



IAEA Nuclear Security Conference

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Marcel Biato Permanent Representative of Brazil to the IAEA

Vienna, 5 December 2016

Mr. President, Minister Yun Byung-se,

Mr. Director-General of the IAEA, Ambassador Yukiya Amano,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to address this Ministerial segment of the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security. The celebrations of the Agency's 60th anniversary confer special importance to this event. This organization is indeed uniquely positioned to facilitate international cooperation aimed at strengthening nuclear security, in a comprehensive, inclusive, transparent and genuinely multilateral manner.

As widely recognized, including in the UN Charter, security, peace and development are mutually interdependent goals. Through its work to promote peaceful nuclear applications, the IAEA has helped to make the world a safer, more secure and prosperous place.

Significant obstacles still remain, however, for the motto "Atoms for Peace and Development", which underpins the work of the Agency, to be fully realized.

As time and again highlighted by the UN Secretary-General, a fraction of the resources associated with the maintenance and modernization of nuclear arsenals would be more than enough to advance economic and social development worldwide, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We reject military doctrines that emphasize the role of nuclear deterrence, indefinitely delaying the fulfillment of their long-standing obligations to nuclear disarmament.

The vast majority of the world's most sensitive fissile material consists of weapons-grade material, which is in the hands of a few nuclear-armed States, and is not subject to any sort of international oversight.

Physical protection of nuclear materials is a primary responsibility of States possessing them. Yet, the international community has a legitimate concern about the security of nuclear arsenals and huge stocks of weapons-grade materials. Their sheer existence poses a serious existential threat, with potential catastrophic humanitarian consequences across borders.

Earlier this year, at the last Nuclear Security Summit, Brazil and other 15 countries issued a Joint Statement entitled "In larger security: looking ahead", stressing the importance of a comprehensive approach to nuclear security. We take satisfaction in seeing that the interconnection between nuclear security and nuclear disarmament was reflected in recent IAEA General Conference Resolutions on Nuclear Security, as well as in the Ministerial Declaration of this Conference.

We consider the information released by some States on their policies to ensure the security of weapons-grade materials as a positive step towards greater transparency, and we call for further voluntary measures in this regard.

Ultimately, there can be no effective and sustainable nuclear security architecture without simultaneously addressing all three pillars of the NPT, in particular nuclear disarmament, where the main compliance deficit lies.

Our countries will have another opportunity to advance this matter when they gather here in Vienna, next Spring, in preparation for the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Also on the agenda for 2017, there will be the follow-up of the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly, entitled “Taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”. This historic landmark will help us move away from the current stalemate on nuclear disarmament, through the negotiation of an international convention on the prohibition of nuclear weapons, leading to their future elimination.

Mr. President,

In line with Agency’s guidance documents, Brazil has adopted effective national legislation and a solid regulatory framework in nuclear security. My country is a party to all relevant international instruments, and our National Congress is currently considering the ratification of the 2005 Amendment of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Meanwhile, Brazil has already been updating the requisite internal procedures and requirements. Earlier this year, my country approved new anti-terrorism legislation that criminalizes terrorist acts with nuclear or radioactive materials, also in line with the Amendment.

The “Brazilian Nuclear Program Protection System” (SIPRON) supervises and coordinates actions of several governmental agencies and entities aimed at ensuring the appropriate capacity for prompt response to nuclear emergency situations and for the protection of our nuclear materials and installations. The System has proven its effectiveness, including in a series of major public events hosted by Brazil, most recently the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. In the footsteps of the close cooperation maintained with the IAEA and of the partnerships established with other States, we stand ready to continue sharing our experiences, as we have already done with countries in Latin America and Africa.

Mr. President,

Brazil is fully committed to ensuring nuclear security within its borders and to cooperating in all relevant regional and global endeavors. We reiterate, however, that nuclear security requires a comprehensive approach to be truly effective and sustainable. We must work towards an international nuclear security framework that encompasses all threats associated with nuclear weapons, related materials and radioactive material.

This six-decade-old Agency plays a rightful and legitimate role in these efforts, given its broad membership and vast experience and expertise. For its part, Brazil will continue to strive for a world without nuclear weapons, with fewer nuclear security vulnerabilities, and enhanced cooperation for the advancement of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Thank you, Mr. President.