BRAZIL

First Committee
Thematic Debate on Cluster 1 – “Nuclear Weapons”

13 October 2010

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares,
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the Conference on
Disarmament

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Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the statement delivered on behalf of MERCOSUR and Associated Countries, I would like to make some remarks in my national capacity, in particular with regard to the issue of a treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world remains a high priority for my country. Brazil strongly supports the calls for an immediate commencement of negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, which would promote the total elimination of all nuclear weapons within a specified timeframe.

Notwithstanding, we understand that a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty could be a first, feasible step to be taken within a gradual approach to the objective of nuclear disarmament.

In considering this alternative, however, it must be clear that negotiations should not be limited to the prohibition of the production of fissile material. These negotiations should also deal with all other aspects related to fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. As a result, the treaty would be not only a non-proliferation instrument but also a real nuclear disarmament instrument.

Bearing this in mind, during the 2010 session, the Brazilian delegation to the Conference on Disarmament offered two contributions to discussions on this issue.

The first was a Draft Programme of Work (document CD/1889), presented by Brazil in its capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament. According to that proposal, a working group would be established to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, while taking into consideration all other matters related to those fissile material, on the basis of document CD/1299, the so-called Shannon Report, of March 1995, and the mandate contained therein.

We know that a treaty coping not only with the future production of fissile material but also with all other matters related to those fissile material raises additional complexities in terms of ensuring States’ compliance.

That is why Brazil presented a second contribution: a proposal on a possible structure of a treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, contained in document CD/1888.
According to our proposal, the treaty would be composed of a framework or umbrella treaty containing provisions on objectives, definitions and final clauses. A first protocol would have the objective of banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, including a verification mechanism. A second protocol would deal with all pre-existing fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. This protocol should equally provide a verification mechanism.

The final clauses of the framework or umbrella treaty would define the modalities for participation in the protocols.

Brazil hopes that any General Assembly resolution on a FMCT, or any decision by the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on this issue, should reflect these positions.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.