



BRAZIL

General Debate of the First Committee

6 October 2009

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti,
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations**

(Please check against delivery)

I would like first to congratulate you, Ambassador José Luis Cancela, for your election to chair the First Committee and reaffirm the commitment of the Brazilian delegation to fully collaborate with you. We are certain that under your able leadership we will reach significant results in our deliberations this year.

Brazil fully associates itself with the views expressed earlier on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

We also take this opportunity to recognize with appreciation the work carried out by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Sergio Duarte, and by UNODA.

This session of the First Committee is taking place amidst renewed expectations of the international community regarding nuclear disarmament. As the very existence of nuclear weapons constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, we welcome the auspicious signs of the past months and hope concrete progress is made towards nuclear disarmament.

Brazil welcomes the relaunching of the strategic talks between the United States and Russia. It is a significant step that may pave the way for further reductions in their arsenals.

The Security Council Summit held on 24 September was a positive contribution as it renewed the political commitment to address nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues. The nuclear-weapon States have the responsibility to follow-up accordingly and to forge the necessary compromises that will allow a world free of nuclear weapons to come about.

The adoption of a programme of work by the Conference on Disarmament, after twelve years of stalemate, was another important development. Next year's session must build upon the progress achieved in 2009.

It is essential to pursue new steps towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Bilateral initiatives should not replace an irreversible and verifiable multilateral agreement on complete disarmament. The entry into force of the CTBT would be a major factor in strengthening the international

disarmament and non proliferation regime. Another measure of significant impact would be the commencement of substantive negotiations on a fissile materials treaty.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference agreed on 13 practical steps to achieve disarmament, including the unequivocal obligation by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The next NPT Review Conference, scheduled to take place next year, should build upon these achievements.

Mr. Chairman,

There is a clear and inextricable link between disarmament and non-proliferation. They are mutually reinforcing processes, in which the best guarantee against nuclear proliferation is nuclear disarmament. The provisions of NPT and the outcomes of the 1995 and 2000 must be entirely implemented. Brazil is fully committed to the non-proliferation efforts of the international community. We are constitutionally bound to use nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes.

All countries must abide by their obligations stemming from the Treaty. The balance between the "three pillars" of the NPT must be maintained. Efforts to impose additional responsibilities on non-nuclear-weapon States coupled with the selective implementation of existing disarmament commitments will affect the credibility of the regime and therefore undermine its effectiveness.

Brazil believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As a member of the first nuclear-weapon-free-zone in a densely populated area, we are convinced of the need to expand to other areas of the globe the security assurances to non-nuclear-weapons States. To be effective, these assurances must be irreversible and legally binding. Once more this year, we will submit together with New Zeland a draft resolution which seeks to establish the Southern Hemisphere as a region free of nuclear weapons. We hope that the initiative will once again receive wide support in the First Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Our efforts must be directed not only towards the elimination of weapons of mass destruction but also towards addressing the problems related to conventional weapons. In the case of small arms and light weapons - which have been considered “virtual weapons of mass destruction” – the need to take effective action is evident. We are firmly committed to the full 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. But more needs to be done. It is important to recall that Resolution 63/72 established a sequence of activities in preparation for the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States in 2010 and for the Review Conference in 2012. In this context, we attach particular importance to enhancing cooperation in order to effectively combat the illicit traffic. Furthermore, Brazil reiterates its support for an international legally binding instrument that allows States to identify and track small arms and light weapons.

The issue of arms transfers is also of utmost importance. Brazil believes that careful attention should be given to the negotiations of an arms trade treaty and supports the work of Open-ended Working Group established by Resolution 63/240. A multilateral treaty on the transfer of conventional arms should be effective, balanced, non-discriminatory and legally binding. It would regulate the legal trade, by establishing common international standards which would also help prevent those weapons from being diverted to the illicit market. The treaty should define clear criteria to be taken into account when authorizing exports. These criteria must be based on shared responsibilities among export, import and transit countries, besides explicitly prohibiting the transfer of arms without the authorization of competent government bodies in the transit and import countries. Furthermore, the right of States to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain such weapons and ammunition must not be affected.

Positive momentum is building up. We must be ready to seize the opportunities that arise. In this context, it is particularly important to renew our commitment to work constructively towards our common goals and to seek innovative solutions to the challenges before us.