



61st IAEA General Conference

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

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DISTRIBUTION VERSION

Madam President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Ambassador Maria Zeneida Angara Collinson, on your election as President of this 61st session of the IAEA General Conference. You may rest assured of the full support of the Brazilian delegation in your efforts to lead this meeting to a successful conclusion.

I wish to commend Ambassador Othman, of Malaysia, for the competent manner in which he discharged his duties as President of the 60th session.

I would also like to commend Grenada for its admission to the IAEA.

Last but not least, I wish to add my voice to those welcoming DG Amano's reelection. He can continue to count on Brazil's full support in his third term of office.

Madam President,

Brazil is a founding Member State of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We have supported it since inception. For 60 years, my country has endeavored to promote the Agency's core mission to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world", as established in its Statute.

Brazil has a deep-rooted commitment to using nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. This is a core principle of our foreign policy and is enshrined in our Constitution, in our legislative practice and in several international legally binding agreements we have subscribed to.

BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

Madam President,

Today, more than ever, Brazil sees nuclear energy as a source of prosperity and security for its citizens. Our diversified and robust nuclear sector ensures that the economic, social and technological benefits of harnessing the atom are available over a wide variety of fields to an increasing number of individuals. Nuclear technology has a well-established role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by offering a large range of applications, integrating economic, social and environmental challenges.

To this end, Brazil's nuclear industry sector is presently undergoing profound changes in reply to the country's development needs and to evolving global challenges. A high-level government committee has been formed to provide a fully coordinated policy response.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in the question of climate change. Perhaps the greatest threat facing the global society, its disruptive impact hits unequally, targeting especially the most vulnerable and poor. For this reason, Brazil is investing heavily in renewable, secure and competitively-priced energy sources. Our decades-long experience with nuclear power generation encourages us to redouble efforts to bring the Angra 3 plant quickly on-stream. This will pave the way to making nuclear generation a strategic component of our energy mix in coming decades. For this reason, Brazil looks forward to the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, to take place in Abu Dhabi, later this year, as a valuable opportunity to discuss the challenges facing this critical industry.

In the field of health, Brazil has made important strides in making the benefits of nuclear medicine widely available. The challenge remains to enlarge the range and quantity of radioisotopes for application in the growing number of life-saving technologies. My government is therefore expanding cost-free radiotherapy services in Brazil. This will be linked to large-scale public purchases and the local assembly of the requisite medical equipment.

The possibilities for nuclear technology applications are equally limitless in agriculture. The Sterile Insect Technique, for example, is a strong tool in order to increase food productivity and enhance Brazil's position as one of the leading food producers in the world.

Brazil has embarked on an ambitious project to build a Multipurpose Research Reactor. It will enhance Brazil's nuclear technology capabilities and innovation infrastructure, while at the same time enlarging the scope of products and services available to the general public. The scheme calls for a 30 MW research reactor as well as associated facilities and laboratories geared to the following activities: radioisotope production, with emphasis to the molybdenum 99 (Mo-99); irradiation tests of nuclear fuels and materials; and scientific research using neutrons beams. The basic engineering project has been concluded, and detailed designing has started and shall be partially developed in cooperation with Argentina.

In the area of nuclear research, Brazil is currently developing a new 3 Gig electron Volt synchrotron light source, designed to foster research in a variety of fields, such as material science, structural biology, nanoscience, physics, earth and environmental science and cultural heritage. Equally ambitious, the Nuclear Fusion Laboratory project aims to consolidate national activities in nuclear fusion and the promotion of country's participation in related international initiatives.

NUCLEAR SAFETY AND SECURITY

Madam President,

While promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, Brazil has maintained its unequivocal commitment to the efforts to continuous improvements and the pursuit of high levels of nuclear safety and security. My country is committed to all pertinent international instruments in these areas and has been fully implementing the Agency's voluntary standards and guidelines.

Our government participated actively in the VII Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which took place earlier this year. As stated in Brazil's National Report, our nuclear installations continue to meet all the objectives of the Convention. The Brazilian National Nuclear Energy Commission has taken a series of steps to incorporate the Vienna Declaration's key concepts into our national regulations, and has a systematic review process in place to evaluate possible gaps and

necessary improvements in the safety aspects of our nuclear power plants. We aim for a well-running system in which regulatory body, operators, law enforcement teams and civil protection actors work together to protect the general population and the environment.

The Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies (FORO), now under Brazilian chairmanship, has proved to be an important clearinghouse for sharing experiences and lessons. Increasing cooperation of FORO with the IAEA is an ongoing goal.

Emergency preparedness and response

In the field of emergency preparedness and response, Brazil took part in a type three Convention Exercise. This followed on from a previous domestic nuclear security trial at the Angra nuclear power plant, as well as in preparation for a general nuclear emergency exercise next October. Brazil has thus enhanced its capability to plan and work in a multiagency environment to counter a nuclear security event or emergency. We are now better equipped to commit ourselves to take a more active part in future international exercises. We are likewise committed to receiving a future IRRS mission and hosting IAEA events and courses on EPR and nuclear security.

Madam President,

In organizing the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil acquired significant experience in dealing with nuclear security concerns during major public events. We are grateful for the assistance offered by other States and the IAEA on those occasions and look forward to future collaboration.

The IAEA plays an important role in strengthening the worldwide nuclear security framework in a manner that is genuinely comprehensive, inclusive, transparent and multilateral. Concerns in this area should however be viewed from a broader perspective. Nuclear security cannot be isolated from wider efforts to promote nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. A sustainable global nuclear security strategy goes beyond adopting practical

measures of physical protection in civilian facilities. It must equally encompass the security of the vast majority of stocks of HEU and separated plutonium in States possessing nuclear weapons. Enhanced nuclear security is an integral part of a comprehensive approach to the various, interrelated nuclear risks and challenges confronting the international community.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Madam President,

Given its core statutory mandate to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the IAEA is uniquely positioned to encourage and assist in the development and transfer of nuclear technology globally. We therefore congratulate the Agency, especially the TC Department, for successfully organizing the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme earlier this year. This event highlighted the IAEA's pivotal role over the last 60 years in promoting the peaceful application of the atom. It also shed light on how best to ensure the TC Programme's impact on improving lives around the developing world.

The high numbers in attendance at the TC Conference underscore global recognition for the importance of the IAEA's role in satisfying the growing demands from Member States for services that help improve quality of life globally. Further proof is the fact that in 2016 the Agency received the highest amount of total new resources for the TC Programme of the last few years, despite continuing worldwide financial constraints. Given the clear interest shown by the international community, my government calls for measures to further strengthen the Departments of Technical Cooperation and of Nuclear Sciences and Applications.

The Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL) is an important building block in fostering South-South cooperation since its entry into force in 2005. Under the recent Brazilian presidency, a new ARCAL Regional Strategic Profile, covering the 2016-2021 period, was approved.

NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS

Madam President,

Brazil fully supports the implementation of safeguards, as one of the IAEA's statutory functions, and the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to identify further efficiencies in their application. It is paramount to ensure that States' obligations are being met, and that the Agency operates within the established legal framework, taking into account the different scope and safeguards measures deriving from the distinct categories of agreements entered into by Member States.

My government views with concern some attempts to reinterpret the nature of safeguards obligations undertaken by States, including those contained in Article III of the NPT. Proposals to expand their scope and change the voluntary nature of the IAEA Model Additional Protocol fly in the face of agreed undertakings. In this vein, ongoing activities associated with the State-level concept should continue to abide by the Supplementary Document contained in GOV/2014/41, as well as the assurances given by the Secretariat at the September 2014 Board of Governors session and the Safeguards Resolutions approved since then by this General Conference. The discussion on the State-level Concept provided the opportunity for the Agency to develop practices fostering greater accountability and transparency, and for closer involvement of Member States in developing proposed new policies. We encourage the Secretariat to take forward the fruitful dialogue with Member States in the format of regular technical meetings since 2015.

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Madam President,

The enormous potential of nuclear energy makes it all the more imperative that it not be distorted for destructive purposes. What chance is there for spreading the peaceful applications of nuclear energy when we continue under the threat of nuclear armaments and global

holocaust? To those who argue that it is impossible to dispense with them because they would allegedly ensure peace, we offer the Latin America and the Caribbean's unique experience. Over 25 years ago, Brazil and Argentina created the Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC). It provides for an unprecedented level of transparency and confidence-building between two neighboring countries who were determined to develop nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. In the region as a whole, the world's first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated region was established. The Treaty of Tlatelolco has inspired similar initiatives around the world.

We have reason to commemorate this week's historic landmark: the opening tomorrow for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Over seventy years since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and thousands of nuclear explosive tests, a legally-binding instrument has been adopted outlawing the most lethal and indiscriminate category of weapons of mass destruction. As an expression of Brazil's strong support for and enduring commitment to ensuring that this instrument comes into force, President Michel Temer is taking part in the signing ceremony in New York.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is consistent with the NPT, and will help fulfilling the nuclear disarmament obligations enshrined therein. Brazil will continue to engage constructively in the process leading up to the next NPT Review Conference in 2020.

We also remain committed to bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and regret that 20 years later, eight remaining States listed in its Annex II have yet to sign or ratify it. In order to achieve this goal and to ensure continued political support from those States that have already ratified it, concrete steps must be taken to ensure that the CTBT remains a meaningful instrument. We cannot therefore condone nuclear doctrines or policies aimed at the continued retention and modernization of nuclear arsenals. Such policies are in clear contravention of the letter and the spirit of the CTBT, and undermine its relevance and credibility.

We are confident that efforts to make the TPNW as well as the NPT and the CTBT universally accepted, will bring us closer to our shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The determination of the DPRK to pursue nuclear weapons capability further underscores the importance of advancing global nuclear disarmament without further delay.

As we forge ahead, we must engage openly and constructively with all segments of world opinion through all relevant international fora and avenues. My delegation believes the IAEA has an essential role in this realm, given its highly regarded verification capabilities, so as to make good on this Agency's motto "Atoms for Peace and Development".

Thank you, Madam President.