Brazil

8th Review Conference of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Main Committee II

Statement by Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro
At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Volodymyr Yel’Chenko for assuming your duties as Chairman of Main Committee II of this Review Conference. You can count on the cooperation of the Brazilian delegation in your endeavors.

Ever since its adherence to the NPT in 1998, Brazil has been a leading advocate of the need for balanced progress in all three pillars upon which the Treaty is founded. Balance is especially crucial in the case of the pillars related to disarmament and non-proliferation, since both are closely interrelated and mutually reinforcing processes, for better or worse. Proliferation both within and outside the Treaty is stimulated not only by the existence of nuclear weapons, but also by the on-going qualitative development of such weapons and their delivery systems. This need for balance is further reinforced by the fact that the verifiable and objective obligations contained in the treaty on non-proliferation, as per Articles II and III, are inherently asymmetrical vis-à-vis the open-ended obligation to disarm enshrined in Article VI.

Notwithstanding this inherent asymmetry, which in the long run is dangerous and unsustainable, it should be recalled that the NPT has proven highly successful in preventing nuclear proliferation throughout its 40 years of existence. It was in large part owing to the NPT that the direct predictions about the spread of nuclear weapons made at the height of the cold war failed to come true.

This is due in no small extent to the credibility and effectiveness of the verification system put in place to verify non-proliferation commitments, in the form of the IAEA safeguards system. Comprehensive safeguards agreements, which all Non-Nuclear-Weapon States are under a legally binding obligation to adopt, enable the Agency to ensure that no nuclear materials in such States are diverted to non-peaceful uses. In addition to this, comprehensive safeguards agreements also serve to prevent the occurrence of undeclared nuclear activities inasmuch as they allow the Agency to verify the correctness of declarations submitted by States. For such reasons, the universalization of comprehensive safeguards is an urgent necessity.

It should also be stressed that the balance of obligations upon which the NPT is founded also includes the manner through which its commitments are to be verified. The Additional Protocol is not a part of that bargain. It is simply not fair to expect Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, which have already undertaken unequivocal, credible and verifiable commitments to forego nuclear weapons, to implement further enhanced verification measures, while the international community has yet to be presented with a timeframe within which to expect the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. Enhanced verification mechanisms should be devised and grafted into a future Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which would level the playing field by making zero nuclear weapons the norm for all members of the international community.

Another issue which is also of relevance from the point of view of compliance with the provisions of the Treaty related to non-proliferation is that of arrangements commonly referred to as “nuclear sharing” in the context of military alliances. In that
respect, Brazil recalls that, as stated by the working paper presented by the New Agenda Coalition, each article of the NPT is binding on the respective States Parties at all times and in all circumstances and that all States Parties should be held fully accountable with respect to strict compliance with their obligations under the Treaty.

Brazil believes that Nuclear-Weapon free zones (NWFZs) are another important instrument to prevent nuclear proliferation. As a Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first NWFZ on a permanently populated area, Brazil strongly supports the establishment of additional such zones, including one in the Middle East. Brazil hopes that recent changes in the nuclear strategic doctrine of a Nuclear-Weapon State may pave the way to the withdrawal of reservations made by such State and other Nuclear-Weapon States in ratifying the Additional Protocol II of the Tlatelolco Treaty, with a view to allowing the negative security assurances provided by them to Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to become straightforward and unequivocal. It should be recalled, however, that the objective of achieving negative security assurances is not an end unto itself, but only a transient measure to be upheld pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Brazil continues to consider the CTBT as an essential element of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It should be recalled that after its entry into force, the CTBT and its extensive and effective verification regime will become essential tools to prevent, deter and detect nuclear proliferation. We therefore reiterate our long-standing call on all States to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, in particular the remaining nine Annex II States whose ratification is still needed for its entry into force. We welcome in this regard the announcement recently made by the Foreign Minister of Indonesia according to which its country should soon ratify the CTBT, and we call on other Annex II States to follow this example, by showing the necessary resolve to overcome conditionalities and mistrusts in order to ratify it without delay. Instead of being held hostage to other issues or used as a bargaining chip, the Treaty should be seen in the light of its own merits, since its entry into force would represent an unequivocal contribution to international security and stability at all levels.

In the view of my Delegation, the purposes of this Conference as regards non-proliferation should be, among others:

1. To state clearly the need for universalization of Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, as a fundamental element in the process of strengthening the IAEA;

2. To recognize the role played by bilateral and regional arrangements, including Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones, in promoting and fulfilling the goals of non-proliferation;

3. To reiterate its support for the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East, under the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference package of decisions, and to recommend concrete measures to fulfill this goal;

4. To underline the need for the prompt entry into force of the CTBT and, pending this, the universal observance of a moratorium of nuclear tests;
5. To support a comprehensive review of strategic doctrines of military alliances, with a view to reducing the role of nuclear weapons and to dismantling tactical weapons from non-nuclear-weapons States;

6. To call upon States found by the IAEA in non-compliance with their respective safeguards agreements to fully and unconditionally cooperate with the IAEA and the international community with a view to resolving relevant issues;