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## **DEBATE GENERAL DE LA PRIMERA COMISION**

### **62° PERIODO DE SESIONES DE LA ASAMBLEA GENERAL DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS**

Intervención del Embajador Enriquillo A. del Rosario C.  
Representante Permanente Alterno, Encargado de Negocios a.i.

**EN NOMBRE DEL GRUPO DE RIO**

Nueva York, 8 de octubre de 2007  
(Sírvasse verificar contra lectura)

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## **GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE**

### **SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Statement by Ambassador Enriquillo A. del Rosario C.  
Deputy Permanent Representative, Chargé d'affaires a.i.

**ON BEHALF OF THE RIO GROUP**

New York, 8 October 2007  
(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman:

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the members of the Rio Group: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and my country, the Dominican Republic.

First of all, the Rio Group congratulates Ambassador Paul Badji, Permanent Representative of Senegal, for his election to preside over the work of the First Committee during this sixty-second session of the General Assembly. It is our hope that under his leadership our deliberations during the current session will be imbued with a sense of renewed purpose and resolve. We also would like to express our appreciation to the outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Mona Juul of Norway, for the manner in which she conducted the work of this Committee.

The Rio Group welcomes the firm commitment expressed by the Secretary General to give greater impetus to the topics of disarmament. We congratulate Ambassador Sergio de Queiroz Duarte for his designation as High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Chairman:

The countries of the Rio Group maintain a long tradition of commitment to the topics of disarmament, and consider them among their priorities within the United Nations agenda, for recognizing disarmament as an essential component of the efforts to maintain international peace and security.

The Rio Group has seen with worry that in recent years the disarmament machinery has advanced very little in some areas, and has remained stagnant in others. Loyal to its commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation, the Rio

Group gave its support to the realization of two important sessions this year. The first of these was the Disarmament Commission, presided by Ambassador Elbio Rosselli of Uruguay, and the second was the Open-Ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of a Preparatory Committee for the IV Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV), presided by Ambassador Alfredo Labbé of Chile.

The Rio Group would have wanted greater substantive agreements, but highlights that it was possible to maintain the channels of dialogue open. We trust that we will be able to continue advancing in the work undertaken in the following sessions.

Mr. Chairman:

The Rio Group has shown a long and sustained commitment to the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Our region, that of Latin America and the Caribbean, was the first densely populated nuclear weapons free zone, established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1967. As State Parties of the Treaty of Tlatelolco we urge nuclear weapon States to withdraw the interpretive statements made at the time of their accession to the Protocols of this treaty. The Rio Group also renews its commitment to support the establishment and extension of nuclear weapons free zones in other parts of the world.

The Rio Group expresses its deep concern for the threat posed to humanity by the existence of nuclear weapons and the doctrines of strategic defense that contemplate the accumulation, development, and use of these weapons.

The Rio Group is committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and calls on all States that have not done so to adhere to it as Non Nuclear Weapon States. The three pillars of the NPT (non-proliferation,

disarmament, and peaceful use) have equal importance and there should be unconditional advances in all three, taking into account the interests of the international community. For this reason we should not brush aside the need to advance in disarmament and implement the 13 practical steps agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. In particular, we highlight the need for Nuclear Weapon States to fulfill the unequivocal commitment they contracted with respect to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Rio Group observes with satisfaction that there have been advances in the preparatory work for the 2010 NPT Review Conference and highlights the importance of establishing subsidiary organs in the Main Committees of this Conference, with a view to considering, among other topics, the practical measures intended to seek in a systematic and progressive fashion the elimination of nuclear weapons, as well as considering negative security assurances.

The Rio Group reaffirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of these arms and that the Non Nuclear Weapon States should receive effective guarantees from the Nuclear Weapon States against the use, or threat of use, of these arms. For this reason, the Group calls on the conclusion of a universal, unconditional, legally-binding agreement on negative security assurances for Non Nuclear Weapon States at the earliest date.

The Rio Group encourages the negotiations on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and we hope that this process will achieve the desired outcome. The Group welcomes the announcement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to dismantle its nuclear facilities and considers this as an example of what can be achieved through dialogue and negotiation.

The Rio Group considers that all NPT State Parties should comply with all articles of the NPT, without prejudice to the right of all State Parties to the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In this context, the Group reaffirms the inalienable right of Developing States to participate in the research, production, and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Our Group favors the broadest possible exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Group takes note of the proposal of civil nuclear cooperation from an NPT State Party with a State non Party. This proposal has raised numerous issues related to its possible impact on the disarmament and non proliferation regime and on the NPT in particular. It is imperative to ensure that any decision taken does not erode, but rather strengthens the disarmament and non proliferation regime.

The Rio Group reiterates its support for the start of negotiations without preconditions on an International Treaty that prohibits the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices, to include an international verification regime.

The Rio Group supports the timely entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, convinced that it would be accompanied by a limitation on the qualitative and quantitative development of nuclear weapons. The Group reiterates its appreciation to the Provisional Technical Secretariat for the work it has done with the view to ensuring the prompt ratification of the Treaty, especially on behalf of those countries which have difficulties in doing so, despite sharing its letter and spirit.

Mr. Chairman:

The total elimination of chemical and biological weapons should also be among the high priorities in disarmament for being, along with nuclear weapons,

weapons of mass destruction. In this context, the Rio Group recalls that none of its members possess these types of weapons. The Group also considers of the utmost importance the universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, instruments which have broad international support. In this regard, the Rio Group is pleased that on September 27<sup>th</sup> the High-Level meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which had the active participation of the Group, was held. Likewise, we see in a positive light that the VI Conference of the State Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention had as a result an inter-sessional follow-up programme, which will include four annual meetings prior to the VII Conference of State Parties to be celebrated in 2011, and that it was decided to create an implementation support unit, established in August of this year.

In addition to its consternation regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Rio Group is also concerned by the signs of an arms race in outer space, since there is no other field in international relations characterized by deep asymmetries of national capabilities which are likely to increase in the coming years, with possible implications for our collective security.

The Rio Group highlights the need for the Disarmament Conference to initiate its substantive work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the same vein, the Group underlines that it is of the utmost importance that the existing legal regimen on the utilization of outer space be strictly respected, while recognizing the common interest of all of humanity in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman:

The illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons constitutes a problem of particular gravity that requires the special attention of the international community due to the large numbers of deaths in our region and in other parts of the world.

For this reason, the Rio Group reaffirms its full support for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, for considering that a collective effort is required to combat this illicit activity. In this sense, the Group encourages all the initiatives leading to the provision of international cooperation and assistance with a view to strengthening the full implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account that the primary responsibility of the application of the pertinent measures corresponds to each individual State. The Rio Group is pleased that the next biennial meeting of States to consider the national, regional, and global implementation of the Programme of Action will take place in 2008.

The Rio Group confers importance to the subject of ammunition, for considering that it is intrinsically linked to the problem of the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons. The Rio Group also considers of importance that the issue related to common international norms on the import, export, and transfer of conventional arms be duly discussed, and hopes that the Group of Governmental Experts on the subject takes into account the views presented by States. With the work of the Group of Experts on the Illicit Brokering of Small Arms and Light Weapons now concluded, the Group hopes that in the near future we can initiate negotiations on a legally-binding treaty on the matter. At the regional level, the Rio Group has the *Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other related materials*, a legally-binding instrument.

The Rio Group also expresses its concern with the lack of political commitment of some States to prevent the proliferation of conventional weapons, including those that have excessively cruel and indiscriminate effects. In this regard, we salute the initiative of numerous countries to commence negotiations to regulate the use of cluster munitions and hope that this exercise will culminate with the adoption of a legally binding instrument that will strengthen the international humanitarian

law regime. We reiterate the importance of fully implementing all the dispositions of the CCAC, in particular its Protocol V on explosive remnants of war, and we call on all countries that have not done so to ratify this Protocol.

Mr. Chairman:

The problematic issues surrounding anti-personnel mines continue demanding great attention from the international community. The Rio Group recognizes the value of the Ottawa Convention in the combat of this scourge and calls on the universality of this Convention. Counting with the assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the demining programme of the Organization of American States (OAS), the countries of the Rio Group have committed themselves to make the hemisphere a zone free of anti-personnel mines. For this reason, the Rio Group highlights the importance of cooperation for demining and victims assistance. The Group hopes that the successes seen in demining efforts in recent years can be repeated in the years to come.

Mr. Chairman:

Confidence-building measures, which are adopted voluntarily by States, play an important role in the preservation of international peace and security, as they can enhance understanding. Confidence-building measures can contribute in the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of relations and cooperation among States. Our region has numerous examples of confidence-building measures at various levels, and among the confidence-building measures applied by members of the Rio Group are the *Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions*, of a legally-binding nature.

The Rio Group also considers that confidence-building measures should be promoted at the global level, taking into account the security needs of the countries and regions concerned. Consequently, the Group considers of great

importance confidence-building measures such as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations System for the Standardized Reporting of Military Expenditures, among others.

The Rio Group celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament, and Development in Latin America and Caribbean, which without a doubt has assisted countries from the region in their application of disarmament measures in various fields. The Group congratulates the Director of the Regional Center for the great work done by the Center, which is a model to follow.

Mr. Chairman:

The Rio Group considers that in order to advance significantly in disarmament the political will of not only a few States or a majority of States, but of all States, is required. General and complete disarmament is an objective that requires the attention of the international community due to the potentially devastating effects that ignoring it, or postponing its consideration, could have. It is the responsibility of all States to provide their citizens with peace and security.

The Rio Group looks forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, with a view to the successful conclusion of the work of the First Committee, trusting in your leadership to achieve this objective. You can count on the full support and cooperation of the Rio Group.

I thank you.