60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
First Committee – General Debate
Statement by Ambassador Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations
04 October 2005
Mr. Chairman,

Please accept my congratulations on your assumption as Chairman of the First Committee. Let me assure you of Brazil's full cooperation in what we hope will be a productive session.

We fully associate ourselves with the views expressed by the distinguished representative of Argentina, on behalf of the Rio Group, as well as by the distinguished representative of South Africa, on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil sees the pursuit of nuclear disarmament as a fundamental priority. We recognize the risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Yet we cannot disregard the importance of reducing and dismantling existing arsenals of all such weapons. Together with non-proliferation efforts, we must continue to work tirelessly towards nuclear disarmament.

To that end, our focus must be on systematic, continuous and progressive efforts to implement the obligation set forth in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, on the basis of negotiations on effective measures on nuclear disarmament. This is, in a nutshell, the thrust of the New Agenda Coalition's draft resolution for the present session of the First Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

As a founding member of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Brazil welcomes the celebration, earlier this year, of the Conference of States parties to Nuclear
Weapon Free Zones. It is a development that certainly strengthens the international community's determination to continue working towards freeing the entire Southern Hemisphere of nuclear weapons. Together with New Zealand, Brazil will therefore be again submitting a draft resolution on this issue.

Mr Chairman,

In the last NPT Review Conference, Brazil sought to work on all substantive issues related to the Treaty's three pillars - nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes - that would facilitate the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Regrettably, owing to a lack of the necessary political will from different quarters, it was not possible to appropriately discuss such issues and, much less, to agree on a final substantive document. We are, nevertheless, of the firm opinion that the next Review Conference and the preparatory process that will begin in 2007 must undertake a thorough reassessment of the implementation of the 2000 NPT document, including the agreed thirteen practical steps. We also call on those few remaining countries that remain outside the NPT to accede unconditionally to the Treaty, as non-nuclear States.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil has signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and has been supportive of such a Treaty since the very beginning of multilateral discussions on this issue. As I stated during the Conference on the Facilitation of Entry into Force of the CTBT, two weeks ago, its full and effective implementation will represent a significant step towards nuclear disarmament, as it will contribute to balance the inherent asymmetry of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The CTBT is intended to be a bulwark against both vertical and horizontal proliferation, by constraining the development and qualitative
improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons. It constitutes a crucial step towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

For this reason, Brazil calls upon all States, particularly those listed in Annex II that so far have failed to sign and ratify the CTBT, to do so, without delay, and to refrain from any activities contrary to the purposes of the Treaty and to the obligations laid out therein.

The recently adopted Declaration by the Conference on the Facilitation of CTBT Entry into Force reaffirmed the parties' determination to bring the Treaty into force and underscored its importance for global disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

It is regrettable that the recently concluded High Level Summit failed to reach agreement on matters relating to disarmament and non-proliferation. This lost opportunity further underscores the challenges to the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. The challenges posed by these developments will not, however, impede our determination to pursue the objective of achieving the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. Strengthening multilateralism is the only means of effectively tackling security concerns common to the whole of humankind.

Continued lack of consensus on a program of work at the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the difficulty of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in arriving to a common agenda, are, for their part, unacceptable.

With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, it is clear that a balanced program of work must encompass the simultaneous establishment of four subsidiaries bodies, namely on nuclear disarmament, our highest priority; on a fissile material treaty; on the prevention of arms race in outer space; and on
negative security assurances. These four core issues cannot be evaded; nor can we pick and choose from among them, although negotiations and discussions on them should be dealt on the basis of with different time frames and perspectives.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil concurs with the assessment that terrorism and the prospects of further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are prominent among contemporary threats to international peace and security. One of the most terrifying possibilities is that non-State actors might acquire and use such weapons. We must endeavour to prevent this from ever happening, while acting strictly within accepted principles and norms of international law. No less challenging, however, is the lack of progress, even setbacks, in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

As the Brazilian Foreign Minister, Ambassador Celso Amorim, stated at the opening of this session of the General Assembly, "We will continue to lend our support to increased international cooperation in the combat against terrorism and to the elimination of its deep-rooted causes. Such efforts must be undertaken with due respect for international law and human rights. The fight against terrorism cannot be viewed in terms of police repression alone. Neither can such acts result in absurd, indiscriminate deaths, similar to those caused by terrorism itself."

Thank you.