Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva

STATEMENT

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Second Preparatory Committee to the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

General Debate

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you most warmly on your appointment as Chairman of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in your important task of guiding the PrepCom's work and in ensuring that our deliberations are taken up substantively.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Silvana da Silva for her designation as Secretary of this meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

Before proceeding with this statement, Brazil, as a member of the New Agenda Coalition, is fully aligned with the statement delivered by the Honorable Minister of Disarmament of New Zealand, Ms. Marian Hobbs, on behalf New Zealand, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, South Africa, Sweden and Brazil.

Mr. Chairman,

The Second Preparatory Committee to the 2005 NPT Review Conference unfolds under a rather gloomy perspective and the reasons for such a mood are clear: the lack of progress to date in implementing the decisions agreed upon at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

The successful outcome of the 2000 Conference created expectations of progress in the implementation of the Treaty's obligations, in all their aspects. In particular, the parties to the NPT agreed on a phased program on nuclear disarmament, which was a substantial achievement leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. But inaction in the implementation of the agreements reached at the 2000 Conference has been casting increasing shadows on the general expectations then heralded.

Of outstanding significance were the "13 Steps on Nuclear Disarmament", among which the "unequivocal undertaking" by the nuclear-weapon States to achieve the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, the recognition of irreversibility as a principle to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures, the agreement on the urgency to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force, the agreement on the early entry into force of START II and the conclusion of START III, the commitment by the nuclear-weapons States to take steps towards a diminishing role for nuclear
weapons in security policies, the necessity of establishing in the Conference of Disarmament subsidiary bodies to deal with nuclear disarmament and to start immediately the negotiations on a fissile material treaty.

Three years after the 2000 NPT Conference, the CD is paralyzed. Measures to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems have been agreed without taking into consideration the principle of irreversibility. There are no real prospects for the entry into force of the CTBT, while the process of installation of the International Monitoring System is advancing, a comfortable situation for some States who are still preventing the treaty from entering into force.

Particularly disturbing are new approaches concerning the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies, especially the development of low yield nuclear weapons and plans related to their tactical uses, including countering conventional forces.

Also worrisome are counter-proliferation strategies, not compatible with non-proliferation and disarmament approaches and inconsistent with the very nature of the NPT regime.

More than absence of progress, these are alarming signals, which might definitely jeopardize the commitment lying at the heart of the "13 Steps" and undermine the credibility of the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

On the non-proliferation side, the confidence in and ultimately the sustainability of the NPT regime will be determined by the degree of progress in nuclear disarmament and, in this regard, will also depend, to a great extent, on the measures and decisions taken by the five nuclear-weapon states to live up to their commitments. Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing processes, which must proceed hand in hand. As long as nuclear weapons will continue to play a central role in security policies, proliferation will be a risk looming on the horizon. Any presumption of indefinite possession of nuclear weapons is incompatible with the sustainability of the non-proliferation regime. But if one fundamental pre-condition for promoting nuclear non-proliferation is the continuous irreversible progress in nuclear arms reductions, another pre-requisite for a successful non-proliferation regime is the obligation of all parties to the NPT to confront nuclear proliferation also outside the Treaty, as a matter of priority. There is a legitimate concern at proliferation outside the Treaty, which should not be overshadowed by concerns at non-compliance.

It should be stressed that all parties to the NPT have obligations to fulfill under the treaty, including under Article VI.
Mr. Chairman,

The NPT was indefinitely extended in 1995 in the context of a package of decisions, among which the commitment that every effort should be made by all States parties to achieve universal adherence to the Treaty, that every effort should be made to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and that measures relating to nuclear disarmament would be pursued in good faith. The Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice confirmed the obligation of the nuclear-weapon states to pursue and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. Following the 1995 Extension Conference, Brazil joined the NPT in 1998 with the determination to work for nuclear disarmament and to act, from within the NPT, to correct the treaty’s widely recognized imbalances. The Legislative Decree that approved the treaty included a stringent proviso in the sense that “Brazil’s accession to the NPT is made on the understanding that, in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty, effective measures will be taken with a view to the cessation of nuclear arms race at an early date and the total elimination of nuclear weapons”.

It is very significant to note that Brazil joined the NPT immediately after the nuclear tests in South Asia. Any accommodation of a de facto nuclear-weapon status of States who are not parties to the NPT and who have failed to renounce the nuclear-weapon option would be contrary to agreements reached upon at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. It would contradict the letter and spirit of the NPT, as well as relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, besides contravening and undermining the fulfillment of the objectives of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

When the NPT was indefinitely extended in 1995, the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, then agreed by all parties, stated that further steps should be considered to assure non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the treaty against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. 2000 NPT Review Conference “agreed that legally binding security assurances by the five nuclear-weapons States to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT would strengthen the nuclear proliferation regime” and “called upon the Preparatory Committee to make recommendation to the 2005 Review Conference on the issue”. The negotiation of a legally binding instrument on security assurances in the framework of the NPT is an engagement in conformity with the decisions of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Conference, to be expected from all parties to the treaty, particularly the nuclear-weapon States.

Mr. Chairman,

Having joined the NPT after a long process of internal reflection, Brazil feels especially attached to the treaty. We will spare no efforts to hold all parties
accountable for the duly implementation of all their obligations and for the full observance of the commitments agreed upon in 1995 and 2000.

Brazil deeply regrets the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to invoke NPT's Article X and to withdraw from the treaty. We call on the DPRK to reconsider its decision.

Not all news have been discouraging since the 2002 PrepCom: allow me to conclude by welcoming the decision of Cuba to accede to the NPT, as well as to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

With the decision of Cuba to accede to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Latin America and the Caribbean has become a nuclear-weapon-free zone in its entirety, a decision which has only highlighted the historical commitment of the region to peace and security through disarmament and to a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

Our responsibility is great, Mr. Chairman, to meet the challenges facing the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, to ensure the credibility and sustainability of the instruments composing this regime, among which the NPT is one key element, and to show political will to implement the decisions agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference, moving the PrepCom successfully towards the 2005 Review Conference.

Thank you.