



PERMANENT REPRESENTATION
OF BRAZIL TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

**Statement by H. E. Ambassador Celso Amorim,
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Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address the Conference on Disarmament, which I had the privilege to preside twice. As a new Brazilian presidency begins, I wish to reiterate my country's confidence in this body.

From my own personal experience, I can tell that, for too long, the Conference on Disarmament has had failure and frustration as part of its routine.

Now the environment is favourable for the Conference on Disarmament to be instrumental in this crucial area of international security. The CD can spearhead an even more profound change: the effective participation of developing countries, non-nuclear weapon States, in such matters.

Thanks to the economic crises of the last years, a consensus is emerging that legitimacy and efficacy in international relations demand decisions that are taken democratically, with the participation of a broad and representative group of countries.

Global governance is being rebuilt. The world cannot be run by clubs of self-appointed decision-makers.

In the economic and financial fields, some progress has been achieved. But in the political domain, the legitimacy and efficacy gaps have not been filled.

This is particularly true in the realm of international peace and security. The unfortunate identification of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council with the five nuclear-weapons States recognized by the NPT renders decisions on such matters the object of a kind of "market reserve".

Decisive action by the CD on nuclear disarmament can help change this anachronistic reality.

Mr. President,

We welcome initiatives to promote nuclear disarmament that have been promoted both at bilateral and multilateral levels.

Brazil went to the Eighth NPT Review Conference convinced that that meeting would be the NPT's chance of survival as an effective multilateral instrument.

We are glad to see that more and more people – scientists, activists, political leaders – are coming to share our view that the best guarantee for non-proliferation is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Likewise, the most effective way to reduce the risks of misuse of nuclear materials by non-state actors is the irreversible elimination of all nuclear arsenals.

Nuclear weapons have no role in the more peaceful, democratic and prosperous world we all want to build. We need not only undiminished, but indeed increased security for all, especially for countries that do not possess and do not aspire to possess nuclear weapons.

A change in mentality is needed. The Cold War logic of the ability of mutual destruction must be left behind. We have to embrace the simple truth that nuclear weapons diminish the security of all States, including of those who possess them.

The world will not achieve sustained stability as long as proliferation is spurred by protracted action on nuclear disarmament and by the continued modernization of nuclear arsenals.

The Review Conference achieved a modicum of success. This relative positive result allows for cautious optimism. One is entitled to hope that we may be entering a new phase in nuclear disarmament.

The fact that we were able to build on the "13 steps" to nuclear disarmament and that the Nuclear-Weapon States reaffirmed their "unequivocal undertaking" to eliminate nuclear arsenals are good news.

Of highest importance was the decision to convene, in two year's time, a Conference on the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Brazil stands ready to contribute to the Conference. Despite the evident complexities of the situation in the Middle East, the lessons learned from the successful confidence building process between Brazil and Argentina in the nuclear field could provide a technical input to the goals pursued at the Middle East Conference.

But words alone will not make the world a safer place. They must be matched by deeds.

Ten years ago we thought we had reasons to celebrate. But most of the pledges agreed in the Review Conference of 2000 remained on paper. The first decade of the new millennium faced virtual paralysis in nuclear disarmament.

The positive moves in relation to some aspects should not blind us from the lack of progress in other areas, such as de-alerting and modernization of arsenals. Indeed, in some cases, we went backwards.

Brazil welcomes the promise of quantitative reductions in arsenals by nuclear States. However, it is far from enough. Cuts in arsenals were offset by qualitative improvement in nuclear forces, by the modernization of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems and by the roles ascribed for nuclear weapons in national defense doctrines.

It is disturbing that a large proportion, if not the entirety of such reduction, does not mean that the weapons will be actually destroyed or disposed of.

A more stringent timeline for nuclear disarmament is also essential. It is rather disappointing that the final document of the NPT Conference refers only to a "sense of urgency".

Still, if the political will is there, the new action plan provides a basis to move forward in pursuing the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons.

The positive dialogue between the New Agenda Coalition, the P5 and a number of other non-nuclear weapons States was instrumental to the consensus.

The Non-Nuclear Weapon States have been delivering their part of the deal. We now look forward to continued political will and to more expeditious steps to fulfill the nuclear disarmament commitments enshrined in Article VI of the Treaty. There is where the "compliance deficit" lies.

Distinguished Delegates,

The impetus given by the recent NPT Conference encourages us to put an end to the paralysis of the Conference on Disarmament. We must resume negotiations immediately and pursue action-oriented goals.

As I came here, I re-read a statement I made in this Conference ten years ago. It is sadly impressive how much of it could be repeated today without any change.

We must stop choosing inertia as the CD's preferred procedure. If the CD is to retake its place as a relevant negotiating body, immediate action must be taken.

An "ad hoc" Committee to deal with nuclear disarmament would surely help pave the way for further multilateral work on this issue.

As we proceed in negotiations on a Fissile Material Treaty (FMT), we need another subsidiary body dealing with steps leading to nuclear disarmament.

A fissile materials treaty should not only ensure the verifiable ban on the production of materials for nuclear devices. It must also address the existing stocks of weapons-usable material.

There are ways, I believe, which could be explored to overcome the present difficulties on how to start negotiations on a FMT.

Brazil is presenting a working document with this aim.

Other subsidiary bodies on the questions of negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space must also be established.

Negative Security Assurances reinforce the notion that international security must be based on the rule of law, rather than the use of force. Progress on a legally binding international instrument related to negative security assurances remains an important goal for this Conference.

Outer space must be preserved from "weaponization". The growing dependence of our societies on space activities makes it imperative that concerns related to the improper uses of outer space are adequately addressed. As a developing country engaged in a space program that is totally peaceful, Brazil expects unrestricted access to a weapons-free outer space.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The relative success of the NPT Review Conference proves that differences among nations are always better tackled by means of dialogue and diplomacy.

The Tehran Declaration, signed by Brazil, Turkey and Iran on questions relating to the Iranian nuclear programme, illustrated how those tools can help bridge gaps and overcome obstacles. Recrimination and suspicion yielded to patient negotiations.

It is important to repeat the reasons that inspired two developing countries, non-permanent members of the Security Council, to dare deal with an issue of such relevance in the realm of international peace.

Turkey and Brazil were chiefly guided by the aim – which I am sure is shared by all in this room – of finding a formula that would ensure the exercise of Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while providing assurances that Iran's nuclear program has exclusively peaceful purposes.

We did not invent a new scheme. We merely revived (or as a major Western paper puts it, resuscitated) a proposal originally put forward by the Vienna Group, taking into account the parameters that were repeatedly indicated to us as key to a confidence-building agreement.

The result was acknowledged by highly respected institutions and personalities – from Dr. El Baradei to Ambassador Pickering; from the Arms Control Association to the Organization of the Islamic Conference -- as an achievement worth pursuing.

It is difficult to understand why it has not been at least given a chance to bear fruits. Its value as a confidence building measure, as a platform for further talks, was not put to test.

It is still early to know precisely what the effects of new sanctions will be. One can only hope that the most promising opportunity to engage Iran in a dialogue about its nuclear programme is not missed.

No matter what, if and when the parties decide to go back to the negotiating table, they will face an even steeper challenge.

The presence of IAEA inspectors is the best assurance to allay the concerns that material is not being deviated for non-peaceful purposes.

It is Brazil's conviction that persuasion will do more than threats; that the construction of a positive atmosphere is the only viable path towards a solution satisfactory for all.

Mr. President,

This Conference must do its part, by maintaining the momentum created by the NPT Review Conference. It must engage in substantive discussions on all the topics of the agenda, particularly in nuclear disarmament. It must reaffirm, by its practical, result-oriented activity, the utility of investing political capital in multilateral initiatives.

Member States can count on our steadfast commitment to restore the Conference on Disarmament's central role in dealing with the crucial security issues of our time.

Dear friends,

I would ask your indulgence for doing something which I do not normally do – self-quoting. Not because of the wisdom of the words, but because of the lessons contained in them.

In the year 2000, just after the successful NPT Review Conference, Brazil alerted that "the continued paralysis of the CD cannot but cast doubt over the value of progress achieved elsewhere".

(...) "The real question we face is this: is it or is it not true that, in spite of our divergent priorities and concerns, we all share the same vested interest in reinforcing the multilateral machinery for disarmament and non-proliferation? And, if this is the case, how far are we prepared to go in displaying the necessary flexibility to allow for constructive solutions that do not jeopardize perceived vital interests?"

No convincing answer has been given to this question for the last ten years.

Let us hope it will be different this time.

Thank you.