



BRAZIL

Ninth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty (Article XIV Conference)

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Statement by

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Mr. Co-president,

My delegation would like to commend you on your election to preside over this important meeting and to reiterate its commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Brazil participated actively in the negotiations that led to the adoption of the CTBT and was one of the first countries to ratify it, in 1998. Since then, we have been vocal in our support for the entry into force of the treaty and its role as an important measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

When the CTBT opened for signature, in the aftermath of the 50th anniversary of the first nuclear explosion, no one expected that two decades later we would still be struggling to facilitate its entry into force, notwithstanding the overwhelming support for the treaty.

This support has been reiterated by all the previous Article XIV Conferences and was also part of the commitments arising from the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences. The failure to fulfill those commitments, including on the part of the nuclear-weapon States, who bear a special responsibility in this regard, has deepened the gap between the vast majority of the international community, who call for urgent progress on nuclear disarmament, and those who seem comfortable with the current nuclear status quo. The failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt an outcome document further aggravates this worrisome trend, which must be confronted decisively.

We therefore call on all States that have not yet signed and/or ratified the CTBT, specially Annex II countries, to do so with a sense of urgency. Countries holding nuclear arsenals, in particular, should make this a priority. In this sense, we especially urge the United States to press forward with the

ratification of the CTBT and deliver on the expectations raised by President Obama's speech in Berlin in 2013. As one of the two largest holders of nuclear weapons, the US should lead by example with regard to the CTBT.

If we wish to promote the treaty's entry into force, we must bear in mind its significance to the broader goals of the international community, particularly nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Final Declaration we have just adopted and which was arduously negotiated in Vienna touches upon the core objectives of the treaty, including that of deterring a qualitative nuclear arms race by constraining vertical proliferation. Unfortunately, as has been repeatedly confirmed by different actors, including, most recently, by the respected Swedish institute SIPRI, nuclear-armed states have been modernizing their nuclear arsenals and developing new nuclear weapons technologies, as well as devising new missions for them. This is in breach of the letter and spirit of the CTBT and threatens to undermine the relevance of the treaty even before it is in force.

By signaling to the global community their intention to maintain and increase their reliance on nuclear weapons, States possessing them are putting in jeopardy not only the timely entry into force of the CTBT and current nuclear disarmament efforts, but the whole non-proliferation architecture.

Proliferation leads to more proliferation. Experiments aimed at developing new nuclear weapons or improving existing ones, such as sub-critical experiments or supercomputer simulations, are eroding trust in the CTBT. States possessing nuclear weapons have repeatedly argued that they need to perform such tests in order to maintain the safety and reliability of their arsenals. One fails to understand, however, why those same States refuse to join calls on other States to abstain from conducting such experiments for the purposes of modernization of nuclear weapons, which are not related to maintenance activities. In fact, if a State is not engaged in such vertical proliferation, it should make all efforts to constrain other States to also abstain from it.

Disarmament is an essential feature of the CTBT. It cannot be pushed away for the convenience of some States and in complete disregard for the concerns of the vast majority. The main motivation for the CTBT lies in its contribution to nuclear disarmament, which is the very reason ratifying States joined the treaty in the first place. Attempts at reinterpreting the treaty to weaken or exclude nuclear disarmament from its priorities run counter to the efforts of bringing it into force.

The entry into force of the CTBT, important as it is, should be followed by a multilateral effort aimed at developing and implementing effective measures for nuclear disarmament within a specific, multilaterally agreed timeframe and the ultimate adoption of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit development, possession, testing and use of nuclear weapons, and providing for the transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination of all nuclear arsenals.

Given the paralysis currently in the Conference on Disarmament and the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to agree on new commitments towards this end, Brazil expects the United Nations General Assembly and its First Committee to assume a leading role to point the way forward in a decisive manner. Political will from all parties is needed to move beyond the status quo and not only to bring the CTBT into force, but also to guarantee it will fulfill the role it was designed for in ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.