

STATEMENT OF THE NEW AGENDA COALITION
at the First Committee
General Debate
64th United Nations General Assembly
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Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the Conference on Disarmament

Muchas gracias Señor Presidente,

I have the honor to take the floor on behalf of the seven members of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), namely Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden, South Africa and my country, Brazil.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to assure you of the New Agenda Coalition's full support and constructive engagement as you lead us in our work during the coming weeks.

Just over eleven years ago the New Agenda Coalition was established as a direct response to the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament in the aftermath of the NPT 1995 Review and Extension Conference. Our countries agreed to join efforts to launch a call for nuclear disarmament. In that same year, we proposed a draft resolution which was adopted as resolution 53/77, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

The Coalition is a group of non-nuclear weapon States. We have different development levels and we are situated in different regions of the globe, but we share the common goal of making the world free of nuclear weapons.

In advancing our common goal of a nuclear-weapons-free world, the Coalition is fully committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its three pillars: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The NPT is an essential cornerstone in the global security framework. It is clear to us that the international community cannot attain the complete elimination of nuclear weapons nor have the assurance that they will never be produced again without the universalization and the full implementation of that Treaty, in all its aspects. This relates equally to both the non-proliferation and disarmament provisions of the NPT. Similarly, in order to preserve the integrity of the Treaty, States Parties should honour solemn undertakings and commitments made during the Review Conferences.

It is often said that a balance must be found between the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments contained in the NPT. The New Agenda Coalition believes that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing processes. Both therefore require continuous and irreversible progress. To the NAC it is axiomatic that the only absolute guarantee against the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons is the complete and verifiable elimination of those weapons. For as long as a number of States deem that the possession of nuclear weapons is essential for their security, there may be others who will aspire to acquire them, and the risk will remain that they may fall into the hands of non-State actors.

The New Agenda Coalition does not accept any justification for the acquisition or the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons and we do not subscribe to the view that nuclear weapons – or the quest to develop them – contribute to international peace and security.

It is in this light that the Coalition urges the international community to strengthen its efforts to achieve universal adherence to the NPT and calls upon India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and to place their facilities under comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to rescind its announced withdrawal from the Treaty, to re-establish cooperation with the IAEA and to rejoin the Six-Party Talks, with a view to achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The 2010 Review Conference will be a critical juncture for the NPT. We echo the call made by the Security Council in its resolution 1887 that States Parties expend every effort to intensify their engagement towards securing a positive outcome to that Conference. At the Review Conference, we will assess the implementation of the Treaty, especially the commitments made by the States Parties at previous Review Conferences, in particular the Decisions and Resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference. It will also be a timely and appropriate occasion to call for the full implementation of those commitments and to assess the many challenges that the NPT faces. In this regard, the NAC continues to be concerned at the lack of sufficient progress to date in the implementation of the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, to which all States Parties agreed at the 2000 NPT

Review Conference and we will be working at the NPT Review Conference for an outcome that ensures greater progress in the area of nuclear disarmament.

The New Agenda Coalition notes with satisfaction the renewed interest in nuclear disarmament on the part of international leaders expressed, inter alia, during the United Nations Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament held on 24 September 2009, which resulted in the adoption of resolution 1887, and underlines in this regard the urgent need for concrete, transparent, verifiable and irreversible steps to realize the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The New Agenda Coalition welcomes the important developments this year in the Conference on Disarmament, which after more than a decade has reached consensus on a program of work. The positive momentum created this year should not be allowed to fade and we call upon all the members of the CD to seize the opportunity and seek an early commencement of substantive work during its 2010 session. It is our expectation that the working groups on the core issues of its agenda will initiate their substantive discussions and that negotiations will start on a verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into consideration both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament objectives.

We also view positively the prospects for further key ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which have been greatly enhanced by the commitment made by the US to pursue ratification of the Treaty. While the ratification of all Annex 2 States is required for the Treaty to enter into force, we warmly welcome the recent ratifications by Mozambique, Malawi, Lebanon, Liberia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines bringing the Treaty closer

to universality. In this context the NAC reaffirms its opposition to nuclear weapons tests and we share a deep concern over the announced nuclear test explosion by the DPRK on May 25th this year.

We also welcome the progress made towards a successor to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The New Agenda Coalition hopes that both sides will meet the deadline set by US President Obama and Russian President Medvedev and sign the agreement before the current treaty expires in December this year.

The New Agenda Coalition also welcomes all efforts towards transparency undertaken by some of the nuclear-weapon States. In this regard, the Coalition encourages initiatives for greater transparency and continues to believe that there would be merit in pursuing progress on such initiatives in the lead-up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

On the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the Coalition wishes to refer to two very significant developments in 2009; the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, signed in Semipalatinsk, and the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba, which establishes a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Africa. These two regions join many existing and consolidated Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in the World, bringing to a total of 116 the number of countries covered by regional regimes which are in force. These initiatives enhance global and regional peace and security, strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and contribute towards the goal of nuclear disarmament. The New Agenda Coalition looks forward to other regions following this course and hope that concrete steps may be undertaken through concerted international efforts and

in accordance with the Final Document of United Nations General Assembly I Special Session on Disarmament and the 1999 UNDC guidelines to create other Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in the world, especially in the Middle East.

We also believe that enhanced co-operation and consultation mechanisms among existing nuclear-weapon-free-zones can make a significant contribution to the advancement of the international disarmament agenda. The Second Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Conference - which will be held in New York immediately before the Review Conference of the NPT in 2010 – will be an occasion to contribute to that goal.

Mr. Chairman,

The New Agenda Coalition welcomes the renewed global attention on the need for progress towards achieving a nuclear weapon free world. The leadership shown by key players lends important momentum to our efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons but the onus is on all of us to seize the opportunity that lies before us. The NAC will be doing its part to realize a world free of nuclear weapons that is safer and more secure for us all.

As in previous years, the Coalition will present a resolution to this Committee. It reflects our stand regarding the issues we deem of utmost importance concerning nuclear disarmament. We hope to muster a broad base to support it and, ideally, to adopt it without vote.

Thank you