



PERMANENT MISSION OF URUGUAY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

57 PERIODO DE SESIONES DE LA ASAMBLEA GENERAL

PRIMERA COMISION

DEBATE GENERAL

**INTERVENCIÓN DEL
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL URUGUAY
EMBAJADOR DR. FELIPE H. PAOLILLO**

Nueva York, 4 de octubre de 2002

(verificar con texto leído)

57 SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST COMMITTEE

GENERAL DEBATE

**ADDRESS BY THE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF URUGUAY
AMBASSADOR DR. FELIPE H. PAOLILLO**

New York, October 4th 2002
(check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

The current political landscape does not seem to be encouraging so far so as to expect significant advances in disarmament. Maybe none has been, otherwise we would have not spent more than a century discussing this issue. The international community faces serious threats to its security and needs to provide serious answers. These threats, be they of terrorist, technological, nuclear, bacteriological or chemical nature, put the existing multilateral structure to the test. It is this structure we have to strengthen rather than turning into passive observers, because with the excuse that no instrument is still universal, or that the level of implementation is still unsatisfactory or that under the current conditions some of them might be irrelevant, we are becoming just observers to the weakening of the multilateral structures we have created ourselves.

Uruguay believes that under circumstances like the ongoing, when dangerous unilateralist tendencies appear, it is necessary –more than ever- to strengthen the multilateral system. At a time when the entry into force of the main instruments is not in sight, when negotiations on disarmament remain at a standstill, when the universalization of conventions is not achieved, at a time like this, is when we need to give proof of determination in the defense of the multilateral structures.

Nuclear, biological, chemical, bacteriological, toxic, mechanical, small and light weapons, all of them carry the power of massive destruction, some of them by its nature, others by the amount with which they proliferate in illicit ways. To define them, catalogue them, account them, register them, we do that with relative success. But we do not achieve our main objective that is to eliminate or limit them.

During the last decades, we have instituted a system in charge of regulating the arms control and the disarmament. Although insufficient and weakened by the deterioration of the international situation, we believe that the integrity and authority of the system must be preserved, improved and widened.

To this effect, subscribing what was stated by the Representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Rio Group and without prejudice of the interventions, which will be made by Mercosur in specific issues, Uruguay would like to stress the following:

1.- We believe that maintaining and enhancing the NPT still remains as the milestone for the denuclearization of the planet. Therefore, it is necessary to insist on the universalization of it on one hand and the strict compliance with its regulations on the other. We are particularly pleased by the announcement made by the delegation of Cuba regarding its accession to it as well as to the Tlatelolco Treaty. We also like to call upon the full implementation of the Thirteen Measures on Nuclear Disarmament agreed upon the NPT Conference in year 2000, date since when no substantive advance has been registered.

2.- Uruguay is concerned by the difficulties which faces the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Ban Test –CTBT-. Although we trust in the observance of the moratoria on nuclear test explosions, we believe that the effective validity of a treaty of this nature should not be delayed.

3.- It is disappointing the stalemate, already six year long, in which the Conference on Disarmament finds itself as well as the failure to renew negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. A treaty of this nature would be a significant step towards non-proliferation, contributing also in a direct way to the prevention of nuclear terrorism.

4.- The serious consequences of the illicit trafficking of small and light weapons speaks for itself when observed the number of annual victims to it, amount which

rises to half a million. We reaffirm the importance of the Plan of Action adopted last year and we hope that the international community will provide the necessary support to the UN in its efforts on the area of tracing, towards the evaluation of the feasibility of an instrument for the prevention of the illicit trafficking.

5.- We support the process of universalization of the project of an International Code of Conduct against the proliferation of ballistic missiles and the convening of an international conference for its adoption, for Uruguay believes that the proliferation of such weapons has become an increasing threat.

6.- Uruguay reiterates the need for enhancing the Convention of Chemical Weapons and the need to move forward on the Protocol to the Convention on Biological Weapons. In this regard, we believe that it is necessary to develop a strategy around the Convention as its core. Therefore, we regret that no further step has been achieved to strengthen this convention.

7.- We believe that the Register of Conventional Arms, which celebrates its tenth anniversary this year, has proved as an important element in the promotion of the transparency in armament and we call upon for its universalization.

8.- Finally, Uruguay wishes that the advances achieved through the Ottawa Convention find a stronger echo within the international community.

Mr. Chairman,

Uruguay, member of the Peace Zone constituted by Mercosur, member of the Tlatelolco Treaty, which established the first nuclear free zone and member of the NPT reiterates once more, the importance attached to the issues that will be debated within the next weeks in this Committee. We stated at the beginning of this intervention that the existing threats are serious and therefore they demand serious responses. Uruguay wishes to commit its political will in this task.

Thank you.