



No-proliferação para la Seguridad Global
Nonproliferation for Global Security

International Seminar

Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament - The Future of the NPT

Rio de Janeiro, October 29 and 30, 2009

Full audio transcription *

Quotes in Spanish and Portuguese translated into English

Opening Remarks, October 29, 2009

Mário Renato Borges de la Silva: - Ambassadors, speakers, ladies, and gentlemen, welcome to Rio de Janeiro. It is an honor for the Correios (Brazilian Post Company) to greet you at our building headquarters for the International Seminar “Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament”, a crucial topic for people’s security and peace everywhere. As a public company we are convinced that in this forum will be encouraged discussions and presented ideas about disarmament and development, demonstrating that regional, national and global security will be always an essential matter for the preservation of mankind and guarantee of social welfare. As a public company, conscious of its social and environmental responsibility, and we are proud to sponsor this seminar. It is without a doubt a initiative that adds to the different actions implemented by inter governmental organisms, investigation institutes and universities, NGO’s and diplomatic instances, looking to get the attention of the international community on a topic that imposes itself in the mandatory agenda and common interest. On behalf of the Correios of Rio de Janeiro, the Empresa Brasileira de Correios e Telégrafos, I want to congratulate in advance the CEBRI and their working team for the realization of this Seminar and to wish all present moments of understanding on the topics developed during the seminar. Thank you very much.

Ambassador José Botafogo Gonçalves: - Good morning ladies and gentlemen, some very quick words on my behalf in relation to the proposal of the seminar, that we are kicking off. The first time the CEBRI promoted a discussion on the nuclear topic was in December 2007, practically two years ago. In that occasion, the great concern was the combination of scenery of economic growth in Brazil with the increase in the international fuel prize. It was the time to re-discuss the Brazilian energetic matrix. In this context we still find, now more intensely, worries because of climate change and the search for clean and sustainable alternatives.

Even if Brazil’s energetic matrix was and still is considered among the cleanest matrix of the world, given its abundance of hydro resources we are still in a quest to gain self sufficiency and energetic assurance which takes us to reconsider the Brazilian model. The topics of energy are still as important in 2009 as they were in 2007, even considering the rational aspects, the nuclear component of the energetic solution is increasing its importance, right now our matrix is increasing its complexity and some even say its tarnishing because of the use of fossil fuels against renewable energy .

Even so, the option of using nuclear energy in Brazil has never been put aside, common sense in Brazil, partially because of ignorance or fear on the bad administration of the residues, did not admit the possibility that Brazil could increase the share of nuclear energy in its energetic matrix. Here comes in too, a bit, the fear of resuscitating some of the phantoms of the non-pacific use of nuclear energy that astonished the Brazilian scenery on decades before.

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The 2007 seminar, wanted to offer the Brazilian society up-to-date information on the nuclear subject, touching from the technological and security concerns to the waste management and nonproliferation in order to de-mystify and allow a more pragmatic and less passionate debate. This year the CEBRI is re-taking the nuclear subject to discuss in a more emphatic and deep way the topic of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. This is a topic of political nature and, therefore, different from the motivation that originated the 2007 seminar. This topic is matter of security and energetic and environmental sustainability. This is happening in a context where the U.S. President, Barack Obama adopts a different posture than his predecessor, seeking a broader dialogue and cooperation with countries that where always perceived as threats because of their arsenals, nuclear power or internal instability in their regions.

The CEBRI wants to bring about a high quality discussion, with academics and specialists from different parts of the world, on important questions regarding international security. Amongst them: 1) the possible behaviors of nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states facing the review of the NPT, 2) the role of the elite in the discussion and the role of deterrence and nuclear free zones, 3) the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency, today and its future, and proposal for the governance of the agency and verification incentives, 4) nonproliferation initiatives and management of fissile materials, 5) the future of the NPT regarding nuclear disarmament and the nonproliferation regime, alternatives for improvement, radical change or replacement, and the possible risks of each alternative.

I think this is a very important and diversified agenda, but the panelists that where invited and accepted to participate of this seminar will be more than up to the challenge. As usual, I would like to reference our supporters, we have a very important number of entities that support our initiative: the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, from Germany, the European Union, the Norwegian Government through their Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the embassy of the United States, the Argentine Consulate in Rio de Janeiro, the Canadian Consulate, Eletronuclear, Nucleoeléctrica Argentina S.A., the Autoridad Regulatoria Nuclear from Argentina. In a very particular way I would like to thank the partenership with Correios. Thank you so much for welcoming us, we are very happy and admiring the quality of the installations. Several of our panelists came from abroad have already talked to me about the beauty of the facilities, and it is also because of the generosity of the Correios that we have such a lovely reception. It is not new to anyone that amongst all the Brazilian companies the Correios is one of the most credible and appreciated by the public opinion. And last but of fundamental importance, I want to thank our co-organizer NPSGlobal, the Nonproliferation for Global Security Foundation, represented here by Dr. Irma Arguello, founder and chair, and to whom I give the floor to her initial remarks. Thank you very much.

Irma Arguello: - Thank you Ambassador Botafogo. We have decided to speak in our own languages, so I am going to switch to Spanish now. On behalf of the Non-proliferation for Global Security Foundation and of myself, I join the welcome to this International Seminar "Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament – the Future of the NPT" expressed by the Director Dos Correios and by the Ambassador Botafogo.

Several months ago, when we had our first meetings with our colleagues and friends from the CEBRI to plan this Seminar, two main things raised our enthusiasm and expectation. First, the incredible opportunity to have an open and plural exchange of opinions about the nuclear subject in its multiple sides -nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy- the so called three pillars of the nonproliferation treaty.. I would say that this debate is the first with these characteristics to be held in Latin America, and it comes to life just seven months before the Nonproliferation Treaty's Review Conference – NPT. It happens at a time signed by intense discussions about the present and future abilities of the Treaty, and the entire nuclear nonproliferation regime as it is.

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Secondly, the possibility of carrying out a successful joint venture between two organizations of the civil society from Brazil and Argentina, as the CEBRI and NPSGlobal Foundation was also very appealing. In this sense, our joint work is a simple homage to the nuclear cooperation that our countries carry out since 1991, date of the creation of the ABACC, our nuclear bilateral agency, that, as you might know, is very successful, and an international model of mutual cooperation in the nuclear area.

As it is known, proliferation and nuclear disarmament stand, today, at the top of the international agenda, a sort of polygon of divergent forces. On one hand, facts like North Korea's nuclear and missile tests, the evolution of Iran's uranium enrichment program -in defiance of United Nation's Security Council- including the disclosure of a clandestine plant; the difficulties to get the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force and, in general, the nuclear weapons states' limited compliance of their disarmament commitments -the so called 13 steps- speak of an international context of growing nuclear risks. And, on the other hand, we are able to see some positive signs, which is also noticeable. The United States and Russia continue to work on the reduction of their arsenals. Beside of that, multiple declarations from current and previous leaders, with a Barack Obama's leading role, support the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons as a long term objective, essential and achievable. Not an utopia.

The recent United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1887, brings to light the indispensable need to promote a safer world and to create the necessary conditions for a world without nuclear weapons.

In parallel, the expansive tendency towards nucleo-electric energy around the world, called by some the "nuclear renaissance", leads to a wider diffusion of technology, increase of actors and therefore of risks for international security. All these topics will be discussed in the following two days. The Seminar will be developed in five panels as it is written in the program, and two main dissertations. Each session has the goal to explore a specific topic, and will be followed by a brief debate, and Q&A's with the participation of the audience and speakers.

On the First Panel, which is introductory, we will discuss the nuclear nonproliferation regime facing the 2010 NPT Review. We will outline the present status of the disarmament and nonproliferation regime and, mainly, the present situation of the equation: disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as a system it is. Besides, we will try to address the meaning of the upcoming Review of the Nonproliferation Treaty.

Following the discussion, the Second panel will be focused on the analysis of nuclear disarmament, from different perspectives, by highlighting the gap between declarations and real facts that could lead to true nuclear disarmament. It has special importance, since non-nuclear-weapon states tend to be reluctant to take further obligations on nonproliferation, based on the fact that disarmament goals have not adequately achieved. Therefore, the objective is to outline commitments and actions by nuclear-weapon states in and out the nonproliferation treaty, to reduce their contributions to the nuclear dangers, as well as to discuss the role of non-nuclear-weapon states as promoters of nuclear disarmament. And finally, to consider in which ways those commitments made by states should be reflected in next year's RevCon.

The Third Panel brings us to the analysis of the Third pillar of the Treaty: the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It seeks to analyze how non-nuclear-weapon states can contribute towards nonproliferation protecting as well their right to develop technology of their own and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Fourth Panel considers the impacts of nonproliferation initiatives involving fissile materials, a very hot topic right now. Fundamentally, speakers will analyze the multilateral approaches for the nuclear fuel cycle, such as the International Nuclear Fuel Bank of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

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We will finally come to the Fifth Panel, entitled “The future of the Nonproliferation Treaty: Should it be Enhanced, Changed, or Replaced?.” The purpose of this panel is to analyze the Treaty’s role as the basis of the nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation regime, and to review alternatives for its strengthening, radical change, or replacement. Furthermore, it points to discuss alternatives to the Treaty, such as a nuclear weapons’ convention. There will be room for creative ideas – and out-of-the-box thinking on the matter, to say it somehow, and the related actions for the revitalizing of the disarmament and nonproliferation regime. This panel will search fundamentally future scenarios of development and results of the RevCon, not just looking towards 2010, but to the scene after 2010.

We also have to keynote speakers: Ms. Susan Burk and Ambassador Sergio Duarte, who will share with us their thoughts on this Seminar’s specific topic.

I have only left to express my gratitude to the present audience, and to the 32 speakers from 18 different countries that will help us out make a substantial debate of this seminar. A would also like to thank, like the Ambassador has done before me, the support of our sponsors, without whom this event would have not be possible. Well, thank you all again and I hope you enjoy our Seminar and you be able to really take advantage of the concepts and quality of the speakers we are going to have. Thank you very much.

Applause



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