

STATEMENT

by

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**On behalf of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa,
and Sweden as members of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC)**

**General Debate
First Committee
United Nations General Assembly**

New York

4 October 2004

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr. Chairman,

I am taking the floor on behalf of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden, the seven countries which work together in the New Agenda Coalition (NAC). We warmly congratulate you on assuming the chair of the First Committee. We are particularly pleased to see a distinguished member of the NAC presiding over the Committee. We particularly look forward to working with you in your efforts to make the work of this important Committee more dynamic and effective.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, thirteen years after the end of the cold war, the number of nuclear weapons still amount to tens of thousands - deployed or in storage. And we are faced with the danger of proliferation. If the nuclear-weapon states continue to treat nuclear weapons as a security enhancer there is a real danger that other states will start pondering whether nuclear weapons would not be a security enhancer also for them. We also face the risk that terrorists could acquire such weapons. This is why we are more convinced than ever that nuclear disarmament is imperative to international peace and security.

Current events underline our basic belief that the only real guarantee against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination, and the assurance that they will never be produced again.

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes. Without nuclear disarmament, we run the risk of a new nuclear arms race. Non-proliferation is vital. But it is not sufficient.

The NPT, a legally binding agreement which cannot be complied with à la carte, relies on a fine balance between its three pillars: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The core of the Treaty is that non-nuclear weapon states will not develop nuclear weapons, in return for which the nuclear weapon states will reduce and eliminate their nuclear arsenals. And the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is accorded to all. If

the NPT is to stand the test of time, it must be implemented in its entirety.

In 1995 and 2000 the pivotal bargain was further elaborated. In 2000, the nuclear powers made an unequivocal undertaking to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals. And all parties adopted by consensus a practical plan for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The NAC spearheaded efforts to achieve this result. But today we are increasingly concerned about the state of affairs. The commitments made in 1995 and 2000 must be upheld. Walking away from some of them puts the others in jeopardy.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT is yet to be made universal. We continue to call on the three states outside the treaty – India, Israel and Pakistan – to adhere to the treaty as non-nuclear weapon states. They should also put their nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA Safeguards and bring into force Additional Protocols. That three countries continue to stand outside the NPT undermines international efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty has yet to enter into force. It is particularly important that the eleven states, whose ratification is a condition for its entry into force, adhere to the treaty without further delay. And it is particularly disturbing that the United States has withdrawn its support for the treaty and that China delays its ratification. We call upon the United States to reconsider its approach and China to accelerate its process.

Thousands of nuclear weapons have yet to be eliminated. The Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty between Russia and the United States is a step in the right direction, but it does not require the destruction of these weapons and does not have any verification provisions. The process is neither irreversible nor transparent. And it is by no account far-reaching enough. What is the rationale in today's world for keeping thousands of weapons on each side, many of which continue to be on high alert? As a first step, all weapons should be taken off alert immediately.

The role given to nuclear weapons in security doctrines and policies has yet to diminish. Instead of eliminating nuclear weapons, some nuclear powers have plans to modernize or develop new kinds or new uses of nuclear weapons or new rationales for them. Some even entertain the notion that nuclear weapons may be used pre-emptively against non-nuclear weapon states, or see them as a possible defense against conventional weapons. This would go against article VI of the NPT and the agreements made in 1995 and 2000. It is critical that any such plans be laid aside immediately.

The zone free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is yet to be realized. And legally-binding security assurances are yet to be given by the nuclear weapon states to the non-nuclear weapon states of the NPT. Negotiations on an effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons have yet to begin. In light of the upcoming NPT Review Conference, these and other issues need to be seriously dealt with.

Mr. Chairman,

It is absolutely essential that all states parties to the NPT comply with their respective commitments under the NPT, and that the treaty is made universal. All states should jointly and effectively raise the guard against the further spread of nuclear weapons – and thus prevent both vertical and horizontal proliferation. And the nuclear weapon states must comply with their commitments, and pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith. This includes the implementation of the practical steps agreed in 2000.

Only a few months remain before the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The present prospects are not encouraging. Let us use the remaining time, including our work in this First Committee of the UN General Assembly, to make some headway.

Thank you.