

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GUATEMALA DURING THE
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE
60TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Mr. Chairman,

I wish, first of all, to congratulate you on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly. Our congratulation also extends to your colleagues on the bureau.

We thank the Argentinean delegation for their detailed statement on behalf of the Rio Group, a statement with which we associate ourselves. We wish, however, to make some additional observations that we consider pertinent.

Mr. Chairman,

Our meetings are being held at a time that could not be more opportune. They are taking place when a year begins to wane in which the problems that exist in the areas of disarmament and nonproliferation will have loomed large, but with the expectations of the international community in that regard not being fulfilled. We are witnesses to a paralysis that has been reflected in our work and to the impossibility of reaching consensual positions. The clear disagreements that as regards security have arisen in concepts, priorities and approaches have cast a shadow on our basic aspiration, which is that the Assembly make full and effective use of the powers that paragraph 1 of Article 11 of the Charter grants it with respect to "the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments."

This year has witnessed more than one lost opportunity in this area. The Non-proliferation Treaty review conference failed to adopt a substantial final document reflecting out determination to avoid the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons, with an unequivocal commitment to their elimination. Once again the Disarmament Commission was not even able to hold any substantive meetings, which made it impossible for it to fulfill its mandate to deliberate on issues in the area of disarmament. And, to top it all, the subject of disarmament, non-proliferation and international security was most conspicuously absent from the 2005 Summit Outcome.

These developments demonstrate how serious the deadlock confronting us has become and should alert us to take action in that respect. It is necessary that we should improve our understanding as well as our cooperation, so as to obtain better results in the use of the disarmament mechanisms available to us. Traditional and novel security problems in the spheres of control of armaments, disarmament and nonproliferation deserve just as much attention. And if in order to overcome them new undertakings, time and effort are required, it is our duty to do the necessary to that end and the duty of the United Nations to provide the necessary leadership. A first step in the direction of this new vision in the area of disarmament and nonproliferation is reflected in the document submitted by Norway on behalf of seven countries. It presents an across-the-board commitment and an

opportune balance that can make possible a new dialogue promoting consensus in this matter.

Mr. Chairman,

The area of conventional weapons also deserves our full attention and efforts. In the short term our expectations look to the UN Conference to review Progress made in the Implementation of the Program of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and light Weapons to be held in June-July 2006. This will be a new opportunity, of a multilateral nature, to reconcile conflicting interests by consensus and leave a mark of the special attention that should be bestowed on a problem affecting all of us, such as the one concerning small arms and light weapons.

Guatemala shares the view that the 2001 Program of Action should be enriched and accordingly supports the elaboration of effective world-wide rules on small arms and light weapons with the final objective of promoting global security. In this respect we belong to the overwhelming majority that regrets the limited scope of the recently prepared International Instrument on the Marking and Tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons, the nature and purposes of which do not match the needs of the countries that are the most seriously affected. We hoped that this instrument would complement the commitments we have already assumed under the Inter-American Convention against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other related Materials. We nevertheless look forward to the situation being corrected later on and feel obliged to strive for better results on the basis of the other provisions of worldwide scope that pertain to the Action Program and have not yet been taken up.

Guatemala reiterates its full support for the Ottawa Convention and the effective implementation of the 2004-2009 Ottawa Action Plan. The forthcoming meeting in Zagreb will provide an opportunity for confirming our commitment to preserve the humanitarian purposes of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Guatemala goes along with those who feel the need for forging a new scheme for collective security. This will enable us to overcome the difficulty we have encountered when attempting to meet the old and the new challenges to our collective security. An opportunity that will be given to us to review this new orientation is provided by the meetings to be held in 2006, prior to the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament. We trust to be able to derive the maximum benefit from them.

In conclusion, we cannot fail to thank the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for the willingness it has shown to assist Guatemala in the destruction of small arms and light weapons, as provided for in the 2001 Action Programme.

Thank you.