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

New York, May 7th 2010

Main Committee I

Statement by Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares
Head of the Brazilian Delegation
Mr. Chairman,

Let me associate myself with previous speakers in congratulating you for the assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. You can count on the cooperation of the Brazilian delegation in your endeavors.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil fully subscribes to the statement made by the Ambassador of Egypt on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition. A decade ago, Brazil and its partners of the NAC were able to propose and participate in negotiations on a forward-looking, pragmatic programme of action, which came to be known as "The Thirteen Steps to Disarmament". States Parties were able to agree on a realistic, concrete blueprint for nuclear disarmament, which was a landmark achievement in NPT history. That was a crucial first test for the strengthened review process after the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

Along with a series of practical measures, such programme included an unequivocal undertaking by the Nuclear-Weapon-States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. This undertaking provided a much-needed, clear-cut statement on the precise meaning of Article VI.

Mr. Chairman,

It is inconceivable that, as we are reaching the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the concept of "nuclear deterrence" with all its strategic implications is still in use. Nuclear weapons are not needed to deter non nuclear weapon States and are still less useful to deter terrorist threats. The logical conclusion can only be that "deterrence" and corresponding doctrines apply only to nuclear weapons States in their relations among themselves, which is also difficult to conceive. Nevertheless, NWS frequently use this concept.

Global strategic thinking may appropriately contemplate alliances. However, the inclusion of nuclear weapons in military alliances contaminates non nuclear weapon States that belong to those alliances.

In spite of sophisticated strategic doctrines that purportedly justify the possession of nuclear weapons, these doctrines might have a more basic meaning: enhancing power and a sense of dominance to those who possess such weapons, thus being a serious obstacle to the democratization of international relations, a fundamental basis for international peace and security.

The so-called principle of undiminished security for all, forged in bygone times, is not for all if it is based on nuclear weapons.
A successful outcome of the work in this Main Committee I is predicated on the definition of clear directives on a number of points:

a) to reaffirm the unequivocal undertaking by NWS to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals;

b) a commitment to the goal of concluding a Nuclear Weapons Convention outlawing this category of weapons entirely, with a well defined timeframe, in line with the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions;

c) a commitment by NWS and States participating in nuclear-weapons-based military alliances to diminish the role and salience of nuclear weapons in their strategic doctrines;

d) to call upon all NWS to take clear and further action towards full transparency and accountability regarding their nuclear weapons arsenals and the implementation of disarmament measures, in line with the agreement reached on reporting at the 2000 Review Conference;

e) to reverse the maintenance of thousands of nuclear weapons in high-alert status and immediately start their irreversible demobilization;

f) to resume the substantive workings of the Conference on Disarmament, in particular with regards to the negotiation of a treaty on fissile material, as well as on the questions of negative security assurances and on prevention of an arms race in outer space;

g) to take immediate steps to ensure the entry into force of the CTBT;

h) to withdraw any reservations or unilateral interpretative declarations made by the Nuclear-Weapon-States, which are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaties;

Mr. Chairman,

In the view of my delegation these are, among others, the most salient issues before this Committee. Brazil and its partners of the New Agenda Coalition have presented a working paper with 22 recommendations on nuclear disarmament, which build upon the 13 steps. Of course, the number of steps is not the point. Our challenge is not so much one of adding a few more measures. More important is the political will to move decisively to implementing them.

At this Conference, my Delegation expects more than a reiteration of commitments, if their fulfillment is to be once again postponed by the Nuclear-Weapon-States to a distant, uncertain future. Brazil and the vast majority of the non-nuclear-
weapon States have never put our non-proliferation duties on hold, conditioning their fulfillment to indefinite, more favorable international conditions. A similar attitude is what we expect from the Nuclear-Weapon-States when it comes to disarmament.

Thank you.