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DEBATE TEMATICO: CLUSTER I, ARMAS NUCLEARES
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THEMATIC DEBATE: CLUSTER I, NUCLEAR WEAPONS
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Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Chile is pleased to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau and to pledge our cooperation throughout a session of our Committee for which the signs augur well.

One year ago, we said in this same room that the political changes which have already occurred and those in the offing could create opportunities for rescuing the nuclear non-proliferation regime and relaunching nuclear disarmament. The political changes that we were observing one year ago are today a solid reality and the hopes of yesterday have given way to political events on which we can build courses of action.

Disarmament constitutes a segment of the multilateral agenda which, by its very nature, requires decisive leadership on the part of major actors in the international community. Nuclear disarmament will be a reality when States which possess atomic weapons relinquish an instrument of power whose mere existence, as noted in the statement by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which we are a member, creates unacceptable risks. The Non-Aligned thinking, which we espouse, is that the best way to avert the danger of nuclear weapons falling into terrorist hands is to eliminate them completely.

Accordingly, Mr. Chairperson, we are very glad to see that this necessary leadership has been given considerable impetus by the policies of President Barack Obama. The delegation of Chile will be unyielding in its praise of this White House, aligning ourselves with those who welcome the fact that the Norwegian Academy has bestowed the Nobel Peace Prize on a Chief Executive who - together with President Dimitri Medvedev in London - proclaimed the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, a statesman who in his presidential campaign denounced the high state of alert of strategic nuclear weapons as a relic of the cold war, promising to work with Russia, in a mutual and verifiable manner, to take nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert.

As Dr. Michelle Bachelet, the President of Chile, said on the subject of the Nobel Peace Prize, the award to President Obama represents "an appeal to all international political actors to make [our] hopes come true for real progress towards disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peace in areas of our planet still experiencing tremendous tension, such as the Middle East".

The message of our delegation is the same as that of our President: let us realize our hopes and all assume that share of leadership which, by virtue of the principle of indivisibility of international security, is incumbent on each State - large or small - as a responsible player in the international community. As stated in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, without prejudice to the essential responsibility borne by the nuclear States and recognized in that instrument, the international community as a whole also has a role to play in the achievement of nuclear disarmament.
Mr. Chairperson, our delegation notes that, in the very important resolution 1887 (2009), the members of the Security Council reaffirmed the need to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and on the basis of the principle of undiminished security for all. Chile notes with satisfaction that the Council made an effort to strike a political balance between the various principles, instruments, bodies and political variables involved, without failing to face up to the challenges which nuclear proliferation and terrorism pose for the whole world. As Latin Americans, we are glad to single out the work done by Costa Rica and Mexico - States with a long and distinguished tradition in the area of disarmament - together with the other non-permanent and permanent members to achieve agreement on an instrument which, correctly interpreted, contains a multilateral road map for the coming years.

The General Assembly, whose competence in the area of international security is clearly established in Article 11 of the Charter, now has the possibility, through the work of this First Committee and of the plenary, to expand on and clarify the results of the Council's Disarmament Summit, following the principle that United Nations action is the fruit of synergies and cooperation between its principal organs.

In particular, we must be able to send a clear message to the Conference on Disarmament in which, after the adoption of the programme of work (welcomed as evidence of a new and positive atmosphere in the disarmament machinery), abuse of the rule of strict consensus applied there finally torpedoed the efforts of several Presidents to initiate substantive work. Is it not perhaps ironical that the substantive progress now being made in the area of nuclear disarmament results from the bilateral negotiations which the United States and the Russian Federation have launched to replace the START I Treaty and not from the so-called principal forum for the negotiation of disarmament instruments?

The Eighth NPT Review Conference is undoubtedly the most important event on our calendar for the coming year. We hope for a successful outcome to renew the political legitimacy of an instrument and a regime that are crucial for international peace and security. The old diplomatic qualities of good faith and pragmatism will be essential to the achievement of this outcome. Each State and each political group that will participate in the exercise should feel not only that it is the master of the exercise but also that there is a possibility that its legitimate goals will be met. The NPT belongs to all its States parties; its provisions enshrine rights that we all possess. Chile subscribes to the theory that advocates a process of ongoing revision. Universal conventions of this scope have a life and a progression punctuated by Review Conferences, which ensure not only the permanence of the instrument but also its practical relevance.

The crux of the problem is the need to reconcile support for the earlier results, particularly those achieved by consensus in 1995 and 2000, with the challenges of the present; these results belong to us all and not only to one regional group, as some people claimed in 2005. In particular, we believe it is necessary to review the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament which won general support almost a decade ago and to
formulate, in the light of present realities and needs, a pragmatic agenda with objective chances of success.

It is also essential for the Review Conference to provide significant space for civil society, which has for years been following our activities in a selfless and disinterested fashion. To single out some organizations may be unfair, but I cannot fail to mention the Middle Powers Initiative, the Global Security Institute, the Acronym Institute, Nuclear Flashpoints, Mayors for Peace, INESAP and the Evans-Kawaguchi Commission. The efforts of these organizations - among many others - set an example and spur us on.

Mr. Chairperson,

The goals that we have outlined in this statement can be achieved if a genuine willingness to negotiate, to give and take, prevails among us. Chile's multilateral bent is well known and has been put into play in the Non-Aligned Group, the Rio Group, the Seven-Nation Initiative, the De-Alerting Coalition and, recently, in the coalition that succeeded in launching the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions. It is a policy dictated by the need for peace and inspired by the human security paradigm. Because the beneficiaries of everything we do in this room, Mr. Chairperson - and we should never forget this - are flesh and blood people: our fellow men and women, our brothers and sisters and our compatriots, who hope for and deserve much more and much better from the United Nations.

Thank you.