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Education for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

This report summarizes the activities that the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean has carried out in the field of education for peace, disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons since 2014.

I. Introduction

1. OPANAL was born with the purpose of holding back proliferation of nuclear weapons by creating the first inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Resolution CG/Res.518, adopted in the XXI Session of the General Conference, celebrated on 26 November 2009, urged Member States to implement the recommendations contained in the “United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.”¹
3. In the declaration of 26 September 2019, on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, Member States declared to “reaffirm the importance of the 'United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education' adopted by Resolution 57/60 of the United Nations General Assembly, in its LVII Session² (2002) and commit themselves to continue working on the implementation of programs of education programs on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, convinced that they are an effective means to contribute to the consolidation of international peace and security.”

¹ [A/57/124](#)

² [A/RES/57/60](#)

4. In its Resolution 55/33 of November 2000, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) requested the Secretary-General to prepare, with the assistance of a group of qualified government experts, a study on disarmament and non-proliferation education and training. The overall purpose of disarmament and non-proliferation education was to impart knowledge and skills to empower individuals to make their contribution, as national and world citizens, to the achievement of general and complete disarmament.
5. In UNGA Resolutions 57/60 of 22 November 2002, 59/93 of 16 December 2004, 61/73 of 3 January 2007, 63/70 of 12 January 2009, 67/77 of 8 December 2010, 67/47 of 3 December 2012, 69/65 of 2 December 2014, 71/57 of 5 December 2019, 73/59 of 13 December 2018 it is recognized the importance of promoting concerted international efforts at disarmament and non-proliferation, in particular in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, with a view to strengthening international security and enhancing development, at the time of furthering the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study.¹
6. In OPANAL Resolutions CG/Res.445 of 14 October 2003 and CG/Res.479 of 8 November 2005, OPANAL Member States were urged to follow the recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

II. Evolution of activities

a. Online course

7. Through Resolution CG/Res.518 of 26 November 2009, the course “The Nuclear Challenge” was launched for government officials, political advisors, lawmakers, members of the armed forces of the Member States. The course was held from 2009 to 2012, the first three conducted in Spanish and the last one in English. The first one was conducted face-to-face and the last three online.

8. At the XXI Special Session of the General Conference, held on 13 November 2012, the Secretary-General presented a proposal for the course “Education for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” (SG.11.2012). Likewise, through Resolution CG/E/Res.547 of 13 November 2012, the General Conference approved the creation of an open Working Group on Education for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (GTE, for the Spanish acronym), whose tasks were to recommend practical actions it deemed appropriate regarding the design of the course “Education for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” and the search for resources with the purpose of starting its implementation.
9. Through Resolution CG/Res.556 of 22 August 2013, the recommendations of the GTE presented in document SG.28.2013 were adopted. In that document, the organization of a course through an electronic platform was considered not viable in its academic, technical and financial aspects. Thus, the proposal of the online course of OPANAL was concluded.

b. OPANAL Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

10. At its XXIII Special Session held on 19 November 2014, the General Conference took note of the recommendations of the GTE contained in its report SG.14.2014 and through Resolution CG/E/Res.576, the mandate of the GTE was extended in order to explore new possibilities for the implementation of the course “Education for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.”
11. During the 297th Meeting of the Council held on 3 September 2015, the Secretary-General proposed the implementation of a basic course on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (Doc. Inf.011/2015), which would be based on the Secretary-General’s proposal of 2012, as well as the draft budget for 2016 that included its financial implications. By doing so, the Council decided to submit both proposals to the XXIV Session of the Agency’s General Conference.

12. During the XXIV Session of the General Conference, the proposal of the aforementioned course (C/12/2015) was presented, which was supported by the GTE in its report CG/04/2015. Therefore, through Resolution CG/Res.01/2015 the implementation of the Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation was adopted in a face-to-face mode with a duration of five working days at the countries of the different Member States that decided to host the course.

13. From 2017 to 2019, there have been four editions of the Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The first one took place in Montevideo, Uruguay from 11 to 15 December 2017 at the headquarters of the Artigas Foreign Service Academy (IASE, for the Spanish acronym); the second one was held in La Paz, Bolivia from 3 to 7 December 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The third course was held from 13 to 17 May 2019 at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, and the last course to date was held from 24 to 27 September 2019 at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua.

14. All four editions of the Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation have been conducted with the supported of Ambassador Sergio de Queiroz Duarte, former United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and current President of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs.

c. Internship Program

15. Among its activities for disarmament and non-proliferation education, the Secretariat of the Agency has welcomed students as part of the Internship Program.

16. In document CG/04/2015 dated 26 November 2015, presented at the XXIV Session of the General Conference, the internship program was reopened and organized into two modalities: one for CARICOM Members States and the other one for Latin-American Member States.

17. The internship program for Caribbean Member States has the purpose of encouraging their participation at OPANAL. The Secretary-General presented a proposal to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Mexico to cover the airfare and a one thousand US dollar monthly allowance for a five-month internship for two Caribbean interns per year. The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands responded affirmatively, thus on 26 November 2015 the Secretariat of OPANAL and the Kingdom of the Netherlands signed a cooperation agreement in this regard.
18. On 23 September 2019, the Secretariat contacted the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Mexico in order to renew the cooperation agreement and extend the Internship Program earmarked for Caribbean Member States to 2020. On 9 October of the same year, the Embassy of the Netherlands informed that the Kingdom of the Netherlands would not renew the agreement, therefore the Internship Program earmarked for Caribbean Member States ends in 2019.
19. From 2016 to 2019, the Secretariat welcomed eight young people from Belize (2), Dominica, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Saint Lucia (2) as part of the Internship Program earmarked for Caribbean Member States.
20. Regarding the Internship Program without financial support, fifteen students from different parts of the world have been received: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico and the United States.

d. Summer School

21. At the 288th Meeting of the Council held on 19 June 2014, it was decided to associate the Agency to the “Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation”, in which diplomats from the region participate, and which is co-organized by the Matías Romero Institute and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies.
22. To date, the Summer School on Disarmament and Non-proliferation has had five editions: in 2014, from 7 to 11 July; in 2015, from 13 to 17 July; in 2016, from 4 to 8 July; in 2017, from 10 to 14 July; and in 2018 from 23 to 17 July.

23. At the 320th Meeting of the Council held on 27 June 2019, the representative of Mexico announced that the sixth edition of the Summer School would be postponed until 2020.

III. Recommendations

24. According to the abovementioned, the following is recommended:

- a. To continue with the implementation of the Course on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.
- b. To invite Member States to communicate to the Secretariat their willingness to host the Course of OPANAL on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which can be instructed in both English and Spanish.
- c. To continue to support the Summer School on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation organized annually by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies.
- d. To extend the Internship Program earmarked for Caribbean Member States to 2020 and to continue with the Internship Program for Latin American Member States.
- e. To invite Member States to transmit and promote the communiqués and declarations issued by OPANAL, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and its work and initiatives in the field of education for disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.