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Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

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Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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II. Replies received from Governments

Brazil

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1. The Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic has been recognized by the international community as a valuable mechanism which provides the 24 countries from the two shores of the South Atlantic with an important framework for concerted efforts in the pursuit of the common goals of peace, social and economic development, and protection of the environment.

2. The adoption of subsequent General Assembly resolutions on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, with gradually fewer votes in abstention since its inception in 1986, is quite indicative of the fact that the relevance of this initiative is not confined only to Member States, but has a meaningful impact on the promotion of the objectives of the United Nations as a whole.

3. The Brazilian Government believes that there are priority areas in which the potential of the zone can be most fruitfully put into practice, such as denuclearization of the region, protection of the marine environment, and cooperation in the fight against drug-trafficking and related offences and the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

4. There is no doubt that the goal of complete denuclearization of the South Atlantic region is an achievable aim. The Tlatelolco¹ and Pelindaba² treaties provide a basic frame of reference for this endeavour. With Brazil's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,³ all States members of the zone are parties to that Treaty. Furthermore, the integration of a denuclearized South Atlantic with the Rarotonga⁴ and Bangkok⁵ treaties would make possible the prospect of a southern hemisphere free of nuclear weapons.

5. With respect to the protection of the marine environment, Brazil understands that the creation of new mechanisms on the issue, within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, would make a positive contribution to the prevention of

accidents and promote the exchange of information and cooperation.

6. The fight against drug-trafficking is another objective that is to be adamantly pursued. To that end, Brazil is convinced that coordination of efforts within the zone can be decisive. Bilateral agreements between South Atlantic States, as well as multilateral activities such as the anti-drug initiative launched at the fourth ministerial meeting of States members of the zone, held at Somerset West, South Africa, on 1 and 2 April 1996, are instrumental in fostering the effectiveness of actions undertaken against this form of organized crime.

7. The Brazilian Government fully shares the concerns of the international community with respect to the potentially destabilizing role played by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. To that extent, it is highly commendable that, within the zone, the Organization of American States, the Organization of African Unity, the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States have undertaken appropriate initiatives to alleviate that major threat to international peace and security.

8. In order to fully achieve its goals, the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic needs the continuing support of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme and international financial institutions.

9. The fifth ministerial meeting of States members of the zone, held at Buenos Aires in October 1998, once again renewed the commitment of member States to the objectives of the zone. Its final declaration and the innovative plan of action adopted on that occasion have set out various modalities of cooperation for the common purpose of ensuring peace, security and development.

10. Brazil attaches great importance to the strengthening of the zone and will continue to work actively with other South Atlantic countries and with the entire United Nations membership for the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986.

Notes

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068.

² A/50/426, annex.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

⁴ See *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 10: 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IX.7), appendix VII.

⁵ Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.