



**International Conference on Nuclear Security:
Enhancing Global Efforts**

**Statement by H. E. Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota,
Minister of External Relations of Brazil**

Vienna, 1st July 2013

Dear Minister János Martonyi, President of the Conference,
Dear Ambassador Yukiya Amano, Director-General of the IAEA
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to attend this International Conference on Nuclear Security. I welcome the Director-General's initiative to enhance this edition by providing for a ministerial segment. It is a well-timed signal of the central role the IAEA must play in these efforts.

Let me also thank the two co-chairs, my fellow countryman Ambassador Vinhas and Ambassador Csuday of Hungary, as well as the Secretariat, for the excellent work in preparation of this Conference and the Ministerial Declaration to be adopted today.

Mr. President,

To be consistent and ultimately effective, nuclear security must be articulated within the international community's broader efforts to promote the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the advancement of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

These are objectives that we must, with coherence and determination, actively pursue in our multilateral efforts aimed at promoting sustainable peace, security and increased levels of well-being for each nation and for humankind as a whole.

For us to succeed in these endeavors, we cannot subscribe to piecemeal, selective approaches deprived of a truly comprehensive view on the root causes of the challenges associated with nuclear security.

We should also be aware that concerns with nuclear security cannot be invoked to preclude the legitimate right of States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with Article IV of the Non Proliferation Treaty.

We cannot ignore that the continued existence of many thousands of nuclear weapons constitutes a great and immediate menace to international peace and security, as they threaten the very survival of life on Earth.

While the physical protection of nuclear weapons is the primary responsibility of States possessing them, these weapons are a legitimate concern of the entire international community. Their fate is our responsibility also.

We have indeed a shared responsibility to ensure that systematic and progressive steps are taken, in accordance with the obligations contained in the NPT, for the complete elimination of all nuclear arsenals.

As long as nuclear disarmament remains unrealized, measures aimed at securing the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities will be tinged with an undeniable degree of precariousness. As United States President Barack Obama recently stated in Berlin, "so long as nuclear weapons exist, we are not truly safe".

The continued reliance on nuclear arsenals in national and collective security strategies leads to the prevalence of a logic which favors the preservation of these arsenals, with negative impact on the international community's efforts not only for disarmament, but also in the field of non-proliferation.

The status quo is not acceptable.

In this context, we welcome the fact that the Declaration to be adopted today recognizes, in line the view taken in UN General Assembly Resolution 67/44, "progress is urgently needed in the area of disarmament and nonproliferation in order to maintain international peace and security and to contribute to global efforts against terrorism".

Mr. President,

All of this is serious enough. But the adverse impact of nuclear weapons extends beyond the realm of security and negatively affects living conditions on the planet. Apart from their inherent risks, the option for a nuclear deterrent has other direct and indirect consequences which cannot be overlooked or minimized.

In this respect, Brazil commends the UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-Moon, for his apt remarks on the fact that "the world is over-armed and peace is under-funded". We must reflect on these words and act upon them.

It is cause for serious concern that in 2010, global military spending exceeded US\$ 1,6 trillion – nearly 4,6 billion a day, which alone is almost twice the United Nations regular budget for a year - while ODA expenditures reached only US\$ 128 billion in that same year.

Furthermore, in advancing nuclear security, we cannot set aside the fundamental question of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any possible use of nuclear weapons, either by intent or by accident.

There is a relevant ongoing international debate on this issue and we strongly invite committed participation by all, especially by those possessing nuclear weapons.

We should also encourage greater involvement of civil society organizations in our future work in this area. The risks involved are simply too high. They are of interest to ordinary citizens whose voices must be heard.

Surely nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented but they can be outlawed and eventually eliminated if we manage to deal satisfactorily with the three hurdles – psychological,

geopolitical and technical – recently pointed out by former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.

Nuclear weapons should not be seen as a sign of prestige or status, much less a prerequisite to a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. On the contrary, as the International Court of Justice determined, their threat and use would be contrary to the rules of international law and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law, especially because they do not differentiate between combatants and civilians.

Mr. President,

The risks stemming from the possibility of State or non-state actors having access to nuclear weapons or nuclear materials are of special concern.

Brazil has adopted comprehensive national legislation in this field, and is party to all relevant international instruments on the promotion of nuclear security and the suppression of terrorism.

I shall also note that the internal procedures for the ratification of the amendment to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material proceed apace.

Brazil is ready to contribute to the establishment of more nuclear-weapon free zones around the Globe. We believe that the experiences of Tlatelolco, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Material (ABACC), Pelindaba in the African Continent, Rarotonga in the South Pacific region, Bangkok in South East Asia, the Central Asian nuclear-weapon free-zone treaty and Mongolia's nuclear weapons free status can be important contributions in this regard, especially in the case of the Middle East, where we continue to urge for the early convening of the Conference agreed to at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We call upon all countries of the region to engage actively in this endeavor, which is an integral part of the present review cycle, and as such must be held as soon as possible, preferably not later than December 2013.

We should not succumb to the argument that progress in the establishment of a nuclear weapon free-zone in the Middle East be held hostage to improvements in the overall political agenda. They must evolve in tandem if they are to succeed, including in our efforts towards nuclear security.

In the context of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (ZOPACAS), we are working with our partners from South America and Africa to consolidate the South Atlantic as a region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. President,

This Conference should provide for a platform to affirm not only the Agency's central role in nuclear security but also to raise awareness as to how our objectives of advancing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in adequate security conditions can benefit from a

more consistent approach to our obligations under the UN Charter, the IAEA Statute, the NPT and other applicable multilateral instruments.

To conclude, Mr. President, I reiterate Brazil's staunch support for the IAEA, the appropriate overarching institution to deal with the issues at hand, as this Conference unambiguously demonstrates.

It is our firm conviction that a sustainable nuclear security strategy goes well beyond ensuring better standards of physical protection to both civilian and military nuclear materials and facilities. It also demands vigorous good faith negotiations towards the elimination of nuclear arsenals, and the urgent promotion of an updated multilateral framework for a more secure, peaceful and prosperous world.

Nuclear energy has granted humanity huge benefits and its peaceful applications offer us many future rewards if we are serious in meeting our commitments and direct its use to improving life, rather than threatening survival to humankind.

I thank you, Mr. President.