



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO

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Statement by Ambassador Gustavo Albin, Head of the Delegation of Mexico to the First Committee of the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Mr. Chairman,

I wish to express to you the satisfaction of my delegation upon your election to chair the Committee. Please convey our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. I would also like to thank your initial remarks, as well as the introductory statement by Under Secretary Abe, whom my delegation greets and congratulates for his appointment.

Mr. Chairman,

The Head of the Brazilian Delegation will soon make a statement on behalf of the countries of the New Agenda Coalition. In my own statement, I will refer to some points that are of particular interest to my delegation, as well as to the initiatives that Mexico will introduce during the work of the Committee.

Since the last time we met in this Committee the multilateral system has had to confront challenges of a great magnitude. My country is convinced that multilateralism constitutes the cornerstone in the preservation of international peace and security. However, today the validity of the collective security system is in doubt. This is the general atmosphere in which our work will be conducted.

As for the issues that we have before us, the overview is discouraging. Not only have there not been advances, but there have been backward steps that worry us.

Allow me to point out only some of these. The emergence of new approaches on the generalized use of nuclear weapons as part of security strategies, including rationalizing their use, or else the possible development of new kinds of weapons, are alarming. This adds up to our previous, but not less valid, concern about the absence of significant efforts by Nuclear-Weapon States to completely eliminate their nuclear weapons. We remain convinced that the mere existence of nuclear weapons represents a serious threat to the security of humankind.

To prevent nuclear proliferation in any of its aspects is, without a doubt, a priority of the international community. This ensures the peaceful use of atomic energy and encourages the efforts to advance towards the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In this context, my country is concerned by the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Mexico fully supports all diplomatic efforts aimed, on the one hand, at a swift and peaceful solution of the situation, so that the DPRK finds itself as soon as possible in full compliance with the provisions of the Treaty and, on the other hand, at reaching the objective of a secure and denuclearized Korean peninsula.

Mexico is convinced that to create an environment of trust and to eliminate any misgivings on nuclear proliferation, it is the obligation of States to ensure that the International Atomic Energy Agency is able to effectively verify that their nuclear facilities are used solely for peaceful purposes. The multilateral system would thus be strengthened and temptations to resort to actions that weaken it would be avoided.

As for the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation regrets that we have once again spent a year in stagnation. It is essential that those countries which have a particular responsibility allow the Conference to resume substantive work. The consensus rule should be sufficient guarantee to overcome the prejudices and apprehensions that keep the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum paralyzed. The inability of the Disarmament Commission to elaborate recommendations is also a reflection of this situation.

Mr. Chairman,

The risks of a perverse relation between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction make it increasingly obvious that indefinite possession of these weapons is a threat to international peace and security. Allow me to reiterate that the most efficient solution lies in their complete elimination.

The Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty represents a significant step in the systematic process to reach nuclear disarmament and constitutes a formidable obstacle to nuclear proliferation. My delegation once again calls upon all States that have not yet done so to sign or to ratify the Treaty, especially those whose ratification is needed for its entry into force. The Australian delegation will refer to the draft resolution that, together with New Zealand, we will introduce for the consideration of the Committee.

Concerning the regime prohibiting chemical weapons, allow me to recall that my country endorsed the political declaration adopted by the First Review Conference of the Convention, held recently in The Hague, which confirms the commitment of the international community to the complete elimination of these weapons and recognizes the effectiveness of the verification system established in that instrument.

Mexico shares the view that advances on national legislation of States Parties for the implementation of the Convention for the Prohibition of the Development, Stockpiling, and Use of Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and Their Destruction, as well as of developments in international cooperation are important. However, we remain convinced of the need to endow the Convention with verifying mechanisms that guarantee compliance with its provisions.

Given that the creation of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZ) on the basis of agreements freely arrived at among interested States constitutes an important disarmament measure, my delegation will also promote a resolution to convene a Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties establishing such zones before 2005. This resolution seeks to consolidate coordination and cooperation among States

that belong to a NWFZ and aims at promoting the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime by multiplying these zones. Mexico considers that a broader coordination and cooperation will benefit nuclear non-proliferation and the larger objective of general and complete disarmament.

Mexico supports the consolidation of Mongolia as a nuclear-weapon-free State and encourages the efforts of the five central Asian States to finalize the establishment of a NWFZ in their region.

My delegation will also introduce a draft resolution, something we now do biennially, on the Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco).

Mr. Chairman,

Last July, the Biennial Meeting to examine the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, showed that, in addition to sharing national experiences in this field, we need to study in depth issues such as marking and tracing, brokerage, civilian possession and links between illicit weapon trafficking and other activities of organized crime.

Bearing in mind the multiple effects of illicit trafficking and possession of these weapons in many societies, Mexico considers it timely to proceed with an integral approach in the treatment of this issue, encompassing the negotiation of legal instruments, including an instrument on marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons. Without neglecting the disarmament aspect which is of the purview of this Committee, the international community should work from the root causes of illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, promoting the fight against a culture of violence and gearing its efforts towards conflict prevention and programs of social reintegration for the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants.

The effective implementation of the Ottawa Convention continues to be a unique demonstration of how multilateralism can work successfully when the efforts of States Parties and civil society are united. Starting from the results of Bangkok and looking towards the Nairobi Conference, the position of Mexico will continue to be based upon the following objectives: first, the complete elimination of these inhumane weapons, which requires promoting programs and resources for mine clearance and for the rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of victims; and second, to advance in the universalization and effective implementation of the Convention. My delegation will cosponsor the draft resolution on this item under consideration at the First Committee.

My delegation is convinced that only with a legally binding instrument that defines clear responsibilities on removal, clearance, and destruction of explosive remnants of war, and provides for adequate international assistance and cooperation for these tasks, will we reach our humanitarian goal of protecting civilians from the serious risks and grave

threats that these remnants represent. Mexico will actively participate in the last phase of the negotiation of the new instrument next November, with a view to concluding a new protocol that will strengthen and give broader credibility to the regime established by the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

To conclude this brief overview of the international situation in the field of disarmament, allow me to mention an important institution established 25 years ago in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament: the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. I wish to pay tribute here to its valuable contribution to dialogue, negotiation and the promotion of knowledge of disarmament and security issues.

Mr. Chairman,

There have recently been increasingly frequent criticisms to the international institutions and mechanisms that we have for dialogue and multilateral negotiation.

The President of Mexico, in his address to the General Assembly joined the appeal of the Secretary-General to embark on a new reform of the Organization and in that sense said: *"Mexico will assign its best diplomatic efforts to furthering the reform and updating of our Organization demanded by the international situation."*

In the framework of this Committee, it is common to attribute to some institutions, as if they were entities entirely alien to us, deficiencies and lack of capacity to advance.

We need to remind here that we, ourselves, are the essence of those institutions. Questions, doubts, enquiries are addressed to ourselves. Working methods are, without a doubt, important and there will always be room for improvement. We are convinced of that. But the efficiency of procedures will always be subsidiary to political and systemic understandings needed to make way for an agenda of new threats and old, unresolved, challenges.

The multilateralism we aspire to rests on three pillars: dialogue, negotiation and law. We must privilege diplomatic action and agreement. The axis of our determination is co-responsibility. Mexico will remain ready to assume its own part.