

## Report from Rio by Geraldo Lino

### Brazil joins anti-nuclear pact

*In succumbing to pressures on the nuclear issue, Brazil's "pragmatists" are surrendering national sovereignty.*

After 27 years of resistance, Brazil has agreed to ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, better known simply as the Tlatelolco Treaty. Brazil's decision, approved by the Senate May 11, was officially announced by Foreign Minister Celso Amorim in Mexico City on May 31, and triggered expressions of delight on the part of "new world order" mentors and their sympathizers within the pragmatic "internationalist" faction of the Brazilian establishment.

In the ratification ceremony held at the headquarters of the Organization to Ban Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Opanal), witnessed by Mexican Foreign Minister Manuel Tello Macís and Opanal Secretary General Enrique Roman, Amorim presented the "politically correct" line: "This is a historic moment for Brazil and for Latin America. As 150 million Brazilians join the Tlatelolco Treaty, Latin America effectively becomes the first inhabited zone to totally abandon nuclear weapons. The pioneering initiative of those who came before us is today an example for the world," he said, adding that the end of the Cold War made the world's existing atomic arsenals "irrational and obsolete."

Mexico's Tello Macís answered Amorim in the same spirit: "The purpose that unites us holds great meaning for the Mexican government in its capacity as depository of the treaty, as well as for the international community as a whole, which is today witness to this historic step." Tello

Macís stressed that the signator countries commit themselves to "not fabricating, receiving, storing, or testing nuclear weapons or mechanisms for nuclear launchings."

The Brazilian initiative received the immediate and enthusiastic approval of the United States. The same day that Amorim announced ratification of the treaty, President Bill Clinton sent a letter of congratulations to his Brazilian counterpart Itamar Franco: "We sincerely appreciate your successful efforts to ratify and apply both the Tlatelolco Treaty and the Quadripartite Safeguard Agreement [among Brazil, Argentina, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting of Nuclear Materials, and the International Atomic Energy Organization]. Brazil's leadership is a major contribution to banishing the threat of atomic weapons forever from Latin America."

The U.S. State Department also sent an official note of congratulations to the Brazilian government. "With this decision, the country moves from the arena of good intentions to the concrete commitment not to build atomic weapons. And this places us in a better position to transfer more sophisticated equipment, and even to collaborate with the country on atomic energy matters," said one State Department official to the daily *O Globo* on June 1.

Inside Brazil, the decision was applauded by leading establishment mouthpieces. On June 1, the daily *O Estado de São Paulo* editorialized that "there can no longer be any doubt of

Brazil's trustworthiness in the field of non-proliferation." The editorial nonetheless anticipates that the promoters of the Tlatelolco Treaty will not be content with Brazil's display of good behavior, but will demand similar compliance with the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR); should Brazil fail to do so, declares the newspaper, "the flow of technology in this important area will not be regularized, to Brazil's detriment."

That same day, *Jornal de Brasil* also published an editorial emphasizing that "Brazil could not proceed otherwise, at a moment when the United States and Russia agree that their long-range missiles will no longer point at each others' cities and targets." The editorial concludes that these agreements indicate that "the 21st century has practically already begun."

Such wishful thinking aside, reality shows that through the Tlatelolco Treaty, the mentors of the "new world order" won what Brazil's nationalist sectors had succeeded in excluding from the Quadripartite Agreement, namely the mechanism of "challenge inspections" by the International Atomic Energy Agency of Brazil's nuclear installations. A modification of Article 16 of the original treaty text now allows such inspections to be requested by any country "suspicious" of Brazil's nuclear activities.

Reactions of the Brazilian nuclear sector to the government's decision were quite different. Technicians interviewed by *EIR* described the move as "disastrous" and "shameful." One former president of the National Nuclear Energy Commission told the *Jornal do Comercio* June 7 that Brazil had been heavily pressured to join the treaty, and that the decision "is a step backwards for the nuclear sector."