

Security Council Open Debate on the Cooperation Between the UN and Regional and Subregional Organizations, August 6th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Almagro, Permanent Mission of the Uruguay to the United Nations.

I should like to begin by congratulating President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner and the delegation of Argentina on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and on having convened this high-level open debate aimed at strengthening our understanding of the role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security and incorporating new regional and subregional actors that reflect the dynamics of sociopolitical realities throughout all regions of our planet.

Uruguay also welcomes the presence of the representatives of regional and subregional organizations, in particular from Latin America and the Caribbean, including the Common Market of the South, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and the Organization of American States, and our dear friends from the League of Arab States.

Notwithstanding the responsibility that the Charter of the United Nations Charter entrusts to the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security, regional and subregional entities make a clear and ineluctable contribution to preventing, resolving or minimizing most of the situations that threaten global peace. The South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone is a contribution of our countries to protecting our region from military adventurism. It has opened a path to cooperation, completely changing the logic in the South Atlantic with respect to the North Atlantic, which has its defence mechanisms and its military alliances. This strategy, which has been strengthened politically by the importance attached to it by such organizations as the African Union and UNASUR, to which our countries belong in our respective regions, is also strengthened by the greater interaction achieved through the Africa-South America summit that took place in Abuja, Margarita Island, and Equatorial Guinea. These entities recognize the Zone as a fundamental instrument for promoting peace, security and cooperation among our countries.

The South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone embodies a commitment to the essential values of peaceful coexistence, democracy and respect for human rights. For our countries, these are fundamental and undeniable principles. The Zone is an initiative of international scope, and we manage it in strict respect for the purposes and principles of the United Nations, including the sovereignty and legal equality of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. As current Chairman of the Zone, I note some of the fundamental provisions of our Montevideo Declaration. Our meeting in that city helped to reiterate our commitment to the consolidation of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and cooperation free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We urge other States to recognize it as such.

We know that the very existence of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, remains a serious threat to humankind, creating tension and mistrust among peoples. We believe that progress in the multilateral agenda, especially concerning compliance with disarmament obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, must be a high priority for Member States.

The South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone countries clearly recall the 1994 declaration of the Zone on the denuclearization of the South Atlantic, adopted at the third ministerial meeting. We are therefore doing all we can to ban and prevent in our respective territories and territorial waters the

use, manufacture, production, acquisition, reception, storage and deployment of all nuclear weapons, as well as any direct or indirect attempt to encourage any of these activities in the South Atlantic. In that regard, we urge the international community to respect the Zone's status.

In addition to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, which are currently in force, we urge the international community to fully respect the denuclearized status of our Zone. Our countries are unfailingly committed to disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We also understand the importance of preventive diplomacy, mediation and good offices, and the establishment, maintenance and consolidation of peace to the maintenance of international peace and security; the key importance of avoiding the escalation of conflicts and of settling disputes; and the important role played by women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in building peace. We highlight the importance of their full participation in all initiatives to maintain peace and security, and the need to increase their participation in decision-making with respect to prevention and resolution of conflicts.

Our country is concerned by the negative role played by the exploitation of natural resources in the exacerbation of conflicts. We welcome efforts under way in Africa, in particular on the part of the States members of the Zone, to implement a legal framework designed to address this practice. In this respect, we urge the international community to support these efforts.

For Uruguay and the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone, it is crucial to stress the importance of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, to which some States members of the Zone are contributors. We recognize the potential for cooperation in strengthening the capacity of member States of the Zone to take part in peacekeeping operations. We also reaffirm the need to support the peace processes under way, as well as the United Nations peacekeeping operations deployed in States member in the Zone. We reiterate the need to further study mechanisms and possibilities for cooperation in peacekeeping operations.

The South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone supports the efforts of its member States in promoting the principle of the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the quest for negotiated solutions to territorial conflicts which affect member States of the zone. In that respect, the Zone calls for the resumption of negotiations between the Government of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom, in accordance with resolution General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX) and other resolutions of the General Assembly on the question of the Malvinas Islands with a view to finding a just, lasting and peaceful solution as soon as possible.

We also reaffirm General Assembly resolution 31/49, which calls on both parties to the dispute concerning the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands, and the surrounding maritime areas to refrain from taking decisions that would involve the introduction of unilateral changes in the situation while the Islands go through the process recommended in resolutions of the General Assembly. In that context, we are concerned to see the development of illegitimate activities of oil exploration in the zone in dispute.

Uruguay, as Chairman of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone, maintains along with other countries of the Zone, that we must eliminate the vision of the South Atlantic as a stage for strategic action between antagonistic States with competing interests. The South Atlantic is a geostrategic area that endows our countries, through the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation

Zone, with a new instrument to move forward in the major objectives of the international community: peace, security and the development of our societies.