

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro, to the 53rd General Conference of the IAEA.

Madam President,

Brazil congratulates you on your unanimous election to preside over the 53rd General Conference of the IAEA. Under your leadership we will undoubtedly reach meaningful results. The Brazilian delegation also congratulates all members of the bureau. To you and to them we pledge our full cooperation.

Brazil wishes to welcome the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Rwanda as the new members of the Agency. We look forward to working closely with them in facing the challenges that lie ahead.

The General Conference is a unique opportunity to take stock of what happened last year, to share experiences, to express our hopes for the future and to recommit ourselves to the objectives that the founding members, more than fifty years ago, set for the Agency to achieve.

The Agency is going through a moment of great significance. We are at the end of an era and a new one is being ushered in. Twelve years ago Mohamed ElBaradei was elected the chief executive officer of the IAEA. This week we acclaimed Yukia Amano as his successor.

To speak about ElBaradei's legacy is not easy, because he had to live up to new challenges for which past history had not fully prepared the Agency. And yet he rose to the occasion whenever he had to, and, in the way, we were constantly reminded that, instead of haggling over pettiness, we had to develop a vision for the future, to transcend our differences, to overcome our misgivings and not to turn the pebbles in our road into boulders. He made us never lose sight of the big picture and never wavered in his endeavors to convince us that, as much as we all had our own national agendas, we should all submit to the rule

of law. Indeed, one of the paramount lessons ElBaradei leaves for us to apply in the future is that if the IAEA ceases to function as a rule-based organization it will lose significance to irrelevance. We will certainly miss him.

Brazil is absolutely confident that Yukia Amano will be a great Director General. He certainly possesses all the necessary attributes to lead the IAEA, as all those who had the privilege of dealing with him here in Vienna know perfectly well. Brazil looks forward to working closely with him. We are certain that he will do an excellent job.

Madam President,

The significance of the present moment does not have to do only with the change of Director General of the IAEA. We can all feel a new breath in the world political landscape. We hope that the vision of a world free of the deadliest weapons humankind has invented will come true sooner rather than later. Brazil urges all countries possessing nuclear weapons to commit themselves to the earliest possible elimination of their nuclear arsenals. But then vision not attached to reality becomes only the expression of desirability and not a practical basis for policy. The argument that the ultimate aim of ridding the planet of nuclear weapons is hinged upon there being as absolute guarantees as possible that no country will be in a position to develop those weapons is understandable. For this to be brought about it is also understandable that, in the future, verification measures should be strengthened to a degree higher than that foreseen in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, including, if at all feasible, by making the assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear activities as foolproof as the assurance in relation to the peaceful applications of declared activities.

However it is simply not fair to expect countries which have already made unequivocal, credible and verifiable commitments to forswear nuclear weapons to implement further enhanced verification measures until the international community has before it at least some kind of timeframe within which to expect the achievement of the objective of

a world free of nuclear weapons. Enhanced verification mechanisms should be devised and grafted into a future Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which would level the playing field by making zero nuclear weapons the norm for all members of the international community.

Madam President,

This year for the first time the Board of Governors of the IAEA held a substantive discussion on the issue of assurances of supply of low enriched uranium. Our assessment is that it was a productive and useful discussion. It highlighted differences of views on how to approach the question. What we think is lacking is an understanding of what we want to achieve with the different proposals or concepts we have on the table. What has to be clear is that the actual exercise of what is an inalienable right cannot be looked at with suspicion, provided of course that compliance with safeguards obligations is ensured. Brazil sees merit in the ideas advocated by many, including the Director General, that ultimately all enrichment and reprocessing activities, without discrimination, should be placed under some kind of multilateral control. The modalities for achieving this goal could perhaps also be enshrined in a future Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, together with more stringent verification measures.

Madam President,

As a founding member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Brazil is fully and unflinchingly committed to the objectives set forth in its Statute. We support the activities of the Agency in promoting on as wide a basis as possible the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of developing countries in particular. Brazil highly appreciates the efforts undertaken by the IAEA in the fields of nuclear power, other nuclear applications, safety, security, safeguards and, last but certainly not least, technical cooperation. For the Agency to be even more effective than at present it is essential to strive to reach a more balanced approach to the implementation of its core activities or

pillars. This is particularly true as we are about to witness a revival in the production of nuclear power, not only in countries which already rely on nuclear power in different degrees, but also in countries which will use nuclear power for the first time.

Also, the applications of nuclear energy in the field of health are expanding as an ever growing number of countries avail themselves of nuclear techniques for diagnosis and therapy purposes. The IAEA's Program of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) plays a very important role in this regard. New applications of nuclear energy in agriculture and hydrology, for example, have been developed and, as the Agency's documents clearly show, a growing number of countries are benefiting from them.

Madam President,

The international community needs a strong IAEA endowed with the necessary resources to carry out fully its statutory activities for the benefit of humankind as a whole. Brazil's commitment in that respect is unequivocal. A strengthened Agency is in the interest of all of us. We need to come together to find the will and the means to reach our common goals – development, peace, security. As the Director General has recently told us, either we succeed collectively or we fail collectively. Let us not miss the opportunities we have before us.

Thank you