



BRAZIL

LXII Session of the United Nations General Assembly
First Committee - General Debate
Statement by Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti
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Mr. Chairman,

Please accept my congratulations, Ambassador Paul Badji, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Rest assured of the full cooperation of the Brazilian delegation in what we hope will be a productive session.

Let me also express my particular satisfaction to see Ambassador Sergio Duarte in his capacity as Secretary General's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. I am certain that under Ambassador's Duarte guidance - whose distinguished career in multilateral diplomacy, particularly in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, speaks for itself - the Office for Disarmament Affairs will carry forth the former Department of Disarmament Affairs' tradition of excellence and significantly contribute to move forward the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

We fully associate ourselves with the views expressed by the distinguished representative of the Dominican Republic, on behalf of the Rio Group, as well as by the distinguished representative of Mexico, on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil strongly supports the Secretary-General's recent initiative to revitalize the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda through a more consistent and focused effort. His personal commitment in this regard and the actions of the newly-created ODA could indeed provide the much needed leadership in support of our efforts to overcome current deadlocks that have prevented progress. This session of the I Committee - the first one under the SG Ban Ki-moon administration - has therefore a unique role to play in discussing renewed options for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

We witness today a gradual, yet steadfast, deterioration of the multilateral disarmament machinery. Successive setbacks and deadlocks sadly demonstrate the lack of common ground and an increasing tendency towards the non-fulfillment of commitments and obligations undertaken under the relevant international legally binding instruments. In our view, the lack of substantive progress in the arms control field should not lead us into hopelessness or apathy, but rather should serve as an encouragement to renewed action. The task at hand is to conceive new initiatives and suggestions that may coalesce into practical, achievable recommendations in the field of disarmament and set the ground for a more favorable international scenario to emerge.

Despite all the difficulties there are some recent encouraging signs. Brazil believes the report of the “Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission” published last year and entitled “Weapons of Terror” is a useful tool in helping identifying some reasons for the current stagnation on global arms control and disarmament fora. Moreover, the article published last January in the *Wall Street Journal* by four eminent North-American former high officials endorsing concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament is undoubtedly positive. Equally encouraging are the words of the former Secretary of State of the UK, Margaret Beckett, last June at the Carnegie Endowment seminar in support of a “genuine commitment and concrete action on nuclear disarmament”. These ideas should be given careful consideration by the international community.

Mr Chairman,

The NPT continues to be the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential instrument for the implementation of nuclear disarmament, and the guarantee of States’ rights to the development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. The Treaty is as vital as ever. At the start of a new review cycle on the implementation of the NPT, there are worrying signs in the form of initiatives that do not conform to the objectives of the Treaty. The selective implementation of disarmament obligations agreed by consensus is accompanied by progressive efforts to strengthen non-proliferation mechanisms which could restrict cooperation for the use and development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Today, as we review the implementation of disarmament commitments, we cannot hide the disappointment and avoid the perception that the promise made by the nuclear weapon States towards nuclear disarmament has fallen short of our expectations. The modest achievements in reducing nuclear arsenals have a precarious basis, as they are not the result of multilaterally negotiated, irreversible and verifiable agreements, and thus can be easily rolled back. That is the main rationale behind the proposal put forward by Brazil at the I Preparatory Session for the 2010 NPT Review Conference last May, in Vienna, that the Secretariat, based on the information available, put together a comparative table of the measures undertaken by the nuclear weapon States in compliance with obligations under Article VI. This measure would add much-needed transparency to the nuclear disarmament process and provide States Parties with the means for a better evaluation of progress in this field.

Moreover, there seems to be no sense of urgency regarding the entry into force of the CTBT. Brazil along with the overwhelming majority of NPT States Parties deems the entry into force of the CTBT as an essential step towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The longer the Treaty remains ineffective, the more detrimental this situation becomes to non-proliferation efforts. We cannot let the CTBT be relegated to oblivion. To do so would represent a concession by all to the prospect in time of nuclear armament by several countries.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones for their part also have major significance in promoting nuclear disarmament and preventing nuclear weapons proliferation. On the understanding that nuclear-weapon free zones help enhance peace and security at the regional and global levels, this year together with New Zealand, Brazil will be again submitting a draft resolution on the issue of the Southern Hemisphere free of nuclear weapons.

In the field of conventional weapons, easy access to small arms and light weapons exacerbates conflicts, facilitates violent crime and terrorism, impedes post-conflict reconstruction and undermines long-term sustainable development. Brazil attaches utmost importance to the Program of Action's follow-up mechanism, which allows the international community to take into consideration the experience gathered in implementing its provisions since its adoption in 2001.

I'd like also to express recognition for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) process. Brazil has been actively engaged in the discussions regarding the need for a legally-binding instrument related to the trade in conventional arms. In our response earlier this year to the SG's request for views on the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for an ATT, Brazil underlined that discussions to this end must lead to an instrument that effectively disciplines the licit trade in conventional arms without interfering with the right of States to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain such weapons and ammunition. We now look forward to seeing a compiled report of the views received from Member States in preparation for the work of the upcoming Group of Experts in 2008.

Mr Chairman,

The results of this session of the I Committee will be measured not only by the number of resolutions we adopt but also whether we succeed in bringing the multilateral disarmament machinery towards reengagement and productive discussions and negotiations. It is our hope that deliberations during the current session will provide an impetus towards a global consensus for meeting the contemporary challenges to international peace and security.