



LIX General Assembly
First Committee

Statement by
the Brazilian delegation on behalf of the Rio Group.

New York, October 4, 2004

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Rio Group to express our satisfaction in seeing a member of the Rio Group elected as Chairman of this year's session of the First Committee. Please accept our warm congratulations, our best wishes and the assurance of our cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

Our permanent mechanism of consultation and political agreement has searched, since its creation seventeen years ago, the adoption of concrete actions to preserve peace, strengthen democracy and advocate development in the region, one of the most pacific regions of the globe. The Treaty of Tlatelolco, now fully into force, was an example to the other regions, as the pioneer in establishing a nuclear weapon free zone.

The steady position of the Rio Group in defence of the international peace and security allows us to encourage the international community to take bold steps toward a better panorama for disarmament and non-proliferation.

Next year, the Review conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will find a complex arena. Besides the existence of challenging regional issues to be discussed, recent measures outside the frame of the United Nations in the field of non-proliferation do not contribute to generate a constructive debate. Unfortunately, the results of the Preparatory Committees demonstrated a lack of consensus among positions in the groups that participate at the NPT.

In this adverse scenery, the responsibility of States increases, as they are required an additional effort to assemble niches of negotiation, necessary to the fulfilment of the Treaty. The Rio Group believes that the maintenance of the integrity of the NPT is essential to the credibility of the endeavors towards disarmament and non-proliferation. All commitments must be respected - not only non-proliferation, but also concrete disarmament, verification and the inalienable right to the development of nuclear technology for peaceful use.

The Rio Group reiterates its position for the total elimination of all nuclear testing and stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty including by all Nuclear Weapon States. We highlight the importance of maintaining a moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test-explosion or any other explosions pending the entry into force of that Treaty.

The Rio Group has the hope that in the near future we obtain the universalization of the "Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons" and the "Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons". Besides, highlights the need to agree a verification mechanism for the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons.

The Rio Group is convinced that an effective multilateralism is the only path to the maintenance of international peace and security and that the joint efforts of all States in achieving common grounds in international instruments and mechanisms will lead us to the assurance of collective security.

With regards to the Conference of Disarmament, the only multilateral forum of negotiation on disarmament, the Rio Group has the expectation that it regains its importance, in order to respond to the challenge of addressing all the substantive matters of its competence.

Also the United Nation's Disarmament Commission has the support of the Rio Group. Given its character as a deliberative and pre-negotiator instance, the UNDC represents an appropriate framework to explore the possibility of obtaining progress in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. We hope it reaches consensus, as soon as possible, on its agenda items, in order to achieve a fruitful discussion in its next session.

The Rio Group celebrates the work done by the Group of Governmental Experts on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and its reappraisal of this significant issue in the current international context.

The Rio Group renews its commitment with the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, as well as with the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking of Arms. In this context, we praise the work-in-progress of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The use of anti personal land mines annually causes the loss of thousands of human lives and leaves survivors with disabilities. Until their deactivation and destruction, the said mines constitute a threat to civilian population and impede the use of fertile land for agriculture, prevent regional development and limit employment possibilities. All of this, without omitting the cost of healthcare and rehabilitation resulting from the care of mine victims, are areas of challenges that contribute necessary resources for the development of our countries. We desire that future generations from all over the world can liberate themselves from the suffering caused by the scourge of anti personal land mines, and thus we call on those States

that are not yet parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) to fulfill its provisions and adhere to it.

Mr. Chairman,

The Rio Group expresses its congratulations to the "United Nations Regional Center for Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean" for the achievements related to its objectives of peace and security in the region. With the collaboration of member States, United Nations organisms and non-governmental organizations, the UNLIREC enhanced its program through the coordination of workshops, arms and ammunition destruction events and information broadcasting.

The Rio Group greets the San Francisco de Quito Declaration on the establishment and development of the Andean Zone of Peace, adopted by Heads of States of member States of the Andean Community, in Quito, Ecuador, on the 12th July 2004, during the XV Meeting of the Andean Presidential Counsel. The establishment of this Zone of Peace is another testimonial that the member States of the Rio Group promote a pacific coexistence in the region and develop their relationship in a climate of peace and liberty.

Mr. Chairman,

To finish my intervention, I wish to express the view of the Rio Group on the issue of the revitalization of the First Committee. We believe that to enhance the methods of work of the First Committee, there must be first of all reciprocal confidence and spirit of cooperation among all member States, in order to constitute a forum where issues of great importance to international peace and security are discussed. Nevertheless, the main objective of the process of revitalization of the First Committee shall be to recover its original political role, as mandated by articles 11 and 13 of the Charter.