Statement by Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro,  
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the Conference on  
Disarmament,  
at the General Debate of the NPT PrepCom  
Geneva, 23 April 2013

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Brazil warmly welcomes you on your election to the post of Chairman of this PrepCom and pledges its full cooperation in your efforts to steer our work to a successful conclusion.

The measure of success of any review cycle, from a Brazilian perspective, is whether it contributes to reducing the basic asymmetry inherent in the NPT. This should be our main objective. We should therefore shun attempts to further increase the imbalance between the rights and obligations of NWS and NNWS. It has been widely recognized that the NPT has been an outstanding success as far as non-proliferation is concerned. In effect, 43 years after the entry into force of the Treaty, no NNWS Party to the NPT developed a nuclear weapon, thereby validating one of the main purposes for which it was negotiated.

The other main purpose of the Treaty is still elusive. There is no commitment to multilateral negotiations on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, as mandated by Article VI. This situation is unsustainable and will not last forever. Never in history have such a great number of States renounced voluntarily having a specific weapon whereas a very few were entitled to keep them, albeit temporarily. The indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995 cannot be in any way interpreted as permission for the perpetual possession of nuclear weapons. NWS will sooner or later come to the conclusion that it is in their security interest to live in a world without nuclear weapons and without the tensions inherent of a world of haves and have-nots.
Mr. Chairman,

Brazil welcomed the Norwegian initiative to convene the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of a Nuclear Weapon Detonation. This issue is an important component of the NPT and we very much regret that the NWS decided not to be represented at the event. We look forward to their revisiting this position with respect to the follow up Conference, to be held in Mexico. We also look forward to further impetus being given to the international movement to delegitimize the very existence of nuclear weapons.

Brazil regrets that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to adopt a program of work which would effectively contribute to nuclear disarmament. We stand ready to work toward an agreement at the CD, particularly on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. From our perspective any future on fissile material will have to deal in a way or another with past production or else its impact on disarmament will be less than negligible in centuries to come.

Mr. Chairman,

We regret that the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction was not convened in 2012 as agreed in the 2010 Action Plan. All efforts must be exerted towards convening the Conference without further delay. We commend the ongoing efforts of the Conference Facilitator, Mr. Jaako Laajava of Finland.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to state on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition that “neither the pursuit nor the retention of nuclear weapons can ever guarantee a nation’s peace and security, nor enhance regional or international security”. We therefore strongly condemn the nuclear tests carried out by the DPRK in violation of its obligations made under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by once again quoting, as I did yesterday on behalf of the NAC, the UN Secretary General: “there are no right hands for wrong weapons”.

I thank you.