

Conference on Disarmament

24 November 2022

English

Original: Spanish

Note verbale dated 26 September 2022, from the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, transmitting a declaration of the member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean on the occasion of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 26 September 2022

The Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and, in its capacity as Geneva coordinator of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), kindly requests that the declaration of the member States of OPANAL on the occasion of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 26 September 2022 (English and Spanish versions attached), be issued as an official document of the Conference.

The Permanent Mission of Ecuador takes this opportunity to convey to the secretariat the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.



Annex

Declaration of the member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean on the occasion of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 26 September 2022

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

Maintaining their historic commitment to the prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons,

Reaffirming that a world without nuclear weapons is essential for the accomplishment of the priority objectives of humanity, those being peace, security, development and the protection of the environment,

Recognizing that to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons is a responsibility shared by all Member States of the United Nations,

Recalling that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, States must refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations,

Stressing that the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and a crime against humanity,

Proud to belong to Latin America and the Caribbean, the first densely populated region to have established a nuclear-weapon-free zone, pursuant to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (the Treaty of Tlatelolco) of 14 February 1967,¹

Recalling that the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco have rigorously complied with the Treaty for 55 years, relying on the constant efforts of OPANAL,

Recalling also that the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2), stated that “nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization” and that the growing number of nuclear weapons, far from strengthening international security, diminish it; a situation that has not changed to this day,

Reiterating the full validity of the declarations on nuclear disarmament adopted by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) on 20 August 2013 in Buenos Aires, on 29 January 2014 in Havana, on 29 January 2015 in Belén, Costa Rica, on 27 January 2016 in Quito and on 25 January 2017 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic,

Conscious that the Treaty of Tlatelolco and OPANAL are political, legal and institutional references for the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones,

Reiterating also their conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is closely related to the maintenance of international peace and security and that the prohibition of nuclear weapons in different regions, adopted by sovereign decision of States situated therein, has a beneficial influence over other regions and the whole world,

Emphasizing their rejection of nuclear weapons, which, after more than 75 years of existence and use, continue to pose a serious risk to international peace and security and a significant threat of rendering the whole Earth uninhabitable, given that no State has the physical and technical capacity to deal with the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons,

¹ <https://www.opanal.org/text-of-the-treaty-of-tlatelolco>.

Highlighting the importance of General Assembly resolutions 76/30 “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”² and 76/25 “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”,³ both adopted on 8 December 2021, which represent important political advances towards the delegitimization of nuclear weapons,

Convinced that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)⁴ remains the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime,

Fully aware of the obligation set forth in article VI of the NPT and the unequivocal commitment of nuclear-weapon States to negotiate effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control,

Stressing the importance of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 22 January 2021,

Recalling that the prohibition of nuclear weapons is a means to contribute to the elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner within clearly established time frames and that elimination is the only truly effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons,

The member States of OPANAL,

Join in the commemoration, on 26 September 2022, of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, established by General Assembly resolution 68/32 (2013);⁵

Invite the international community to commemorate once again this International Day as part of global efforts towards achieving the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and urge governments, parliaments and civil society to take further action each year to commemorate this International Day;

On this occasion, the member States:

1. *Reiterate* their concern over the existence of more than 12,000 nuclear weapons⁶ that pose an unacceptable threat to humankind, a danger that becomes more serious day by day.
2. *Recall* that this concern is reflected in numerous General Assembly resolutions, such as resolution 1 (I) of 24 January 1946;⁷ in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, of 1978;⁸ and in the respective preambles of the Treaty of Tlatelolco of 1967, the NPT of 1968 and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons of 2017.⁹
3. *Demand* that nuclear weapons not be used again, under any circumstances by any actor, which can only be assured by the prohibition and the subsequent transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination of all nuclear weapons.
4. *Reiterate* the call for all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their security and defence doctrines and policies and to comply fully with their legal obligations and unequivocal commitments to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay.
5. *Call upon* non-nuclear weapon States that are covered by extended nuclear deterrence policies by means of military alliances to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons from their security and defence policies.

² <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/76/30>.

³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/76/25>.

⁴ <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/npt/text>.

⁵ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/68/32>.

⁶ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 2022*.

⁷ [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1\(I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1(I)).

⁸ <https://undocs.org/en/A/S-10/4>.

⁹ http://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2017/07/20170707%2003-42%20PM/Ch_XXVI_9.pdf.

6. *Urge* nuclear-weapon States to cease efforts to improve nuclear weapons, develop new types of these weapons or propose new scenarios and procedures for their development and use; efforts which are inconsistent with the obligation to adopt effective measures towards nuclear disarmament.
7. *Recall* the mutually reinforcing relationship of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation treaties.
8. *Recall also* the members States' participation in the adoption and recent entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which currently has 86 signatories and 66 States parties, and which prohibits the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
9. *Appreciate* the participation of the States parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in their first Meeting, held from 21 to 23 June 2022 in Vienna, inspired by the shared goal of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world, and take note of the Meeting's outcome and the election of Mexico to preside over the second Meeting in 2023.
10. *Welcome* the determination and unwavering commitment of Latin America and the Caribbean to promote complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament as a priority objective, in recognition of the urgent need to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons, as demonstrated by the large number of States from the region that are party to international legal instruments and commitments on disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace and the CELAC summit declarations on nuclear disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons.
11. *Consider* that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, by establishing an international norm prohibiting nuclear weapons, adds to the path to the total elimination of these weapons of mass destruction in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner within a clearly defined time frame; a path laid out by the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the NPT.
12. *Welcome* the ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by all Central American States, with Central America thus becoming the first entire subregion covered by the Treaty, reflecting its long-standing commitments to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to the maintenance of international peace and security.
13. *Underscore* that these three treaties, together with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, once in force, establish norms of international law that are binding on the States that have signed and ratified them; these instruments are not mere declarations of intent, but constitute a suitable legal basis for the total elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner.
14. *Welcome* the ratification by Dominica on 30 June 2022 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the universal adherence to the Treaty in the region.
15. *Call upon* all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear weapon test explosions, or any other non-explosive experiments, including subcritical experiments for the improvement of nuclear weapons, considering that such actions are contrary to the spirit and purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and undermine its desired impact as a nuclear disarmament measure.
16. *Urge* the States listed in annex 2 to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty that have not ratified it¹⁰ to take necessary measures to do so without further delay.
17. *Express deep concern* at the erosion of the treaty-based disarmament structure, firmly support all bilateral, regional and multilateral instruments that contribute to nuclear disarmament and call upon all States to promote and strengthen international peace and security.

¹⁰ China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, United States of America, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel and Pakistan.

18. *Stress* the importance of preserving the bilateral arms control instruments that have contributed to international peace and security.
19. *Express alarm and dismay* at threats of nuclear weapons use, increased operational alert of nuclear arsenals and increasingly strident nuclear rhetoric; emphasize that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations; and unequivocally condemn any and all nuclear threats, whether explicit or implicit and regardless of the circumstances.
20. *Call upon* nuclear-weapon States to provide unequivocal and legally binding guarantees of non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against the States parties of nuclear-weapon-free zones, in accordance with the international treaties establishing such zones and their protocols.
21. *Urge* all States not parties to the NPT¹¹ to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States, without further delay and without conditions.
22. *Invite* all States not yet party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to consider ratifying and acceding to it.
23. *Underline* the responsibility of all States parties to fully implement the NPT, and urge the nuclear-weapon States to take immediate action for the full and effective implementation of article VI in compliance with their legal obligations.
24. *Regret* that, despite the efforts of the President of the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT and the valuable participation of the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco that are also States parties to the NPT, for the second time in succession the Review Conference was unable to adopt either a final document or recommendations to advance the implementation of the Treaty.
25. *Reaffirm* the legally binding obligations agreed more than 50 years ago with the entry into force of the NPT, and consider that the commitments undertaken at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference¹² and the 2000¹³ and 2010¹⁴ Review Conferences remain valid.
26. *Recognize* the essential role of the International Atomic Energy Agency and of safeguard agreements in the implementation of the NPT and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, reiterate their strong support for the Agency and encourage it to cooperate closely with OPANAL.
27. *Encourage* efforts to break the impasse of more than two decades in the Conference on Disarmament, so that it may fulfil its mandate.
28. *Support* the inalienable right of all States, without discrimination, to conduct research into nuclear energy and to produce and use it for peaceful purposes.
29. *Urge* nuclear-weapon States that made interpretative declarations concerning Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco which are contrary to the spirit of the Treaty, to examine the proposals made by OPANAL with the aim of resolving this problem, giving full and unequivocal security assurances to the States that comprise the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean; and to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the zone of application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.
30. *Encourage* the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones by means of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned and stress the importance of these zones as a contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.
31. *Regret* that, after more than two decades, the resolution on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction,¹⁵ an integral part of the commitments of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and of

¹¹ Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan.

¹² NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I).

¹³ NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II).

¹⁴ NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I).

¹⁵ NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex.

the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, has not been implemented.

32. *Reaffirm* their support for the goal of establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

33. *Reiterate* their commitment to continue promoting dialogue and cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones, including Mongolia, and regret that the fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, provided for in General Assembly resolution 73/71 of 13 December 2018,¹⁶ did not take place.

34. *Commemorate* the seventy-seventh anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and, taking into consideration the humanitarian impact of those events, stress their determination to work towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, which continue to threaten the imminent destruction of the planet and pose a risk to international peace and security.

35. *Reiterate also* their conviction that the dissemination of information on the danger posed by nuclear weapons is essential for civil society as a whole to join the struggle to eliminate nuclear weapons.

36. *Reaffirm* the importance of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education,¹⁷ adopted by the General Assembly at its 57th session (2002) in resolution 57/60,¹⁸ and undertake to continue working to provide education programmes on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

37. *Consider* the eighth edition of the Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation for Latin American and Caribbean Diplomats, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and the Matías Romero Institute of Diplomatic Studies, in close cooperation with the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey and OPANAL, and held from 11 to 15 July 2020 with the participation of representatives from 22 countries, to have been a significant contribution by the region to international peace and security.

38. *Recognize* the valuable contribution of the region's women to promoting and maintaining peace and security, and reiterate the member States' commitment to promoting women's representation and full and effective participation in policymaking, planning and implementation processes related to disarmament and non-proliferation, in accordance with the resolution "Gender, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament" (CG/Res.05/2021),¹⁹ adopted at the twenty-seventh session of the General Conference of OPANAL.

39. *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, through general and complete disarmament, to strengthening trust between nations.

¹⁶ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/71>.

¹⁷ <https://undocs.org/en/A/57/124>.

¹⁸ A/RES/57/60.

¹⁹ https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CG_Res.05_2021_Gender-Non-proliferation-and-Disarmament.pdf.