcome;
8. Affirm that the unequivocal and legally binding guarantees to the States belonging to Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones against the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are a fundamental element for the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and constitute a legitimate interest of the international community.
9. Call on nuclear-weapon States that issued interpretative declarations to the Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco which are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Treaty, to examine them together with OPANAL aiming at revising or eliminating them in order to provide full and unequivocal security assurances to the States of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean; and to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the region.

10. Recall their participation in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that prohibits the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
11. Consider that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), once in force, will add to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) on the path towards the elimination of these weapons of mass destruction.
12. Note that these four Treaties establish norms of International Law that are legally-binding on the States which signed and ratified them; these legal instruments are not mere declarations of intention, nor can they automatically produce the disappearance of nuclear weapons; however, they are a suitable legal basis for the process aimed at eliminating all nuclear weapons forever.
13. Stress their determination to work in favor of and to contribute to the success of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, to be held on 27 April to 22 May 2020, in New York, in the framework of the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its indefinite extension, and welcomed that it will be chaired by Ambassador Gustavo Rodolfo Zlauvinien, from Argentina.
14. Stress their great concern about the prevalent international situation, which is characterized by the increasing threat of use of nuclear weapons in a context of geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts and threats of terrorism, that occurs when there still are States possessing nuclear weapons, many of those on alert status. In that regard, firmly demand that nuclear-weapon States cease the qualitative improvement and modernization programs of their nuclear arsenals, the development of new types of such weapons and of new scenarios and procedures for the development and employment of new types of such weapons, which is inconsistent with the spirit and objective of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
15. Recall the obligation derived from article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which commits each Party "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear

disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control”.

16. Reiterate the commitment of the States of the region endorsed in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, to continue to promote nuclear disarmament as a priority objective and to contribute to general and complete disarmament in order to favour the strengthening of confidence among nations.
17. Demand that nuclear weapons not be used again by any actor, under any circumstances, what can only be assured by the prohibition and the subsequent transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination of all nuclear weapons.