

Revised



BRAZIL
VII REVIEW CONFERENCE OF TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Statement by the Head of the Delegation of Brazil,
Ambassador Ronaldo Sardenberg
New York, 2 May 2005

Mr. President:

At the outset, I wish to state that Brazil is much honored by your election to the Presidency of the Seventh Review Conference. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau, and to express my delegation's appreciation to the members of the UN Secretariat for their effort to ensure the efficient work of this Conference.

My delegation commends the efforts you have made for the preparation for this highly important international event, by means of holding intensive consultations with the States Parties. We are certain that under your experienced guidance this Conference will successfully conclude a balanced examination of the operation of the NPT, and thus be able to build upon the results of the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences.

Brazil wishes to associate itself fully with the statement previously made by the Delegation of New Zealand on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

The NPT is the cornerstone of a stable and successful regime of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and is therefore crucial for the maintenance of international peace and security. As a State Party to the Treaty, Brazil is fully prepared to participate in the collective efforts in order to preserve its integrity and to strengthen its implementation and review process. A balanced implementation of all the commitments assumed under the Treaty is of the essence in order to achieve those results, and should therefore be at the forefront of our considerations at this Conference.

Every nation holds high stakes in the promotion of the nuclear disarmament, peaceful development and use, and in the non-proliferation goals of the NPT.

Brazil shares the concerns of the international community regarding the threats to the NPT regime, both persistent and new that have been highlighted by developments since the 2000 Review Conference. These include proliferation efforts, either brazen or

clandestine, either within or outside the NPT, carried out by both state and non-state actors. To this we could add issues involving NPT compliance, associated with suspected proliferation attempts, as well as with the protracted implementation of the steps toward nuclear disarmament agreed to at the 2000 Review Conference.

In our view, the way to strengthen the credibility of the NPT is to reaffirm the cogent and complementary nature of all commitments under the Treaty. Confidence in the review process as a guarantor of the fundamental bargain on which the Treaty is based should not be allowed to erode. This is why this Conference seeks a balanced approach in its review of the operation of the NPT.

Furthermore, it is the understanding of Brazil that the issue of non-proliferation should be tackled in a comprehensive manner, on a par with nuclear disarmament and with the development and use of nuclear technology for exclusively peaceful ends.

Mr. President,

The development and use of nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes are a basic principle of our national policy, as enshrined in our Constitution. In addition to electrical power generation, Brazil's nuclear activities extend to wide-ranging applications in medicine, agriculture, industry, and environmental protection.

Article IV of the NPT clearly recognizes the inalienable right to the development and use of nuclear energy for peaceful ends. It does not qualify, restrict, or reinterpret such a right that, incidentally, was already in existence prior to the Treaty.

Mr. President,

Both individually and as a member of the New Agenda Coalition, Brazil has called upon the five Nuclear-Weapon States to undo the effects of the nuclear proliferation they engaged in through the accumulation of weapons, and hence to strive to achieve nuclear disarmament.

As other types of weapons of mass destruction, - which are prohibited under their respective regimes -, nuclear weapons should be completely eliminated. There should be no excuse for their use or indefinite possession; for their development, or acquisition. The NPT is the main international instrument to achieving these ends.

Brazil welcomes the announcements regarding substantial reductions in nuclear arsenals. The reductions in the numbers of deployed strategic nuclear warheads envisaged by the Treaty of Moscow represent a positive step in the process of nuclear de-escalation. However, we note that the fundamental principles of verification and irreversibility should be applied to all disarmament measures.

Although the NPT does not contain provisions that expressly prohibits modernization of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, the introduction of new weapon types or the announcement of strategic doctrines that tend to lower the threshold for the utilization of nuclear weapons run counter to the “unequivocal commitment” to full nuclear disarmament, and bypasses the “thirteen practical steps” towards that goal adopted in 2000.

Both commitments are contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, and should be revisited with a view to promoting their implementation, under the aegis of the NPT.

There is, furthermore, a legitimate concern about proliferation outside the Treaty. Our common goal of universal adherence to the Treaty must be stressed in this regard. The States Parties should renew their call for those countries that have not yet signed the NPT to do it without delay, as non-Nuclear Weapon States.

Brazil deplored the announcement by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) that it is in possession of nuclear weapons and that it intends to continue to develop them. We thus reaffirm our call to the DPRK to reconsider this decision and to reaffirm its commitments under the NPT.

In this context, Brazil considers that this Review Conference has a twofold task: to urge non-States Parties to accede to the NPT without conditions and without delay, and to call on States Parties to refrain from any action that may contravene or undermine the fulfillment of the objectives of the Treaty.

The entire international community must share the concern that peaceful nuclear programs may be used as cover for nuclear proliferation. However, on the one hand, one should not ignore the successful track record of the system of safeguards now in place for non-nuclear weapon IAEA members; and, on the other, one should not wrongfully blame the NPT for alleged loopholes that are assumed to render it ineffective to combat nuclear non-proliferation.

Brazil has supported the strengthening of safeguards since the inception of such efforts by the IAEA. It is Brazil’s view that further strengthening of safeguards should be assessed in the light of the wider disarmament and non-proliferation context.

A balance should be maintained in the activities of the IAEA regarding verification, on the one hand, and promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear energy, including technical assistance, on the other.

We consider that it is warranted to carefully scrutinize proposals to severely limit or prohibit access to some nuclear technologies that are deemed to be critical for proliferation. Prohibition or outright confiscation would create a new cleavage between the "haves" and the "have-nots", which was admitted, as a very particular exception, in the case of nuclear weapons under the terms of the NPT bargain.

Brazil is a founding member of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in an inhabited region of the world, which is the hallmark of the Treaty of Tlatelolco adopted by all Latin American and the Caribbean states in 1967. Every country in the region has now ratified this groundbreaking Treaty, which actually predates the NPT itself; The Tlatelolco Nuclear Weapon Free Zone is considered a beacon for other initiatives that have been modeled after it around the world.

We strongly support the implementation of nuclear-weapon free zones and consider that they shall play an increasingly important role with a view to promoting the building of mutual confidence and nuclear disarmament worldwide. In that spirit, Brazil participated in the Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held from April 26 to 28, 2005 at the site of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

In line with its commitment, Brazil also revoked the reservations it had under the Tlatelolco Treaty concerning peaceful nuclear explosions, thus relinquishing the right to conduct them. We thus call upon the nuclear-weapon states to revoke the reservations they made to the Tlatelolco Protocols to which they are Parties, thereby extending to countries of the region the unrestricted negative security guarantees that are of the essence for building mutual confidence.

Mr. President,

As we proceed to take stock of the results of the Review Conference, Brazil will fully keep in mind the explicit, interpretative statement of the Brazilian Congress, in ratifying the NPT, to the effect that effective measures should be forthcoming with a view to the elimination of all nuclear weapons, under the terms of Article VI.

As Secretary General Kofi Annan just stated this morning, "the only guarantee that nuclear weapons will not be used is for our world to be free of such weapons".

Finally, Brazil has consistently called for the universalization of the CTBT, which we consider to be an essential element of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Therefore, we continue to call for signatories that have not yet done so, particularly those 13 states listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty, to ratify the CTBT with a view to its early entry into force.

Thank you.