First Committee
Thematic Debate on Cluster 2 — "Other Weapons of Mass Destruction"

22 October 2010

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

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I have the honor to speak on behalf of MERCOSUR Members and Associated States: Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Uruguay and my own country, Brazil.

Mr. Chairman,

MERCOSUR and Associated States reiterate their firm commitment to the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. We reaffirm the need for full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

The international commitment undertaken by our countries is reflected in the Declaration on Security in the Americas, signed in 2003, in which “We declare our objective to make the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons”. In addition, through Resolution 2107, of 2005, adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States – OAS, we decided unanimously to “fulfill concretely the shared commitment of member States to make the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons”.

Mr. Chairman,

MERCOSUR and Associated States support the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and encourage the efforts to its universalization. We are convinced that the elimination of arsenals and the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons by all States of the Convention are effective contributions to international peace and security. We congratulate the Director General of OPCW, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his election and for assuming this function this year. We fully believe that, under his leadership, the Organization will successfully accomplish its purpose.

We also congratulate the OPCW for the positive results on the implementation of the Convention and reiterate our concern with regards to the still existing chemical arsenal.

MERCOSUR and Associated States, on this occasion, also take note of the region’s contribution through a seminar which will be held in Salvador, Bahia, in Brazil, on 26-28 October, in order to train customs authorities to identify chemical weapons and products prohibited by the Convention. The course is designed for authorities from Latin American and Caribbean countries with the purpose of effectively implementing the transfers regime of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

MERCOSUR and Associated States affirm their continued willingness to contribute for the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and to improve cooperation between States.
However, we express our concern for the path that this international security instrument has taken. We agree with many States that it is necessary to develop and to implement additional measures for assuring that the prohibition is effective, even though this may be a challenge considering the biological weapons peculiarity. The Convention lacks means for assuring that States parties are in compliance. This deficit has taken some member States of the Convention to explore implementation modalities which focus on cooperation in areas such as sanitary structures and human and animal health in general, competing with existing mechanisms at the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

In this context, MERCOSUR and Associated States express their concern with the current situation of the Biological Weapons Convention. Nevertheless, we reaffirm our commitment to contributing substantially to the Seventh Review Conference, which will be held in December 2011, so as to restore the international security dimension of this important legal instrument.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, MERCOSUR and Associated States reiterate their continued commitment to the instruments related to weapons of mass destruction and reaffirm that the elimination of these weapons should take place through multilateralism, under an effective and strict international control.

Thank you.