



MÉXICO

**Statement by Ambassador Pablo Macedo,
of the First Committee at the General Debate of
the 61st session of the General Assembly of the
United Nations**

New York, October 2nd, 2006

(Check against delivery)

Unofficial translation.

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Madam President:

First of all, allow me to congratulate you for your election as president of the First Committee. We also want to congratulate the other members of the bureau.

Mexico fully subscribes the statement just made by the distinguished representative of Egypt on behalf of the Coalition of the New Agenda. In this opportunity I would like to refer to questions of particular interest for my Government.

Madam President:

The current situation seems to be characterized by the constant risk of imbalance between the actions taken, on the one hand, to achieve the disarmament objectives and, by the other, to fight against terrorism and proliferation. Particularly, with regard to these last two issues, the threat of terrorism tends to privilege the strategies in favor of horizontal non-proliferation.

My country deplores the fact that the trend of constant failures in the negotiations on disarmament cannot be stopped. We were hoping that, after the frustration that we suffered in 2005, in this year there would be another pattern. Yet, our hopes have been once again hampered: the Conference of Disarmament was not able to adopt a program that would allow it to renew its substantive negotiations and, regrettably, even in the question of small arms and light weapons, the Conference to Review Progress in the Implementation of the Program of Action, which took place here a few months ago, did not achieve any result due to the opposition of one delegation.

This caused a deep disappointment in the Latin American and Caribbean countries which, gathered in Antigua, Guatemala, in May of this year, decided to propose ways to complement the Program of Action by adopting

measures oriented to regulate brokering activities in SALW in particular through the adoption of a legally binding instrument on illicit brokering. We are also concerned by the question of insufficient regulation of civilian possession of small arms as well as the laxity in control of ammunitions and, above all, by the transfer of weapons to non-State actors which represent a threat to national and regional security. My delegation is fully committed to these objectives, agreed at a regional level and clearly reflected in the Antigua Declaration. In this regard, we consider that the initiative by Costa Rica and other countries in favor of an ATT can become a very valuable instrument.

Madam President:

What is at stake is not only the disarmament and non-proliferation regime which the international community has been building during the last 60 years, but also the contribution of this effort to the democratization of the multilateral system. That is why Mexico bestows the highest priority to the reform of the Organization and considers that the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly with regards to the weapons of mass destruction, must be incorporated to this process. We can thus assure that our strategies and actions to combat terrorism or to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and/or their delivery vehicles will not turn against our efforts to achieve disarmament. The most democratic and representative United Nations organ cannot leave aside the discussion and examination of the link and required balance among disarmament, fight against terrorism, and non-proliferation.

Madam President:

The intolerable paralysis of the Conference has moved us to search for alternatives that will allow us to advance in the disarmament agenda. Our ideas have not always been welcomed by those that do not wish to advance and have blocked progress in other forums. We have heard their objections. What we have not heard yet is their proposals in order to overcome the current impasse.

We continue to consider that, because of its universal composition and its working methods, the General Assembly is an organ that can assume the responsibilities that other have not been able to fulfill due to a lack of political will and the abuse of the rule of consensus which tends to become a real form of veto right. The initiative that we presented last year in this forum has not lost its validity, above all considering what has happened in the Conference during 2006. We will continue our consultations on this matter.

Madam President:

My country has taken note with interest of certain proposals that have been introduced in the Conference of Disarmament and we have signaled our flexibility. The best example is our willingness to initiate work on a treaty banning fissile material, taking as a point of departure the mandate and the draft instrument presented this summer, regardless of their shortcomings. We are constructive but we would expect that others will also be open in a reciprocal manner to work on issues that are a priority to a vast majority, such as nuclear disarmament.

We express our hope that 2007 will be a year of true progress and not merely a repetition of what happened in 2006. If the current situation persists, the Conference will continue to lose credibility and it will be necessary to search for alternatives that enable us to advance in the tasks that such forum is unable to fulfill.

Madam President:

Soon we will initiate another cycle in the review process of the NPT, a fundamental instrument for the international security system.

As was expressed by the Minister of Energy of Mexico, just a couple of weeks ago in the framework of the General Conference of the AEIA, my Government firmly supports the proposal by Austria to hold the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Treaty in Vienna, during the first semester of 2007. Mexico considers that such a venue would enhance the strong link between the Treaty and the Agency.

We hope also that during the first session we can establish the bases to ensure that this Treaty, cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, will emerge strengthened at the end of the process.

In order to achieve this objective, we must work with the same conviction in the exercise of the rights and the fulfillment of the obligations established by the three pillars of the Treaty: the right for the inalienable peaceful use of nuclear energy; the obligation not to acquire or transfer nuclear weapons and the obligation to reduce nuclear arsenals in order to achieve nuclear disarmament. These are fundamental legal commitments that should be considered on an equal footing.

Besides the obligations of the Treaty, there are agreements that were reached by consensus in the Review Conferences. Among them is the decision about

principles and objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament that was an element of the compromise which allowed for the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995. In that decision, the conditions for the establishment of agreements for nuclear supplies included the acceptance of legally binding agreements prohibiting the acquisition of nuclear weapons. In this context, Mexico follows with attention developments such as the agreements which have been concluded with States non-parties to the Treaty.

Not respecting the basic principles that have been agreed also erodes the non-proliferation regime that we have been building with so much effort in the last decades.

Madam President:

The aggravation of nuclear dangers has made it urgent to reactivate the multilateral system of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in order to build a more secure world. We must demand greater guarantees that nuclear weapons will not be used.

Mexico displays actions towards the elimination of nuclear threats which include the possible diversion of nuclear technology and materials for non-peaceful purposes and the possibility that terrorist actors may use weapons of mass destruction affecting the security of our nations.

Last July 8th we commemorated the tenth anniversary of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice regarding the obligation to initiate and conclude in good faith negotiations towards nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under a strict and effective international control. This is a legal obligation that should be fulfilled urgently. My country insists that without effective disarmament our efforts to achieve non-proliferation will be seriously thwarted.

It should not be forgotten that, at the end of the 2000 Conference, the States possessing nuclear weapons unequivocally committed themselves to the total destruction of their arsenals. Nuclear disarmament is not an option, it is an obligation. My delegation is concerned by the fact that such purpose has not been fulfilled and that there have even been attempts to disregard such unequivocal commitment. Once again we urge Nuclear States, some of which are depositaries of the Treaty, to keep their word and to accelerate the fulfillment of the thirteen practical steps for nuclear disarmament agreed in 2000.

According to the commitments agreed, there should be firm steps towards nuclear disarmament. But, on the contrary, we observe with deep concern, that nuclear weapons continue to be part of strategic doctrines and that the development of new, more sophisticated types of nuclear weapons is even being considered. It is also troublesome that today there is no single legally binding instrument that regulates in an integral way the question of missiles.

Madam President:

My Government welcomed the Report of the Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction, headed by Dr. Hans Blix. The recommendations approved by consensus among its members are a valuable contribution that will stimulate the debate on disarmament and will guide actions taken by States in this matter.

In this regard, we welcome the invitation that the presidency has extended to Dr. Blix to participate in a Panel of independent experts which we will listen next October 16th during the thematic debate.

Madam President:

The tenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT is a good opportunity to call once again States that have not ratified the Treaty, in particular those whose ratification is needed for its entry into force, to do it without delay. In this regard, my Government welcomes the recent ratification by Vietnam.

Mexico is convinced that prohibiting of nuclear tests contributes to stop proliferation of nuclear weapons and their upgrading. That is why we promote the entry into force of this international legal instrument. With this purpose, from 11 to 13th October, Mexico will hold the "Seminar for the promotion of the ratification of the Treaty in the Caribbean Region." This seminar is organized jointly by Mexico and Canada with the support of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission of the Organization of the CTBT.

As one of the sponsors of the Treaty that established the first nuclear weapon free zone in an inhabited area of our planet, my country welcomed the signature, last September 8th of the Treaty of Semipalatinsk for the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia. We congratulate the five States that negotiated and concluded it. We hope that the multiplication of such zones will bring us a little closer to the ideal of a world free from the terror of nuclear weapons.

Madam President:

Mexico participates actively in other areas of disarmament. I would like to point out that, along with other Latin American countries we are working on concrete proposals that will be submitted to the Review Conference of the Convention on Biological Weapons in order to strengthen the regime established by such an important international instrument.

Also, in the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, we look for the strict and universal observance of international Humanitarian Law in issues such as Mines different from Antipersonal Mines or, in particular, regarding the use of fragmentation bombs and other weapons that cause excessive damage which have unfortunately been used in recent armed conflicts.

Mexico is convinced that more than ever it has now become indispensable to promote education in issues of disarmament and non-proliferation as has been pointed out by the United Nations study in this matter and we deem it urgent to display actions to promote a disarmament culture that will free present and future generations from the scourge of war.

Madame President:

My delegation will continue to work in a constructive manner in this Committee in order to achieve its objectives and we will support the presidency in its efforts to achieve the success of our endeavors.

Thank you.