

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1720
9 October 2003

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH and
SPANISH

**LETTER DATED 1 OCTOBER 2003 FROM THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA ADDRESSED TO
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE
TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF THE PRESS STATEMENT
FROM THE EIGHTEENTH PLENARY MEETING OF THE
MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME (MTCR),
HELD AT BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINE REPUBLIC,
FROM 19 TO 26 SEPTEMBER 2003**

I have the honour to forward herewith the text of the press statement from the eighteenth plenary meeting of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), held at Buenos Aires, Argentine Republic, from 19 to 26 September 2003.

I would be grateful if this letter and the attachment to it could be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to all member States of the Conference, as well as to the non-member States participating in the work of the Conference.

(Signed): Alfredo V. Chiaradia
Ambassador and
Permanent Representative

Annex

PRESS STATEMENT

PLENARY MEETING OF THE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 19-26 September 2003

The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) held its 18th Plenary Meeting in Buenos Aires from 19 to 26 September 2003 in order to review its activities and further strengthen the efforts to prevent missile proliferation.

The meeting, which marked the start of the Argentinean chairmanship, was officially opened by Ambassador Jorge E. Taiana, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, and Ambassador Carlos Sersale di Cerisano was elected new Chairman.

The Plenary congratulated the efforts and the excellent job carried out by the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Mariusz Handzlik.

The MTCR was established in 1987 with the aim of controlling export of missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, as well as related equipment and technology. The Regime, which is formed by 33 countries*, is an important international arrangement dealing with non proliferation of missile technology, whose members contribute, with their coordinated efforts, to reduce this global threat.

MTCR partners reaffirmed their commitment to control exports in order to prevent the proliferation of delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction. They recognised that this risk remained a major concern for both global and regional security. They had during the Plenary a deep discussion on possible new, qualitative responses to face the new proliferation threats. Confidence and security building measures were also addressed in the discussions.

Export controls, strict implementation and enforcement, as well as the strengthening and update of such controls to respond to technological development in the evolving security environment, have been identified as important priorities for actions to address that threat.

In view of growing concern over the continuing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and of the fact that not only states but also terrorist groups and individuals may acquire such weapons, the Partner countries of the MTCR stressed the need to give the necessary impetus to actions to combat terrorism. The MTCR will continue to contribute to the fight against terrorism by limiting the risk of controlled items and their technology falling into the hands of terrorist groups and individuals and calls upon all states to take similar action.

* Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.

In order to give continued high priority attention to export control issues, Partners decided to include national "catch-all" requirements in the Guidelines of the Regime. Such controls would provide a legal basis to control the export of items that are not on a control list, when such items are destined for missile programs.

Partners agreed to take steps to develop national procedures to subject MTCR-controlled intangible technology transfers to export controls, in accordance with their national legislation.

The Argentinean Chair was mandated to pursue a number of contacts with non - Partners in order to encourage voluntary adherence to the MTCR Guidelines and heightened awareness of missile proliferation risks. The Chair's activities will include workshops and seminars stressing export controls issues, related legislation, transshipment and enforcement.

Partners noted with satisfaction the readiness of several non-member states to abide by MTCR Guidelines, as part of their national export control regimes. They also called on all other states proceeding on tracking missile relevant technology to do likewise. They looked forward to enhanced cooperation with such states.

Based on applications from several states the question of membership was actively considered.

Finally, the Plenary welcomed the offer of the Republic of Korea to host the next Plenary Meeting in the fall of 2004 and to serve as Chair of the MTCR for the subsequent year.

Further information on the MTCR and its Guidelines can be found on the web site www.mtc.info

September 29th, 2003

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