



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

Secretariat

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Contribution of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) to resolution A/RES/79/241 entitled "Comprehensive study on the issue of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects".

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), as the international body responsible for ensuring compliance with the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco),¹ which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated region, on 14 February 1967, is honored to submit the following elements pursuant to operative paragraph 6 of UN General Assembly resolution 79/241, entitled "*Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects*"²:

1. OPANAL attaches the utmost importance to the new "*Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects*", as it is an initiative conceived and promoted by the Member States of OPANAL to contribute to strengthening existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia, as well as to regional efforts for the establishment of additional zones in other regions of the world.
2. The 1975 comprehensive study is considered by OPANAL as one of the historical milestones of the joint efforts of the United Nations and interested Member States to promote the regional approach characterized, at that time, by militarily denuclearized zones, which contributed to coin the term "nuclear-weapon-free zones" used ever since in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation sphere.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068.

² A/RES/79/241 <https://docs.un.org/es/A/RES/79/241> operative paragraph 6: "Requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, regional organizations, organizations of the United Nations system with special competence in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, disarmament and peace-related institutes and relevant non-governmental organizations on matters falling within the scope of the study and to report thereon before the end of its seventy-ninth session."

3. This study, complemented by the report of the Disarmament Commission of 30 April 1999, which recommended a set of principles and guidelines for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, is to date the only guidelines available to the international community to promote the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not exist.
4. OPANAL considers that the objective and scope of the new study should be sufficiently broad and inclusive to be able to shed new light on new elements that will not only promote the possible creation of more nuclear-weapon-free zones, but also strengthen the legal and institutional structures established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco (1967); the Treaty of Rarotonga (1985); the Treaty of Bangkok (1995); the Treaty of Pelindaba (1996); the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (2006); and Mongolia's status as a nuclear-weapon-free state.
5. Strengthening the legal and institutional structures of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an essential condition for the viability and sustainability of such regimes. Success in the establishment of new zones directly depends on the survival of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and reaffirming their added value to the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.
6. Furthermore, OPANAL considers that this new study should, among other aspects, highlight the complementarity of the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones with multilateral legal instruments that constitute the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).
7. During the nearly six decades since the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, OPANAL and its Member States have faced significant challenges of various kinds. These range from the institutional and procedural establishment of the treaty itself with the creation of OPANAL, through its reforms and amendments, to the long journey toward its universalization, as well

as more mundane aspects such as the fact that OPANAL does not yet have permanent headquarters.

8. The experience of nearly six decades has allowed OPANAL to identify problems, but also important lessons learned and best practices that could be useful for the new comprehensive study on nuclear-weapon-free zones.
9. Thus, the elements listed below respond to the interest of OPANAL and its Member States in contributing to the strengthening and sustainability of the regime established by nuclear-weapon-free zones, from the Latin American and Caribbean perspective, considering that nuclear-weapon-free zones are not an end in themselves, but a means to achieve general and complete disarmament at a later stage.

Principles and Objectives of the Treaty of Tlatelolco

10. The preamble of the Treaty of Tlatelolco outlines the principles and objectives of the establishment of militarily denuclearized zones, which were later incorporated into the first comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, conducted in 1975, and the guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1999. Among these is the understanding that "nuclear-weapon-free zones are not an end in themselves but rather a means for achieving general and complete disarmament at a later stage."
11. It should not be forgotten that the fundamental motivation for establishing such a zone in the region stemmed from the conviction that the existence of nuclear weapons in any country of Latin America and the Caribbean would render it a target of potential nuclear attacks and could trigger an arms race in the region, as well as divert essential resources away from economic and social development. This objective is shared not only by existing zones but also by other regions seeking to establish such spaces in the short, medium, and long term.
12. In this context, Latin America and the Caribbean have always been convinced of the imperative need for nuclear energy to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and not for the development of nuclear weapons, and that the countries of the region are

entitled to the fullest and most equitable access to this energy source to accelerate the economic and social development of their peoples.

13. Another relevant element of the preambular part of the Treaty concerns the recognition of the principle of an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states, which should remain a central element in all multilateral disarmament efforts.
14. Furthermore, Latin American and Caribbean states are convinced that nuclear weapons, whose catastrophic humanitarian consequences indiscriminately and inevitably affect both military forces and civilian population, constitute an affront to the integrity of humankind and can render the entire planet uninhabitable.
15. For this reason, Latin American and Caribbean states consider that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, adopted by the sovereign decision of the states included therein, exerts a beneficial influence on other regions.
16. Nearly six decades after the opening for signature of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, its principles and objectives remain valid, contributing not only to the consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty but also to the region's normative and pacifist tradition in favor of nuclear disarmament.

Universality

17. The path toward the universality of any international instrument is marked by political and legal challenges that require constant commitment from the States involved.
18. The Treaty of Tlatelolco was no exception. From its opening for signature on 14 February 1967 to the accession of Cuba in 2002, becoming the last state to ratify the Treaty and a full member of OPANAL, 35 years passed, during which its Member states worked steadily to ensure its full compliance throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.
19. One of the key mechanisms that made this process possible was Article 29 of the Treaty, an innovative provision designed to facilitate its entry into force in a flexible

manner. This article provides that the Treaty would enter into force among those States that have ratified it once certain requirements were met, including:

- a) ratification by all Latin American and Caribbean states;
- b) signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I by States with territorial responsibilities in the region;
- c) signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II by the nuclear-weapon states; and
- d) conclusion of safeguards agreements with the IAEA by all states parties.

20. However, article 29(2) introduced a crucial degree of flexibility by allowing any State Party to waive these requirements, in whole or in part, through an express declaration. This option enabled states to undertake legally binding commitments even if the threshold of formal conditions for full entry into force had not yet been met. As a result, the Treaty could enter into force on an individual basis for each state party facilitating progress towards consensus and significantly advancing universalization.

21. In 1969, the eleven ratifications required by Article 29 were achieved, enabling the establishment of OPANAL. A decade later, in 1979, the five nuclear-weapon States completed their ratification processes for Additional Protocol II. From that point on, achieving full universality of the Treaty became the top priority for its States Parties for over three decades.

22. The universalization of the Treaty and the full consolidation of its Zone of Application, achieved in 2002, cannot be fully understood without acknowledging a series of milestones reached by the states parties during the previous decade. In 1990, 1991 and 1992, the General Conference of OPANAL adopted and opened for signature a set of amendments to the Treaty of Tlatelolco³ aimed at ensuring its full entry into force. These amendments are also evidence of the Treaty's flexibility and the commitment of its Member States to the survival and sustainability of OPANAL.

23. These adjustments reflect the collective will to adapt the Treaty's legal framework to the new challenges and realities of those years, without losing sight of its fundamental

³ A/47/467, annex. <https://docs.un.org/en/A/47/467>

principles. These were divided into three groups of reforms to the text of the Treaty of Tlatelolco relating to: the addition to the title of the Treaty and OPANAL of the term ‘and the Caribbean’; the incorporation of new states to the Treaty of Tlatelolco; the Control System and the relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

24. The amendment to Article 7, which explicitly included “and the Caribbean” in the to the Treaty’s official denomination, responded not only to a formal need for precision, but also to the desire of the Member States to reaffirm regional inclusiveness in a clearer and more representative manner. Meanwhile, the amendment to article 25, aligned with article VIII of the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS), enabled the inclusion of newly independent States, as well as others that had not yet completed their accession to the Treaty, thereby demonstrating the Treaty’s openness to new geopolitical realities.
25. The most substantive reforms were those made to Articles 14, 15, 16, 19 and 20, which relate to the Control System. These amendments significantly strengthened the operation of the system by simplifying its procedures and increasing its effectiveness. Argentina, Brazil, and Chile became parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco primarily due to the adoption of these amendments.
26. OPANAL, as the political and legal body of the system, receives biannual reports from the States Parties confirming the absence of prohibited activities, as well as reports concerning international agreements on matters covered by the Treaty. Technically, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to play a central role through the safeguards agreements concluded and maintained by the 33 States of Latin American and the Caribbean.
27. Additionally, the integration of other verification mechanisms is implicitly recognized, such as the Brazilian Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) which, although not foreseen in the original text of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, can be considered as part of the new configuration of its Control System.

28. The adoption of these amendments, together with France's ratification of Additional Protocol I on 24 August 1992, was essential in the process of universalization of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This enabled the accession of three key states (Argentina, Brazil and Chile), along with several Caribbean countries and, ultimately, Cuba. Thanks to this flexible approach, the Treaty not only survived shifting international contexts but was also consolidated as a successful model of a fully universalized nuclear-weapon-free zone, supported by all States in the region.
29. In sum, the amendments of the 1990s demonstrate that the Treaty of Tlatelolco is not a static instrument but rather a dynamic and evolving legal framework. Its capacity for adaptation, paired with the political commitment of the states parties, has enabled the Treaty to remain a benchmark among nuclear-weapon-free zones and to stay relevant in the face of emerging international security challenges.
30. While the modifications to the Control System have improved the efficiency of OPANAL's work and optimized the use of financial and human resources, one of the main challenges has been the submission of the biannual reports in compliance with Article 14. Beyond interpretations suggesting any deliberate attempt at non-compliance, the delays in reporting are, in reality, due to bureaucratic challenges, given that multiple national institutions are involved in their preparation—including national authorities, regulatory bodies, and ministries of energy and foreign affairs.
31. To reduce the administrative burden and facilitate the timely fulfillment of States Parties' obligations, the XXVI Special Session of the OPANAL General Conference, held in November 2018, adopted a standardized and voluntary reporting format (**ANNEX I**). This format significantly simplifies the reporting process while promoting more efficient and timely submission. Since its adoption, a steady increase has been observed in the number of States using this format, which has tangibly improved compliance levels.
32. The implementation of this voluntary format may be considered a good institutional practice that strengthens the functioning of the verification regime. Given its positive impact, this experience could be useful for other nuclear-weapon-free zones facing

similar reporting challenges and may serve as a replicable model for promoting effective compliance among their states parties.

Negative Security Assurances

33. OPANAL considers negative security assurances to be an essential component in the establishment and strengthening of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this regard, the shared responsibility of nuclear-weapon states is crucial to ensuring the denuclearized status of the region and, more importantly, to providing states with the guarantee that they will not be subject to the threat or use of nuclear weapons.
34. In addition to establishing the legal framework that gave rise to the militarily denuclearized zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty of Tlatelolco incorporated a mechanism to ensure its full respect and compliance by extra regional States, including those with territorial presence in the region and the nuclear-weapon States.
35. These extra regional states were grouped into two categories:
 - a) Extra regional states with territories under their *de jure* or *de facto* administration within the area defined in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Treaty⁴;
 - b) States that possessed nuclear weapons at the time the Treaty was opened for signature in 1967⁵.
36. The solution to this challenge was the adoption of two Additional Protocols, designed to extend the Treaty's obligations to these extra regional states and, in particular, to reinforce the security of States Parties through explicit legal commitments.
37. Additional Protocol I is addressed to states in group a) and seeks to ensure that territories under their jurisdiction in the region remain free of nuclear weapons. States that have signed and ratified this Protocol undertake the commitment to apply to those

⁴ The United States, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, France, and the United Kingdom

⁵ China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the former Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation as its successor State.

territories the "denuclearization status" defined in Articles 1, 3, 5, and 13 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

38. Additional Protocol II is addressed to the nuclear-weapon states. States parties to this Protocol undertake two core obligations: i) they must not contribute, directly or indirectly, to any act that would constitute a violation of the obligations assumed by states parties to the Treaty within the zone of application (Article 2); ii) they commit "not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Contracting Parties to the Treaty" (Article 3).
39. Unlike Protocol I, Protocol II is subject to Article 28 of the Treaty, which prohibits the formulation of reservations. This provision strengthens the binding nature of the commitments undertaken by the nuclear-weapon states, ensuring that such commitments are full and unconditional. Additionally, Protocol II is of a permanent nature and applies for an indefinite duration. The definitions contained in the Treaty regarding territory and nuclear weapons (Articles 3 and 5), as well as provisions on ratification, entry into force, denunciation, authenticity of texts, and registration (Articles 27, 31, and 32), are also applicable.
40. In sum, the legal commitments undertaken by the states parties to Additional Protocols I and II constitute essential guarantees for maintaining the nuclear-weapon-free status established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Furthermore, they serve as a model for other nuclear-weapon-free zones.
41. However, in some cases, these commitments are accompanied by interpretative declarations made by states parties to the Protocols upon signing and/or ratifying them. The declarations made by the United States, France, the United Kingdom and Russia interpret one or more provisions of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, particularly regarding the extent of the obligations assumed as parties to the Protocols or the Treaty's compatibility with general International Law and the law of the sea. Although reservations are explicitly prohibited under Protocol II, certain

interpretative declarations imply reservations by nature, if not in name.⁶ Among the declarations made by four states parties to Additional Protocols I and II ⁷ two substantive issues can be identified as de facto reservations:

a) The non-recognition of the zone of application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, reservations submitted by France and Russia, which directly contradict a fundamental clause of the Treaty;

b) The hypothetical scenario in which a state party to the Treaty commits an act of aggression with the support of a nuclear-weapon state, or in support of a nuclear-weapon state – reservations submitted by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia, which undermine the negative security assurances established under the Treaty; namely, the non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against any of the states parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

42. On 19 November 2014, during its XXIII Special Session, the General Conference of OPANAL requested the Secretary-General to present, for consideration and eventual adoption by Member States, an action plan aimed at encouraging states parties to the Additional Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco to review or withdraw the interpretative declarations they had formulated with respect to those instruments.

43. In fulfilment of this mandate, the Secretary-General prepared and presented a “Study on the Matter and Action Plan”, which analyses the legal and political context of the interpretative declarations and proposes a road map for addressing them in a coordinated manner.

44. To advance the implementation of the plan, the Secretary-General, with the support of the Member States of the Council, prepared individual memoranda with proposed adjustments tailored to each of the four States Parties to the Additional Protocols that issued interpretative declarations (**ANNEX II**). The adjustment proposals are

⁶ According to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, for a "unilateral statement" to be a reservation, it is not necessary to have regard to "its wording or denomination", but to the fact that it is "intended to exclude or modify the legal effects of certain provisions of the Treaty in their application to that State" (Article 2, subsection d). Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1155, p. 331.

⁷ France, the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia.

intended as analytical and working tools, based on the recommendations of the United Nations International Law Commission, in particular its “Guide to Practice on Reservations to Treaties”⁸, and were presented to France, the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia.

45. Although the four states parties to Protocol II have emphasized that their declarations remain valid and that they do not foresee updating or withdrawing them, in the view of the Member States of OPANAL, these adjustment proposals could serve as useful guidance in the process of reviewing and potentially withdrawal of interpretative declarations in question.
46. At present, OPANAL Member States maintain a frank and direct dialogue with the States Parties to Additional Protocols I and II, focusing not only on the issue of interpretative declarations but also on exploring other measures that could better reflect the importance of these relationships for both nuclear-weapon states and the broader international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.
47. OPANAL Member States have consistently reiterated, in various forums and through joint initiatives and statements, that unequivocal and legally binding negative security assurances to States within nuclear-weapon-free zones, against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, are a core element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and represent a legitimate interest of the international community.
48. They have likewise repeatedly called upon the four states parties to Additional Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco that issued interpretative declarations contrary to the letter and spirit of the Treaty and international law to continue examining these declarations, in coordination with OPANAL, with the aim of reviewing or withdrawing them. The goal is to provide full and unequivocal negative security assurances to the States comprising the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin

⁸ Report of the International Law Commission <https://legal.un.org/ilc/reports/2011/spanish/addendum.pdf>

America and the Caribbean and to fully respect the militarily denuclearized status of the region.⁹

49. Finally, it is important to note that the significance of negative security assurances in the context of nuclear-weapon-free zones has been acknowledged in various documents and resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. Most recently, in paragraph 46 (c) of the "Pact for the Future", adopted in 2024, states have committed to "comply with and respect all security guarantees [...] including those relating to the relevant treaties and protocols of nuclear-weapon-free zones and their related assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons."¹⁰
50. For this reason, it is imperative that nuclear-weapon states establish structured mechanisms of dialogue with states that form part of nuclear-weapon-free zones and, where such mechanisms already exist, significantly strengthen them. The objective must be to identify and agree on concrete, practical, and effective measures that lead to mutually acceptable solutions regarding negative security assurances.
51. In this context, the strategy of formulating concrete proposals and maintaining frank and direct dialogue with nuclear-weapon states has proven to be a constructive approach. This practice, focused on the pursuit of common understanding and the strengthening of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, could serve as a replicable model for other nuclear-weapon-free zones facing similar challenges in managing their relationships with nuclear-weapon States.

Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco

52. Over nearly six decades, the Treaty of Tlatelolco and OPANAL have evolved steadily, adapting to the interests and priorities of their Member States as well as to an increasingly complex international environment. This context has been shaped by

⁹ **Inf.01/2025Rev.2.** 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 58th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco https://opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Inf_01_2025.Rev2-Communique-14feb-Tlatelolco-Anniversary_final.pdf

¹⁰ **The Pact for the Future** <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/79/1>

political, legal, institutional, and procedural challenges that have required flexible, innovative, and sustainable responses to preserve the relevance and effectiveness of the Agency.

53. In response to these challenges, OPANAL Member States have, in several occasions, promoted exercises in introspection and critical evaluation aimed at institutional reform and strengthening. These initiatives have sought primarily to ensure the effective implementation of the mandate conferred by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, while enabling the Agency to adapt to new responsibilities. This capacity for renewal and adaptability has consolidated not only the regime established by the Treaty but also OPANAL's substantive contribution to the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.
54. Among the key actions that have revitalized OPANAL's role are disarmament education initiatives and the strengthening of its external relations. Notably, the Agency has increased its substantive participation in major international disarmament forums, including the submission of working papers within the framework of the NPT review process.¹¹ At the same time, it has reinforced cooperative ties with other nuclear-weapon-free zones through the conclusion of memoranda of understanding.¹² These efforts have positioned OPANAL as a key reference within its field and will be discussed in further detail in subsequent sections of this report.
55. Over the past five years, this process of institutional renewal has gained new momentum. Member States have concentrated their efforts on revitalizing the Agency's work through various measures, such as more effective promotion of the values of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the optimization of working methods, and the utilization of new information technologies. A particularly significant milestone has been the establishment— for the first time—of a formal process for the election of the Secretary-General, as part of a broader effort to strengthen the Agency's governance (**ANNEX III**).

¹¹ NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.14 & NPT/CONF.2026/PC.III/WP.34

¹² https://opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/CG_E_17_2024_Relaciones-del-OPANAL-con-otras-ZLANs.pdf

56. Despite these achievements, significant challenges remain, particularly in the institutional and procedural domains, as well as in the form of budgetary constraints and the absence of a permanent headquarters, which limits OPANAL's operational capacity. Nonetheless, Member States have demonstrated a sustained commitment to continuous improvement and the adoption of best practices. In this regard, it is essential to adopt international standards applied by other multilateral organizations, in areas such as working methods, organizational structure, privileges and immunities, and salary scales, with the aim of maintaining OPANAL as a modern, efficient, and attractive institution for highly qualified professionals.
57. The challenges faced and lessons learned throughout this process by OPANAL and its Member States offer a valuable source of knowledge for other nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as for the entities responsible for ensuring the implementation of the treaties underpinning them. Sharing this experience can facilitate the early identification of common challenges and the creation of effective mechanisms to address them, thereby promoting the continuity, sustainability, and strengthening of these zones and ensuring the efficient fulfillment of their respective mandates.

Other nuclear-weapon-free zones

58. As the first region to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, it is one of OPANAL's responsibilities to foster cooperation and share best practices, contribute to the institutionalization and strengthening of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, and promote the establishment of new ones in regions where they do not yet exist.
59. In order to strengthen these ties, OPANAL has, in recent years, worked to establish direct contact with the organizations and countries responsible for other nuclear-weapon-free zones and to deepen cooperation with them. This has been accomplished through the signing of memoranda of understanding with existing nuclear-weapon free zones.

60. OPANAL and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) have maintained a cooperation agreement since 11 February 2003; with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE), which oversees the African nuclear-weapon-free zone, since 1 December 2021. More recently, on 5 December 2024, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the States Parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. OPANAL is currently engaged in dialogue with the Southeast Asia nuclear-weapon-free zones and with Mongolia, with a view to establishing similar mechanisms of cooperation.
61. The proposal to create an International Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones was an OPANAL initiative originating at the XVI Session of its General Conference (Lima, Peru, 30 November–1 December 1999), through Resolution CG/Res.388, titled “Strengthening the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL),” which stated: “To request the Secretary-General of the Agency, with the approval of the Council, to prepare a proposal containing the specific objectives for holding an International Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones; and to establish contacts with the authorities of other zones to communicate the interest in holding such a Conference and to learn their views [...].”
62. The Conferences of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones were conceived as mechanisms to improve communication among the states parties and signatories to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, and with Mongolia. They also aim to affirm the legitimacy of the treaties and decisions establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones as valuable instruments for the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.
63. In this context, OPANAL highlights the importance of convening the Fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia. This forum has proven to be a vital platform for strengthening solidarity among the existing zones, exchanging regional initiatives and best practices, and advancing dialogue on how to address shared challenges. For this reason, it is essential to take into account the precedent set and to ensure that the next meeting—regardless of its format or framework—is held

close to the Eleventh Review Conference of the NPT in 2026, in order to enhance its relevance and impact.

64. OPANAL has actively supported efforts toward the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free and other weapons of mass destruction-free zone in the Middle East, participating in the work of the relevant Working Group and backing United Nations-sponsored conferences on the initiative.
65. Furthermore, in a joint effort to revitalize the issue at the multilateral level, OPANAL Member States developed and promoted a draft resolution before the United Nations General Assembly. Presented by Brazil and Mexico on behalf of OPANAL Member States, the resolution requests the UN Secretary-General to prepare a new comprehensive study on nuclear-weapon-free zones in all their aspects.¹³ Its adoption at the 79th Session of the General Assembly with broad support represents, to date, the culmination of Latin America and the Caribbean's most recent efforts to strengthen these zones as key instruments for international peace and security.
66. The Treaty of Tlatelolco remains a global reference in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation. Its legacy continues to guide OPANAL's actions in promoting cooperation among states and regions, helping to reduce the risk of conflict and complementing multilateral efforts toward a world free of nuclear weapons.
67. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are not isolated initiatives; they are an essential component of the global security architecture. Enhancing cooperation among them and promoting inclusive dialogue with nuclear-weapon States, as well as with regions that have yet to benefit from this approach, is not only desirable but essential. Sustained commitment and mutual support can amplify the impact of nuclear-weapon-free zones and serve as inspiration for the establishment of new zones in other parts of the world.

¹³ A/RES/79/241 <https://docs.un.org/en/a/res/79/241>

Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education

68. One activity not explicitly outlined in the Treaty of Tlatelolco nor part of its original mandate is education on disarmament and non-proliferation. Nevertheless, in line with the United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education, adopted by the General Assembly at its 57th session, OPANAL has incorporated various educational initiatives aimed at promoting peace, disarmament, and non-proliferation.
69. Since 2013, as a result of the General Conference's decision to establish a Working Group tasked with proposing practical actions and follow-up mechanisms in the field of education, OPANAL has developed a range of activities with the goal of training regional experts in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation¹⁴. Among these initiatives are:
- a. The OPANAL Course on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, delivered by Secretariat officials at the Diplomatic Academies of Member States;
 - b. Internship programs, including the Internship Program for OPANAL Member States that are also members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), as well as the general Internship Program open to participants from all countries.
 - c. Participation and support to the Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, targeting diplomats from Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Matías Romero Institute, and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies;
70. Since 2017, twelve editions of the Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have been conducted.¹⁵ Since 2022 the Course has been delivered

¹⁴ <https://opanal.org/en/educacion/>

¹⁵ Uruguay (December 11-15, 2017, Instituto Artigas del Servicio Exterior), Bolivia (December 3-7, 2018, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Guatemala (May 13-17, 2019, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Nicaragua (September 24-27, 2019, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Guatemala (November 8-10, 2022, Diplomatic Academy "Doctor Jorge García Granados"), Guatemala (July 24-26, 2023, Diplomatic Academy "Antonio José de Irisarri"), Ecuador (December 5-7, 2023, Diplomatic Academy "Galo Plaza Lasso"), Mexico (January 15-25, 2024, in virtual mode, with the support of the Matías Romero Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Colombia (May 27-29, 2024, Augusto Ramírez Ocampo Diplomatic Academy), Guatemala

by the OPANAL Secretariat, taking into account the professional cadre that currently integrates the OPANAL Secretariat staff.

71. In the framework of the internship program for OPANAL Member States that are also members of the Caribbean Community - CARICOM, from 2016 to 2024, the Secretariat welcomed fourteen young people from eight countries: Bahamas (1), Barbados (1), Belize (3), Dominica (1), Guyana (3), Haiti (2), Jamaica (1) and Saint Lucia (2). Since the start of the Internship Program open to all countries, forty-six interns have been received from seventeen countries: Algeria (1), Argentina (1), Bolivia (1), Brazil (2), Colombia (1), Costa Rica (1), Ecuador (1), France (2), Germany (1), Japan (2), Mexico (24), Netherlands (1), Paraguay (1), Peru (1), South Korea (2), Spain (1), United States (3).
72. To date, Latin America and the Caribbean stand out as the only nuclear-weapon-free zone that has developed and implemented a systematic and sustained educational program on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This pioneering effort has been led by OPANAL, as the body responsible for monitoring and promoting the Treaty of Tlatelolco, with a strong commitment to training new generations of diplomats and international security specialists, equipping them with solid knowledge and a critical understanding of nuclear disarmament.
73. In addition, OPANAL has actively promoted the democratization of knowledge on disarmament, taking the issue beyond strictly diplomatic circles and bringing it closer to broader sectors of society. In close collaboration with universities, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and educational entities throughout the region, the Agency participates actively in conferences, panels, seminars, and dialogue spaces with students, educators, academics, activists, and young professionals.
74. The XXVIII Session of the General Conference decided to establish the Antonio Augusto Cançado Trindade Award on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation with the objective of encouraging academic contributions to the field of nuclear

(August 12-14, 2024, Academia de Diplomacia “Antonio José de Irisarri”), Mexico (January 13-31, 2025, in virtual modality, with the support of the Instituto Matías Romero of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Uruguay (April 7 - 9, 2025, Instituto Artigas del Servicio Exterior).

disarmament and non-proliferation by Latin American and Caribbean authors. At the same time, the award pays tribute to the intellectual legacy of Antonio Augusto Cançado Trindade, a prominent professor and judge of the International Court of Justice, particularly for his defense of the inherent right to live in a world free of nuclear weapons.¹⁶

75. These activities not only promote greater understanding of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the region's role in the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime, but also aim to raise critical awareness of the importance of peace and international security as shared responsibilities. By opening educational and exchange opportunities beyond the governmental sphere, OPANAL helps build a well-informed, engaged, and committed regional citizenry working toward a world free of nuclear weapons.
76. This educational approach, deeply rooted in the pacifist tradition of Latin America and the Caribbean, represents a good practice that can be replicated by other nuclear-weapon-free zones and serves as a reference model for integrating the educational dimension into the consolidation processes of such zones.

Recommendations

Nuclear-weapon-free zones constitute a fundamental pillar of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime by establishing legally binding commitments that prohibit the development, acquisition, possession, and deployment of nuclear weapons in vast regions of the world. Despite their achievements, strengthening these zones requires institutional, technical, and financial support mechanisms to ensure their effective implementation and long-term sustainability.

In this context, OPANAL submits several recommendations aimed at reinforcing international cooperation, capacity building, and treaty compliance for the nuclear-weapon-free zones:

¹⁶ Establishment of the Antonio Augusto Cançado Trindade Award on Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation XXVIII Session of the General Conference https://opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/CG_Res.10_2023_Establishment-of-the-Antonio-Augusto-Cancado-Trindade-Award.pdf

1) Institutional and Procedural Strengthening of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones

- Establishment of a Specialized Unit within the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs: Create a division, department, or liaison office within the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, with the specific mandate to support the bodies, entities, or coordinations responsible for ensuring compliance with treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. This unit would facilitate the implementation of specialized training and capacity-building programs in various areas.
- Appointment of Consultants for Specific Projects: Create consultancy positions tasked with designing, implementing, and monitoring specific projects in close coordination with national or regional focal points of the nuclear-weapon-free zones.
- Creation of a Support Fund: Establish a fund administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs aimed at promoting cooperation activities, technical assistance, and capacity strengthening at both intra- and interregional levels among nuclear-weapon-free zones. Interested countries, including nuclear-weapon States could make voluntary contributions to this fund as a practical way to reaffirm their commitment to regional nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.
- Promotion of Peer-to-Peer Exchange: Encourage interregional cooperation, assistance, and exchange of experiences among peers, emphasizing the sharing of lessons learned, best practices, and legal and technical assistance in the field of nuclear-weapon-free zones. A potential support fund could be used to foster these cooperation mechanisms.
- Incorporation of nuclear-weapon-free zones into the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship: Allow the participation of officials from the bodies, entities, or coordinations responsible for treaty compliance establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. This would contribute to the education and training of this sector, which is key to the operation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Concurrently, include these entities as

part of the practical visits of the Disarmament Fellowship program, most of which are located in cities within the so-called "Global South."

- Training and Capacity Building Programs for Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Regional Organizations: Similar to the peer-to-peer exchange, both the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the IAEA Department of Safeguards could design and implement a training and continuing education program for agencies and entities responsible for ensuring compliance with treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. At the same time, free zones could be included in the regional support and training workshops on safeguards implementation that the IAEA provides to its Member States, in order to highlight the complementarity of the safeguards system with nuclear-weapon-free zones.

2) Legal and Political Strengthening of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones

- Establishment of Dialogue Mechanisms with Nuclear-Weapon States: Nuclear-weapon-free zones could explore creating formal and permanent contact groups with the five nuclear-weapon states through bilateral diplomatic channels or within multilateral forums such as the NPT Review Process, the First Committee of the General Assembly, or interzonal conferences. Common agendas for dialogue could be established, focusing on shared interests such as preventing regional nuclear threats, compliance with protocols, and respect for the zones, allowing progress on practical and progressive bases.
- Reiteration of Nuclear-Weapon States' Commitment to Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones: The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones constitutes an important measure toward achieving the goal of a world entirely free of nuclear weapons. Until that goal is achieved, it is essential that all nuclear-weapon states commit to respecting the nuclear-weapon-free zones established through agreements among the states of the interested region. They must recognize and reiterate respect for the decision of the 115 States that are parties to the five treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones

(Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, South Pacific, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia), which represents three-quarters of the international community. These joint regional non-proliferation and nuclear weapons prohibition efforts provide a foundation for a nuclear weapon free world.

- Good-Faith Negotiations to Resolve Discrepancies on Relevant Protocols of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaties: Nuclear-weapon-free zones could consider developing regional legal studies and technical notes that directly and substantively address concerns raised in reservations or interpretative declarations by some nuclear-weapon states. These documents could demonstrate the compatibility of additional protocols with international law principles and serve as a basis for informed and constructive dialogue. As a first step, these initiatives would contribute to creating conditions for potential negotiation processes aimed at resolving such discrepancies. Collaboration with the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, academic centers, research institutes, and civil society representatives would be essential in this effort. Informal dialogue formats such as Track 1.5 and Track 2 could explore creative and viable alternative measures leading to durable and mutually acceptable solutions, especially regarding the pertinent protocols. Complementarily, within a broader legal strategy, the zones could gradually and coordinately explore other international law tools. Advisory or jurisdictional mechanisms could offer a means to clarify the obligations of states Parties concerning full respect for nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. Without prejudging outcomes or adopting definitive positions, a preliminary technical-legal analysis could strengthen the design of common legal strategies, thus reinforcing the collective position of the zones in multilateral forums.
- Renewed Commitment by Treaty Parties to Strengthen and Sustain Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Regimes: States Parties to treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones must assume a renewed and concrete commitment to strengthening and sustaining these regimes. This commitment must go beyond political declarations, translating into practical actions according to each state's capacities. In coordination with the bodies and entities responsible for treaty compliance, it is essential to promote periodic updates of the normative and institutional frameworks of nuclear-weapon-

free zones, including internal regulations, verification procedures, and multi-year strategic plans to preserve their effectiveness, legitimacy, and functionality. Additionally, regional training and awareness programs should be promoted, targeting diplomats, technical officials, and civil society representatives to strengthen knowledge, ownership, and commitment to the legal regime of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Conclusions

OPANAL is convinced this “*Comprehensive study on nuclear-weapon-free zones in its aspects*” can significantly contribute to revitalizing both interest and ongoing efforts to establish new zones in regions where none exist yet. From this conviction, OPANAL regards this study as a valuable opportunity for collective reflection, to which it brings its unique experience as the body responsible for the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This pioneering and consolidated regional experience offers lessons learned and best practices that could be useful for similar processes elsewhere in the world.

Within this framework, active participation by key stakeholders—including already established zones, regional organizations, United Nations system entities, specialized institutes in disarmament and peace, and relevant non-governmental organizations—will provide fresh and enriching perspectives. This diversity of approaches will contribute to making the study a relevant milestone both for strengthening existing zones and promoting new initiatives. However, it is fundamental to remember that the effectiveness and relevance of treaties and international organizations ultimately depend on the commitment of their Member States. Their vitality is directly linked to the degree of engagement and the value these actors attribute to them.

OPANAL hopes that its contribution helps enrich governmental expert discussions, thereby fostering new perspectives and promoting multilateral approaches in disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, strengthening current and future regional efforts. All of this should be oriented toward the common goal that guides these initiatives: advancing toward a world free of nuclear weapons.



ANNEX I

SEMESTRAL REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE TREATY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The Government of _____

**In accordance with Article 14¹⁷ of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco),**

certifies and declares

**that no activity prohibited under the Treaty has occurred in its territory in the
semestral period indicated below.**

Responsible authority:	<i>name</i>
	<i>position/ title</i>
Semestral period	<i>From <u>day of month of year</u> to <u>day of month of year</u></i>

(Signature of the responsible authority)

(Official stamp)

¹⁷ **Article 14 (Reports of the Contracting Parties)** of the Treaty of Tlatelolco reads as follows:

- 1. The Contracting Parties shall submit to the Agency and to the International Atomic Energy Agency, for their information, semi-annual reports stating that no activity prohibited under this Treaty has occurred in their respective territories.*
- 2. The Contracting Parties to the Treaty shall simultaneously transmit to the Agency a copy of the reports submitted to the International Atomic Energy Agency which relate to matters subject of this Treaty that are relevant to the work of the Agency.*
- 3. The information furnished by the Contracting Parties shall not be, totally or partially, disclosed or transmitted to third parties, by the addressees of the reports, except when the Contracting Parties give their express consent.*

ANNEX II

Adjustment between the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL and the Russian Federation regarding Article 4 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL, represented by its Council, and the Russian Federation:

Taking into account Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Considering that the Russian Federation is a State Party to Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Recalling that on 18 May 1978, Russian Federation (continuator State of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), at the time of signing Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, issued a declaration concerning the Zone of Application established by the Treaty,

Affirming that it is essential to promote complete mutual understanding between the States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the States Party to the Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Recognising the importance of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, established by virtue of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, for international peace and security,

Resolve to adopt the following Adjustment:

1. The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Russian Federation express their conviction that:

- a) The Zone of Application outlined in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Treaty of Tlatelolco does not entail any claim of sovereignty or jurisdiction and, therefore, is not contrary to current International Law, particularly as established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
 - b) The Zone of Application as defined in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Treaty of Tlatelolco identifies the spatial extent covered by the provisions of said instrument, particularly the obligations defined in Article 1 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which are in force for States Party to the Treaty and for States Party to Additional Protocols I and II.
2. The present Adjustment once approved by the General Conference of OPANAL and the Russian Federation, will replace paragraph 2 of the declaration made by the Russian Federation (continuator State of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics) at the time of signing Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 18 May 1978, and will be signed by the Secretary-General of OPANAL, on behalf of the Member States of OPANAL, and by the accredited Representative of the Russian Federation.

Adjustment between the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL and the Russian Federation regarding paragraph 6 of the declaration issued by the Russian Federation upon signing Additional Protocol II to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco on 18 May 1978

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL, represented by its Council, and the Russian Federation:

Recalling Resolution 2028 (XX) of the United Nations General Assembly, which is mentioned in the Preamble of the Treaty of Tlatelolco “which established the principle of an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and duties for the nuclear and non-nuclear powers”,

Bearing in mind the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco, concluded on 14 February 1967,

Considering that all Latin American and Caribbean States are Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Recalling also the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a “Zone of Peace” issued during the Second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana, Cuba, on 29 January 2014,

Reiterating the commitments undertaken by the Russian Federation (continuator State of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) upon ratifying Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Recognising the importance of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, established by virtue of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to international peace and security,

Affirming that both the Russian Federation and the States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco share the firm will to maintain and strengthen the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean,

Resolve to adopt the following Adjustment:

1. The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Russian Federation express their conviction that:
 - a) The full force, integrity and oneness of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, through full compliance with its provisions, is an important element for the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and therefore a significant contribution to international peace and security.
 - b) In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the commitments undertaken internationally by its States Party, nuclear weapons cannot be introduced by any means whatsoever to the Zone of Application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

- c) The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco undertake, according to Article 1, paragraph 2, of said instrument, not to participate in any way whatsoever in situations which may involve the possible use of nuclear weapons;
 - d) Any action on the part of a nuclear-weapon State Party to Additional Protocol II that violates the Treaty of Tlatelolco would affect the integrity of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. The present Adjustment once approved by the General Conference of OPANAL and the Russian Federation, will replace paragraph 6 of the declaration issued by the Russian Federation (continuator State of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics) at the time of signing Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 18 May 1978. This will be signed by the Secretary-General of OPANAL, on behalf of the Member States of OPANAL, and by the accredited Representative of the Russian Federation.

**Ajustement entre l'Organisme pour l'interdiction des armes nucléaires en
Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes – OPANAL et la République française concernant
l'article 4 du Traité de Tlatelolco**

L'Organisme pour l'interdiction des armes nucléaires en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes – OPANAL, représenté par son Conseil, et la République française :

Compte tenu l'article 4, paragraphe 2, du Traité pour l'interdiction des armes nucléaires en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes - le Traité de Tlatelolco,

Considérant que la République française est partie aux Protocoles additionnels I et II au Traité de Tlatelolco,

Rappelant que le 2 mars 1979, la République française, au moment de la signature du Protocole additionnel I au Traité de Tlatelolco, a fait une déclaration concernant la Zone d'application établie par le Traité dans son article 4, paragraphe 2,

Affirmant qu'il est essentiel de promouvoir la compréhension mutuelle entre les États parties au Traité de Tlatelolco et les États parties au Protocoles additionnels I et II au Traité de Tlatelolco,

Reconnaissant l'importance de la Zone exempte d'armes nucléaires en Amérique latine et les Caraïbes, établi en vertu du Traité de Tlatelolco, pour la paix et la sécurité internationales,

Décident d'adopter l'Ajustement suivant :

1. Les États parties au Traité de Tlatelolco et la République française expriment leur conviction que :
 - a. La Zone d'application décrite dans l'article 4, paragraphe 2, du Traité de Tlatelolco n'implique aucune revendication de souveraineté ou de juridiction et, par conséquent, n'est pas contraire au Droit international en vigueur, en particulier en ce qui concerne la Convention des Nations Unies sur le Droit de la Mer.
 - b. La Zone d'application décrite dans à l'article 4, paragraphe 2, du Traité de Tlatelolco identifie l'étendue spatiale couverte par les dispositions de cet instrument, en particulier les obligations définies dans l'article 1 dudit Traité, qui sont en vigueur pour les États parties au Traité et pour les États parties aux Protocoles additionnels I et II ;
2. Le présent Ajustement une fois approuvé par la Conférence générale de l'OPANAL et la République française, va remplacer le paragraphe 2 de la déclaration faite par la République française au moment de la signature du Protocole additionnel I au Traité de Tlatelolco le 2 mars 1979. Il sera signé par le Secrétaire général de l'OPANAL, au nom des États membres de l'OPANAL, et par le représentant accrédité de la République française.

Adjustment between the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding paragraph *d* of the declaration issued by the United Kingdom of Great

**Britain and Northern Ireland upon signing and ratifying Additional Protocols I and II to the
Treaty of Tlatelolco**

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL, represented by its Council, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

Bearing in mind the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco, concluded on 14 February 1967,

Recognising the importance to international peace and security of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, established by virtue of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Considering that all Latin American and Caribbean States are Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Reiterating the commitments made by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland upon ratifying Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Reaffirming that neither the Treaty of Tlatelolco, in accordance with the provisions of its Article 28, nor Additional Protocol II, in accordance with the provisions of its Article 4, can be subject to reservations,

Recalling Resolution 71/27 of the United Nations General Assembly, adopted without a vote on 5 December 2016, which reaffirms and recognises: “the legitimate interests of the States that comprise the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean in receiving full and unequivocal security assurances from the nuclear-weapon States”,

Affirming that both the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco share the firm will to maintain and strengthen the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean,

Bearing in mind the provisions of Article 21 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Recalling further the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a “Zone of Peace” issued during the II Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana, Cuba, on 29 January 2014,

Resolve to adopt the following Adjustment:

1. The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, State Party to Additional Protocol II, express their conviction that:
 - a) The full force, integrity and oneness of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its Additional Protocols, by means of full compliance with its provisions, is an important contribution to disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and therefore a significant contribution to international peace and security,
 - b) In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its Additional Protocols, and the commitments undertaken internationally by its States Party, there can be neither introduction of nuclear weapons, by any means whatsoever, nor use or threat of use of such weapons, in the Zone of Application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,
 - c) The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco are obliged, in accordance with Article 1, paragraph 2, of said instrument, to refrain from engaging in, encouraging or authorising, directly or indirectly, or in any way participating in the testing, use, manufacture, production, possession or control of any nuclear weapon,
 - d) The States Party to Additional Protocol II are obliged, in accordance with its Article 3, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Contracting Parties of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,
 - e) A breach of Article 1 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and of Articles 2 and 3 of Additional Protocol II, fundamentals of the regime established by them, would imply a rupture of said regime,

- f) Any action on the part of a nuclear-weapon State that is a Party to Additional Protocol II that violates the Treaty of Tlatelolco or said Protocol, besides constituting a rupture of the regimen established by those instruments, would affect the integrity of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Once approved by the General Conference of OPANAL and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the present Adjustment shall constitute a legitimate interpretation of paragraph *d* of the declaration made by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland upon signing Additional Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 20 December 1967; paragraph that was subsequently included in the declaration made by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland upon ratifying Additional Protocols I and II, on 11 December 1969.
 3. Such an interpretation will legitimise the validity, completeness and uniqueness of the commitments, eliminating the concerns previously expressed by the States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco with respect to the declaration made by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland upon signing and ratifying Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.
 4. This Adjustment is signed by the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL, on behalf of the Member States of OPANAL, and by the accredited Representative of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
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Adjustment between the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL and the United States of America regarding paragraph 3 of the declaration issued by the United States of America upon signing and ratifying Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL, represented by its Council, and the United States of America:

Bearing in mind the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – Treaty of Tlatelolco, concluded on 14 February 1967,

Recognising the importance to international peace and security of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, established by virtue of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Considering that all Latin American and Caribbean States are Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Reiterating the commitments made by the United States of America upon ratifying Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Reaffirming that neither the Treaty of Tlatelolco, in accordance with the provisions of its Article 28, nor the Additional Protocol II, in accordance with the provisions of its Article 4, can be subject to reservations,

Recalling Resolution 71/27 of the United Nations General Assembly, adopted without a vote on 5 December 2016, which reaffirms and recognises: “the legitimate interests of the States that comprise the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean in receiving full and unequivocal security assurances from the nuclear-weapon States”,

Affirming that both the United States of America and the States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco share the firm will to maintain and strengthen the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean,

Bearing in mind the provisions of Article 21 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Recalling further the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a “Zone of Peace” issued during the II Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana, Cuba, on 29 January 2014,

Resolve to adopt the following Adjustment:

1. The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the United States of America, State Party to the Additional Protocol II, express their conviction that:
 - a) The full force, integrity and oneness of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its Additional Protocols, by means of full compliance with its provisions, is an important contribution to disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and therefore a significant contribution towards international peace and security,
 - b) In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its Additional Protocols, and the commitments undertaken internationally by its States Party, there can be neither introduction of nuclear weapons, by any means whatsoever, nor use or threat of use of such weapons, in the Zone of Application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,
 - c) The States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco are obliged, in accordance with Article 1, paragraph 2, of said instrument, to refrain from engaging in, encouraging or authorizing, directly or indirectly, or in any way participating in the testing, use, manufacture, production, possession or control of any nuclear weapon,
 - d) The States Party to Additional Protocol II are obliged, in accordance with its Article 2, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Contracting Parties of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,
 - e) A breach of Article 1 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and of Articles 2 and 3 of Additional Protocol II, fundamentals of the regime established by them, would imply a rupture of said regime,
 - f) Any action on the part of a nuclear-weapon State that is a Party to Additional Protocol II that violates the Treaty of Tlatelolco or said Protocol, besides constituting a rupture of the regime established by those instruments, would affect the integrity of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Once approved by the General Conference of OPANAL and the United States of America, the present Adjustment shall constitute a legitimate interpretation of paragraph 3 of the

declaration made by the United States of America upon signing Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 1 April 1968; paragraph that was subsequently included in the declarations made by the United States of America upon ratifying said Protocol, as well as upon signing and ratifying Additional Protocol I.

3. Such an interpretation will legitimise the validity, completeness and uniqueness of the commitments, eliminating the concerns previously expressed by the States Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco with respect to the declaration made by the United States of America upon signing and ratifying Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.
4. The present Adjustment is signed by the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean – OPANAL, on behalf of the Member States of OPANAL, and by the accredited Representative of the Government of the United States of America.

ANNEX III

XXVIII Special Session
28 November 2024
Agenda item 19

CG/E/10/2024Rev.2
Original: Spanish/English

Process for Submitting Candidacies for the Election of the Secretary-General for the 2026-2029 Term

The XXIX Session of the General Conference, to be held in 2025, shall elect a Secretary-General for the period 2026-2029. In this regard, this document accompanies draft resolution CG/E/L.21/2024Rev.2 to be considered at the XXVIII Special Session.

I. On the Regulations

- In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean ([Treaty of Tlatelolco](#)), the General Conference, as the supreme body of OPANAL, is responsible for electing the Secretary-General, who is the highest administrative official of the Agency.¹⁸
- The Rules of Procedure of the General Conference ([Inf.25/2016](#)) provide that the Secretary-General shall hold office for a term of four years, with the possibility of being re-elected for a single additional term, and that may not be a national of the country in which the Agency has its headquarters.¹⁹
- Chapter II of the Amended Rules Governing the Functioning of the Secretariat ([CG/E/666](#)) sets out, inter alia, the powers, rights and responsibilities of the Secretary-General.²⁰
- Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini was elected Secretary-General for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021, by Resolution [CG/Res.13/2019](#) adopted at the XXVI Session of the General Conference, and re-elected by acclamation for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025, by Resolution [CG/Res.15/2021](#) adopted at the XXVII Session of the General Conference.
- The strengthening of the Secretariat has been a priority issue for the membership as reflected in resolution [CG/Res.11/2023](#) adopted by the XXVIII Session of the General Conference on

¹⁸ OPANAL. Tratado para la Proscripción de las Armas Nucleares en América Latina y el Caribe (Tratado de Tlatelolco), Artículo 9.

¹⁹ OPANAL. Reglamento de la Conferencia General (Inf.25/2016), Artículo 60.

²⁰ OPANAL. Normas que regulan el funcionamiento de la Secretaría enmendadas (Doc. CG/E/666). México, D.F.: OPANAL.

3 November 2023 and draft resolution CG/E/L.11/2024Rev.3 submitted for consideration of the XXVIII Special Session.

II. Considerations for the XXVIII Special Session of the General Conference

- The Secretariat is the administrative and permanent body of OPANAL. Among its functions, it acts as the secretariat of the General Conference, the Council and the other bodies of the Agency. Therefore, the election of the Secretary-General, who heads the Secretariat, is a crucial element to ensure its effective functioning.
- The establishment of a transparent and participatory process for submitting candidacies would allow Member States the necessary time to identify and prepare qualified candidates capable of assuming the position of Secretary-General, ensuring that the final election is based on a comprehensive and deliberate assessment.
- This process could consider, *inter alia*, the following issues:
 - Early nomination of candidates would be beneficial in order to allow sufficient time for the various bodies involved in the process to deliberate and, eventually, for the appointment by the General Conference to allow the new Secretary-General to carry out any necessary arrangements in good time before taking office.
 - The office of Secretary-General requires the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, as well as a firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.
 - In addition to excellent leadership and management skills, it would be desirable that candidacy submissions consider a broad multilateral experience, ideally in the field of disarmament and/or non-proliferation, arms control, as well as strong multilingual, diplomatic and communication skills.
 - Setting dates for the start of the process and criteria, such as the submission of a work programme or a strategic plan describing the vision of the candidate for the position would provide important elements to the Member States for their decision and consequent election.
 - The Process for Submitting Candidacies might also take into account equitable geographical representation. The list of former Secretaries General is presented as Annex I.

- Candidates are invited to submit, along with their application, a statement of no more than 2,000 words outlining their vision for OPANAL and the strategic direction they would pursue if appointed. The statement should also reflect the candidate's commitment to the values and objectives of OPANAL, including the principles of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the promotion of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Additionally, candidates should highlight their experience in international law, diplomacy, disarmament, and organizational leadership, as well as their understanding of and ability to work effectively within diverse cultural, social, and political contexts. Candidates are expected to commit to observing the highest ethical standards in line with OPANAL's mission and guiding principles. Finally, candidates should indicate their language proficiency, particularly in the official languages of OPANAL.

III. Proceedings in Other International Organizations

- Other international organizations have established formal processes for nominations to their highest leadership positions under a structured framework that seeks transparency, inclusiveness and fairness.
- The United Nations (UN), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) have established mechanisms that allow their Member States to actively participate in the nomination and evaluation of candidates. These processes include clear timelines, public selection criteria, interviews and transparent deliberations, which ensure a choice that reflects the interests of the entire membership.
- For example, in the case of the UN²¹, the selection process for the Secretary-General includes the formal nomination of candidates by Member States, followed by consultations and public hearings with Member States of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The IAEA, for its part, maintains a detailed timetable for the submission and review of candidates, while the ILO²² emphasises the importance of the evaluation of candidates' work plans.
- Taking into account the aforementioned elements, as well as international best practices of other bodies, it would be appropriate to establish a nomination process for the election of the Secretary General of OPANAL for the period 2026-2029. Furthermore, the establishment of such a process could serve as a model and good practice for subsequent periods.

²¹ Ver sitio dedicado al proceso de selección y nombramiento del Secretario General (Antonio Guterres) <https://www.un.org/sg/es/content/selection-and-appointment-of-ant%C3%B3nio-guterres>

²² Rules Governing the Appointment of the Director-General of the ILO <https://www.ilo.org/resource/rules-governing-appointment-director-general-ilo>

ANNEX I

Chronological List of Secretaries General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

Secretary-General	Member State	Terms
Ambassador Leopoldo Benites Vinueza	Ecuador	• 1971
Ambassador Héctor Gros Espiell	Uruguay	• 1973 1975, • 1975- 1979 • 1979 - 1981
Dr. José Ricardo Martínez Cobo	Ecuador	• 1981 - 1985
Dr. Antonio Stempel Paris	Venezuela	• 1986 - 1989 • 1990 - 1993
Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey	Peru	• 1994 - 1997 • 1998 - 2000
Ambassador Edmundo Vargas Carreño	Chile	• 2001 - 2005 • 2006 - 2007
Ambassador Gioconda Ubeda Rivera	Costa Rica	• 2010 - 2013
Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares	Brazil	• 2014 - 2017 • 2018-2019
Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini	Brazil	• 2020 - 2021 • 2022-2025

Deputy or Acting Secretary-General	Member State	Terms
Ambassador Carlos Peón del Valle	Mexico	• 1969 - 1970
Ambassador Antonio González de León	Mexico	• 1971 - 1976
Ambassador Perla Carvalho	Mexico	• 2008 - 2009