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# Conference on Disarmament

19 January 2010

English

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## Final record of the one thousand one hundred and sixty-third plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 19 January 2010, at 10.15 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Md. Abdul Hannan.....(Bangladesh)

**The President:** I declare open the 1163rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the beginning of this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, we have once again been reminded of the fragility of the world we live in. On behalf of the Conference I would like to offer my condolences to the families and friends of all those who have lost their lives in the catastrophic earthquake that hit Haiti last week. I also offer my sympathy to the families and colleagues of the many United Nations staff members who died.

May I ask you to observe a minute of silence in memory of all the victims.

*A minute of silence was observed.*

**The President:** Before we begin our activities for the day, I would like to bid a belated farewell to our colleagues who have left the Conference since we adjourned in September last year, namely, Ambassador Millar of Australia, Ambassador Mindua Kesia-Mbe of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ambassador Yimer of Ethiopia, Ambassador Puja of Indonesia, Ambassador O'Ceallaigh of Ireland, Ambassador Gómez-Oliver of Mexico, Ambassador Boldbaatar of Mongolia, Ambassador Mtshali of South Africa and Ambassador Streuli of Switzerland. On behalf of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to express to the respective delegations our deep appreciation for their many valuable contributions to the work of the Conference during their tenure, as well as our sincere wishes for success and satisfaction in their new assignments.

Allow me also to extend a cordial welcome to new colleagues who have assumed their responsibilities as representatives of their Governments to the Conference, namely, Ambassador Percaya of Indonesia, Ambassador Corr of Ireland, Ambassador Hernández Basave of Mexico, Ambassador Orgil of Mongolia, Ambassador Rosocha of Slovakia, Ambassador Gil Catalina of Spain, Ambassador Senewiratne of Sri Lanka and Ambassador Lauber of Switzerland. I would like to take this opportunity to assure them of our full cooperation and support in their new assignments.

I would now like to make some opening remarks.

At the outset, on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh and on my own behalf, I would like to express my sincere condolences at the tragic loss of lives and the destruction of property in Haiti caused by the catastrophic earthquake. Our thoughts and prayers are with the millions of survivors, many of whom have lost their dear ones. We are also saddened by the loss of United Nations personnel, who lost their lives while serving the cause of peace and development. As a country that contributed troops and police personnel to the United Nations peacebuilding operation in Haiti, we feel the pain of losing compatriots. We express solidarity with them and with the people of Haiti at this trying time.

Bangladesh is honoured to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. It is a body that has delivered significant results in the past. The Conference has not embarked on any substantive negotiations over the last 12 years. Its potential has remained unutilized, but we believe that the potential is very much there. Despite comments to the contrary, the Conference remains the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations where all the nuclear countries are members. Bangladesh is keen to see the Conference on Disarmament get back to work. We have every confidence that, given the right political will and with enough flexibility and accommodation, members can arrive at a consensus to begin substantive work in the Conference. As President, I shall do everything possible to facilitate such a consensus at the earliest opportunity.

Our eagerness to see progress in the Conference is a reflection of the importance the Government of Bangladesh attaches to general and complete disarmament. We are

convinced that armaments are not a part of the solution that we seek for attaining a secure and peaceful world. We therefore strongly support in principle disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives aimed at reaching a nuclear-weapon-free world.

As we begin this year's session, I am conscious of the expectations, the concerns and the frustrations that surround the Conference on Disarmament. Last year, the Conference had a breakthrough when it reached consensus on a programme of work during the Algerian presidency. This agreement created a positive momentum and generated a lot of hope that the Conference would soon resume substantive work. This, as you are aware, was not possible in 2009, despite sincere efforts by the successive presidencies.

We now begin a fresh year, a new session, but our objective for this year remains essentially the same. The Conference should begin substantive work at the earliest opportunity. My job as the first President of the 2010 session is to provide a smooth and steady start, a good start that will facilitate an early consensus. In doing that we shall engage with members in good faith and in an open, transparent and inclusive manner.

As we started our preparations, our first objective was to have a clear understanding on where delegations stand. In response to the request made to the current and incoming presidents by the Conference in 2009 and reiterated by the General Assembly, Ambassador Christian Strohal of Austria and I held consultations in different formats during the intersessional period with delegations. Here, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to him and his team for their support and advice. I believe that the organization of informal consultations under the leadership of Ambassador Strohal on 9 December 2009 was of particular significance in providing a clear understanding of the positions held by delegations. As the incoming President, I have reached out as widely as possible to hear their views. We have tried to fully understand the remaining concerns delegations might have. As we continue to meet delegations we are enriched by their suggestions and observations. I believe that this will help us in making a well-informed recommendation to the Conference in due course. I plan to make a first report on this early next week.

We are having close consultations among the six presidents (the P-6) of the 2010 session. I have been discussing all relevant issues with them and seeking their positions. I must recognize the sense of solidarity and cooperation that prevails among us. We are all committed to deliver, and this is our strength.

I will now conclude my opening remarks and take up the remaining matters that we should address today.

As you may be aware, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was planning to address the Conference personally on 27 January, but he has informed us that, in light of the situation in Haiti, he will remain in New York to oversee the coordination of the humanitarian assistance. The Secretary-General has sent us a video message, which we are now going to see.

**Mr. Ban Ki-moon** (Secretary-General of the United Nations): It is a pleasure to greet the members of the Conference on Disarmament as it begins its 2010 session. I had planned to be with you personally, but the tragedy in Haiti has made that difficult. Thank you for your understanding.

I believe that 2010 can be a historic year for progress in disarmament and non-proliferation. My hope is based not on wishful thinking, but on real opportunities for concrete action. We have seen critical support from leaders of key nuclear-weapon States, the renewed engagement of the Security Council and ongoing initiatives from the international community, NGOs and civil society. I urge the Conference to recognize the importance of this moment and to demonstrate to the world its continuing relevance, especially in strengthening the rule of law in the field of disarmament.

Last year, you broke a longstanding gridlock by adopting a programme of work. This year, I urge you to put aside differences and focus on the global interest – in particular, the compelling need for binding legal norms and the vital role of the Conference on Disarmament in building them. I hope you will agree on a work programme as soon as possible, hopefully during this first session. This would send a positive signal and help build momentum in the run-up to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and beyond.

For my part, disarmament and non-proliferation will remain a priority. I will continue to build support for my action plan and do everything in my power to advance our efforts towards a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

Please accept my best wishes for the success of your work.

**The President:** I would like to convey our sincerest thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his video message. I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament for his remarks.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze** (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): I would like to continue what the Secretary-General has said, as his personal representative to this Conference, not as the Secretary-General of the Conference.

It is a pleasure to address the Conference on Disarmament at the start of 2010. I regret to have to inform you that, as you heard in the message, the Secretary-General will not be able to be here with us at this session, as he is personally coordinating international relief efforts in the wake of the tragedy in Haiti. Allow me as Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative to say a few words as we begin our new session at such a critical juncture.

The past year witnessed growing momentum for multilateral disarmament, with the successful conclusion of the May NPT Preparatory Committee and, most importantly, the adoption by the Conference on Disarmament of a programme of work that laid the foundation for substantive work. With the adoption of resolution 1887 at the historic summit in September 2009, the Security Council pronounced its unanimous and unprecedented support for the vision of a world without nuclear weapons. Significantly, the Security Council called upon the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The Security Council welcomed the adoption by the Conference of a programme of work in 2009 and requested all Member States to cooperate in guiding the Conference to an early commencement of substantive work, i.e. negotiations.

For its part, the General Assembly adopted, by consensus, a resolution on the Conference on Disarmament, which requested all members of the Conference to cooperate with its presidents to achieve the early commencement of substantive work in its 2010 session. The Assembly also adopted, by consensus, the resolution on a fissile material cut-off treaty for the first time in five years. So I appeal to you to heed the appeals of the General Assembly and the Security Council, and that means of the international community. Remember the responsibility you have to fulfil the mandate that you have been given by the Security Council, the General Assembly and the international community as a whole.

Significant endeavours outside the Conference on Disarmament, with bilateral efforts on the part of the United States and the Russian Federation to agree on a treaty to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals, together with important initiatives on the part of other Governments and civil society, have helped to sustain and consolidate the momentum. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear proliferation remain among the Secretary-

General's top priorities. Less than two weeks ago, he met with the executive heads of disarmament-related organizations and his disarmament advisers — by the way it was the first ever such meeting — as part of his concerted efforts to promote this critical agenda through innovative partnership and synergy.

As you know, the Secretary-General has proposed a five-point action plan to eliminate nuclear weapons, which highlights his support for the immediate start of negotiations here in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty. He is looking to take forward this effort throughout 2010.

Expectations for the Conference on Disarmament to resume substantive work have been growing with the momentum. I believe that guided by the leadership of the 2010 presidents, and supported by your efforts, the Conference should agree on a programme of work as soon as possible to resume its substantive work. This is the time to fulfil the expectations and the hopes that are placed in this body by the international community.

**The President:** Thank you, Mr. Ordzhonikidze.

I now intend to suspend the plenary meetings and to invite the Conference to consider at an informal meeting which will follow immediately the requests received from States not members of the Conference to participate in our work during the session, as contained in document CD/WP.555, as well as the draft agenda for the 2010 session, as contained in document CD/WP.556. You should have those documents in front of you. Thereafter we shall resume the plenary meeting in order to formalize the agreements we reach in the informal plenary. I would like to remind you that the informal meeting is open to member States of the Conference only.

*The meeting was suspended at 10.35 a.m. and resumed at 11 a.m.*

**The President:** The 1163rd plenary meeting is resumed.

I should now like the Conference to take a decision on the requests for participation in our work from States not members of the Conference. These requests are contained in document CD/WP.555, and have been received from the following States: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, the Holy See, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Oman, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Slovenia, Thailand and Uruguay.

May I take it that the Conference decides to invite these States to participate in our work in accordance with the rules of procedure?

*It was so decided.*

Let us take a brief pause without adjourning to allow the observers to be seated in their designated places. We welcome them.

At the informal plenary meeting that we have just concluded, we held an exchange of views on the agenda of the Conference for the 2010 session. There was a specific request at the informal consultation we have just had from the representative of Pakistan to take the floor in the plenary before the adoption of the draft agenda. In light of that, I would like to give the floor to Ambassador Zamir Akram to make his contribution.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Mr. President, Pakistan has close and fraternal relations with Bangladesh. These relations manifest our strong friendship. It is, therefore, a great pleasure to see you presiding over the opening plenary of the 2010 session of the Conference on Disarmament. I am confident that your professionalism and diplomatic skills will help us steer the work of the Conference in a smooth and productive manner. Your

outreach to the Conference membership and wide-ranging consultations to prepare for your four-week term as President of the Conference are indeed commendable. Your work will guide the incoming presidents. We have full trust in your leadership and assure you of our cooperation in discharging your duties as President.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the hard work and dedicated efforts of the outgoing President, Ambassador Christian Strohal of Austria, and his colleagues.

I will restrict my statement today to the issue of the agenda and some other organizational matters. A comprehensive statement on substantive issues will be made in the coming weeks.

Mr. President, as the first President of the 2010 session, you have the most important responsibility of laying the foundation of our work for the whole year. In accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference, the first and foremost task before us is to approve the agenda of the Conference for the 2010 session. The agenda will guide the Conference throughout the session.

The approval of the agenda should not be treated as a mere formality. Rather, as members of the Conference on Disarmament, we need to reflect on its importance. We should discuss in an open and transparent manner what to include in the agenda for our work this year. We should not rush into a decision on the adoption of the agenda. Rather, a frank and full exchange of views on the agenda will help us to develop a programme of work, and avoid any confusion during the course of the year and at the time of the adoption of the annual report of the Conference.

Last year's General Assembly resolution 64/42, presented by Pakistan, called for the urgent consideration of the issues involved in conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels. The resolution requested the Conference on Disarmament to consider the formulation of principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control. We urge the Conference to act on this request, include this issue in the agenda and report to the General Assembly in September on the work done during the 2010 session.

There is also the important issue of missiles. At present, there is no global regime on missiles. The international arms control architecture is incomplete without such a regime. The international community is witnessing a growing competition in missile technology. The Conference on Disarmament must address this issue. Therefore, we propose to include the issue of "Missiles in all their aspects" in the agenda of the Conference.

In our view, the issues of conventional arms control at regional levels and missiles are now pressing problems for the international community. We therefore feel that the Conference on Disarmament should not remain oblivious to the negative implications of these weapons systems on international security and stability. We invite members of the Conference to consider these proposals and express their views in the plenary. This will enable us to take an informed decision on the agenda of the Conference for the 2010 session.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador Akram, for your kind words. You have all heard that the delegation of Pakistan has just proposed the inclusion of two additional items in the draft agenda. Are there any reactions to that proposal?

**Mr. Grinius (Canada):** Mr. President, I had intended to take the floor a little bit later and will do so, but just as a quick personal reaction to Pakistan's proposal in adding another item to the agenda, of course my delegation will look at the proposal very, very carefully and we will get back to you in a more formal sense. I suspect that such a proposal will be

the subject of considerable deliberations informally, in the corridors, before we come to some sort of outcome.

Canada of course was prepared to adopt the current agenda as it is only because I believe that there are other greater challenges facing the Conference on Disarmament this year, and there is a need to get on with very substantial work and, hopefully, negotiations. What happens, of course, is that when one opens up the agenda, the implications are that there may be other additions. I would suggest that although my delegation would actually agree to adopting the agenda right now, there are some elements on the agenda now which, quite frankly, we believe are not particularly relevant to arms control reality these days, so what we are doing actually is opening up a potential Pandora's box.

**The President:** I give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze** (Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General): It has been a tradition for many years that the agenda is adopted at the first meeting of the session, and in fact the agenda is not a document that can be looked at as ideal. It probably reflects the positions of different countries that would like to pick up something from the agenda or to discuss something under the agenda items. In any case, for good or bad, we do have a document, and what is important is that we have this document. If you read it carefully, all the items on the agenda are very broad, whether they concern nuclear problems or conventional problems, whether they concern missiles or any other subject. I would like to propose to you — it is of course for you to decide — that you think in terms of adopting the agenda now, while giving the possibility to the Ambassador of Pakistan to raise the two issues he mentioned under the current agenda items, and giving any other delegation the chance to raise any other issue under the current agenda items too, because if we do not adopt the agenda at the very beginning we are actually taking a step backwards, even in comparison with previous years. It would be a shame for the Conference not to adopt its agenda on the first day, especially given what we are expected to do and what the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General are expecting us, the Conference, to do, and actually what the international community is expecting us to do. I would appeal to you to look at this matter from that point of view.

**The President:** Thank you, Mr. Ordzhonikidze. Are there any suggestions?

**Mr. de Macedo Soares** (Brazil): Mr. President, I also plan to address the substantive positions of my country in subsequent sessions, but I think that the point that was brought to our attention merits a reaction. First of all, however, I would like you to know that it is with great pleasure and confidence that my delegation sees you presiding over the Conference on Disarmament.

I think two points were raised by the previous two speakers that are especially important. One was just raised by the Secretary-General of the Conference, and I thank him for having taken the floor to remind us of the meaning of the agenda and the adoption of the agenda for the work of the Conference. Moreover, we know the expectations of the highest bodies in the United Nations under the Charter — the General Assembly and the Security Council — for the work of the Conference.

In this connection I have to say that the country that I represent is committed to the continuation of the work of the Conference on Disarmament, with the ultimate goal of nuclear and general disarmament through negotiations. In that sense I think that we should remind ourselves that we are in this broader context, not isolated in a specific body. At least, that is the feeling of my delegation.

The second point is that the agenda is not a mere formality, but it is a formal document. What is important is the adoption of a programme of work and, more than that, the actual beginning of negotiations within this Conference. Last year, for instance, we were able to adopt a programme of work under the same kind of agenda — or perhaps the very same agenda — that we have in front of us, so we know that the adoption of such an agenda does not prevent us from adopting a programme of work. In that case — and I agree with the Secretary-General — it is perhaps not necessary to amend this draft agenda, and we can consider possibilities with the scope of this document.

My last point is a point of clarification of the situation. I do not know if the representative of Pakistan intends to formalize in a document the proposal to amend this working paper, CD/WP.556. In any case, the Conference would have to have time to consult and discuss the matter.

**The President:** Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. Does any other delegation wish to speak? I give the floor to Ambassador Suda of Japan.

**Mr. Suda (Japan):** Mr. President, on this particular matter of the draft agenda, I would like to strongly support the views of the Secretary-General of the Conference. I think it is very simple. It is not the time for us to add any additional items to the agenda that we have followed in past years. It is the time for us to work substantially on those items which have been on the agenda over the years. We should concentrate on how to start substantive work on the various important items we have agreed in the past years.

As other previous speakers have said, I think there is not much of a problem in having those issues of concern to certain countries, in particular Pakistan, handled and discussed under the current agenda items. I would like to join previous speakers in supporting the present draft agenda.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador. I now give the floor to Ambassador Akram of Pakistan.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Mr. President, I have listened very carefully to the Secretary-General of the Conference and the distinguished colleagues who spoke before me. First of all, let me say that with the highest regard that we have for the Secretary-General, the fact remains that every sovereign State represented in this Conference has the right to express its views on what the agenda should be and what our programme of work ought to be. It is in line with that right that my delegation has made a suggestion. We sincerely believe that the Conference on Disarmament does not and should not act in a vacuum. It should be responsive to realities on the ground and developments around the world. We cannot remain in a hidebound situation where the agenda is frozen in time for all time to come. That is precisely why we have made a suggestion. My sincere hope is that you Sir, as President, will take our suggestions on board and consult with the members of the Conference, either formally or informally. That is a decision for you to take. I would also be very happy to hear more views on this proposal from other members of the Conference, either in formal or informal sessions.

It is not our intention to create an obstacle, but it is also not our intention to remain oblivious to what is happening around us and to decisions of the United Nations. Therefore, I would respectfully call on you to engage with all colleagues and all members of the Conference on these two proposals and to take an appropriate decision.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador Akram. I give the floor to the representative of India.

**Mr. Varma (India):** Mr. President, we of course look forward to an opportunity when my delegation can make a formal plenary statement to welcome and to congratulate you, but let me say how pleased we are to see Bangladesh, a fellow South-Asian country



with which we have the most friendly and excellent relations, as exemplified by the most recent visit of your Prime Minister to our country, chairing this Conference. We would also like to thank you for the very diligent efforts that you undertook during the intersessional period, along with the distinguished Ambassador of Austria, to see how we can commence the 2010 annual session in the best manner possible. We of course pledge to you our continued support to achieve that objective.

We have no difficulty in agreeing to the draft agenda as contained in CD/WP.556, for the following reasons. This draft agenda is derived from the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. India, along with a large number of other countries, attaches the highest priority to the principles and objectives contained in the final document of that special session. This is an agenda of continuing relevance and validity, largely on account of the fact that the aims of most of the agenda items remain unfulfilled, including the highest priority in India's view, that of nuclear disarmament. Secondly, we support the draft agenda because it has not prevented us from undertaking work in the past, and we do not believe that it should in the present circumstances create any obstacles to what the Conference has by general consent seen as the priority issues for the next steps that we need to take, including the decision and programme of work that we adopted by consensus in 2009. India is therefore prepared to accept the draft agenda as it is, along with the presidential statement that was adopted last year, which adequately protects the interests of all delegations.

Reference has been made in formal plenary to General Assembly resolution 64/42, entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels". This calls on the Conference on Disarmament to consider the formulation of principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control. India believes that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the vocation of negotiating disarmament instruments of global applications. Therefore India cast a negative vote on this resolution.

We also recall that the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1993 adopted by consensus guidelines and recommendations for regional disarmament. We feel therefore that there is no need for the Conference on Disarmament to engage itself in formulating principles on the same subject at a time when it has several other priority issues on its agenda.

India believes that the security concerns of States often extend beyond narrowly defined regions. Consequently, the idea contained in the resolution, the idea of the preservation of a balance in defence capabilities in the regional or subregional context, is both unrealistic and unacceptable to India.

Therefore, India would oppose the consideration of this item in the deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament in whatever form, and we want to make that clear as this issue has been raised in a formal plenary. We would like to put on record our opposition to this particular aspect.

With regard to the second issue that has been raised, missiles in all their aspects, we do not consider it an easy subject to be dealt with in the Conference on Disarmament in the present context. However, there are aspects related to that issue which probably could be discussed. We leave it in your very capable hands to decide whether to take forward this discussion in a formal context or in informal consultations. Missiles in all their aspects are an issue on which there are no universally accepted principles. There is no legal regime governing the possession or use of missiles. But this is an issue that could be considered if there is agreement on how it can be dealt with in the Conference on Disarmament.

Let me emphasize very clearly that at the present moment there is no agreement on this by all members of the Conference on Disarmament. We recall that the relevant

resolutions in the General Assembly have been fractured resolutions, which have been voted upon both positively and negatively by delegations. So we leave it in your hands to see if you wish to take forward this particular aspect, in a formal context; if there is a willingness to discuss this in an informal context, India would be happy to make its contributions.

**The President:** I thank the representative of India. Are there any other comments? If not, as noted from the floor, because of the proposal made by the delegation of Pakistan, delegations will need time to consider the issue further, perhaps in an informal setting. A number of delegations are also clearly ready to adopt the draft agenda as presented. To move forward, let me schedule an informal consultation on this matter and convey the date and time to you. I will also consult the relevant delegations to find out how we can address this issue to the satisfaction of all delegations.

Now I would like to turn to the list of speakers of today. The first speaker on my list is the representative of Canada.

**Mr. Grinius** (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, allow me first of all, on this occasion of the Conference on Disarmament's first meeting in 2010, to congratulate you on assuming your duties, and to assure you that you have the full support of the Canadian delegation. Canada would also like to thank all the delegations at the Conference for their countries' support in the course of the work of the First Committee, in New York, on resolution 64/29 of the General Assembly entitled "*Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices*".

Our country is delighted that this resolution was adopted without a vote by the General Assembly on 2 December 2009. This resolution directly concerns the work to be undertaken here this year. In the first operative paragraph of the resolution, the General Assembly "urges the Conference on Disarmament to agree early in 2010 on a programme of work that includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

Last spring, in this same meeting room, the Conference adopted a programme of work contained in document CD/1864 that provided, inter alia, for the holding of such negotiations. The Canadian delegation calls for the adoption as soon as possible of a programme of work for 2010 that is like last year's, or closely similar to it.

Canada is delighted at the prospect of working together with all delegations so that the "immediate commencement of negotiations" can take place in early 2010, in accordance with the request the General Assembly has made to each of us.

(Mr. Grinius *continues in English*)

Separately, I note that we continue with the delineation between the formal and informal aspects of even this meeting and of course I know that we had to clear the gallery of our NGOs and observers when we went into our informal session. My delegation believes that all meetings of the Conference, be they called formal, informal, semi-formal — call them whatever you want — should be open to NGOs and observers. The restricted sessions ought to be those where we are actually negotiating on substantive material. Of course, those negotiating sessions should be held in camera. Frankly, the Conference on Disarmament needs all the support it can get from those concerned NGOs and observers who are with us, and I hope that that will eventually happen.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement. Our second speaker is Ambassador Alberto Dumont of Argentina.

**Mr. Dumont** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your accession to the presidency of this forum and to wish you great

success in your endeavours. You can count on the full cooperation of my delegation in that regard. I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to the other Ambassadors who will preside over the Conference in the year 2010.

Argentina has had the opportunity to assume the presidency of this forum and has seen how important it is for the P-6 to coordinate their efforts. We therefore encourage you to continue with this collective exercise.

Mr. President, I would first like to thank the Secretary-General for the message he has sent to the Conference members. Allow me to reiterate his words regarding the natural disaster and the humanitarian tragedy that Haiti is experiencing right now.

Mr. President, 2009 was without a doubt the most important session of the Conference on Disarmament in recent history. The adoption of a programme of work after 11 years has allowed us to believe once again in this forum's relevancy for the international community.

A political climate of renewal, the flexibility of various delegations, and the fitting way in which the former President of the Conference seized the opportunity have allowed us to provide a response to so many years of waiting for negotiations to start.

After 29 May, my colleagues of the P-6 and I worked tirelessly to implement decision CD/1864. Despite procedural difficulties, that decision continues to be the best expression of the common understanding among the members of the Conference and of the delicate balance that was achieved at that point.

Today, Mr. President, my delegation would like to focus exclusively on the issue of the programme of work for the current session. We find ourselves today in a situation that is substantially different from the opening meetings of previous sessions. Indeed, we now have a recent history on which to build our future, a history that speaks to us of the possibilities that still exist in this forum to achieve substantial results. Considering that decision CD/1864 was adopted by consensus only a few months ago, we believe that it should be the natural starting point from which to work in 2010.

Its impeccably articulated language allows for negotiations to begin immediately on a topic that is on the Conference's regular agenda while avoiding specific requirements for results on the other issues, thus facilitating an evaluation of any progress made.

Argentina remains committed to achieving the full renewal of negotiations on nuclear disarmament instruments. It will continue to demonstrate the flexibility it has shown in recent years with regard to initiating negotiations on those agenda items on which a consensus exists. We will continue to work as we have done in the past to identify the elements that can facilitate and accommodate the interests of all the Member States.

Mr. President, allow me finally to point out that, just as in the past 11 years, this first meeting of the year finds us congratulating ourselves for the efforts made in the past, regretting that they were not enough to show substantial results, and calling for the renewal of political commitment to this forum.

Unlike in recent years, however, 2009 was witness to more than just an "effort". It was a turning point. For this reason, today more than ever we must take advantage of this opportunity and realize our commitments to achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world through, among other things, the creation of new international instruments.

Last year we were able to find common ground on which to build this dream together, thereby saving the Conference from insignificance. We are confident that this will remain the goal of all the Member States in 2010.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Gómez Camacho.

**Mr. Gómez Camacho (Mexico)** (*spoke in Spanish*): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on the significant post you have assumed and to show the full support of my delegation for the success of your presidency. Your well-known diplomatic skills will be of invaluable help in renewing the work of this important forum.

At the same time, my delegation thanks Ambassador Christian Strohal for the excellent consensus-building work he accomplished in 2009.

This year we begin the fourth decade of the Conference on Disarmament with encouraging signs of which we should take full advantage. Firstly, in May 2009 we managed to agree on a programme of work for this forum, and secondly, in recent months there have been important initiatives that have helped to put disarmament, and nuclear disarmament in particular, in the forefront of the international agenda.

In September 2009, Mexico participated at the highest level in the Security Council summit on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It did so with the full conviction that the mere existence of nuclear weapons, as well as the build-up of such weapons and the emergence of States that possess them, represent a permanent threat to international peace and security.

For that reason, Mexico reiterated the fundamental importance of moving forward towards the goal of general and complete disarmament and the prompt elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is obvious that as long as there are States that possess nuclear weapons, other States, and even non-State actors, will also want them. The only absolute guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination.

Mexico is actively participating in the preparations for the Global Nuclear Security Summit to be held in Washington in March 2010. We believe that this important initiative should be incorporated as an integral part of the disarmament process.

We hope that the results of this meeting will be a positive contribution to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

My country is glad to hear that the United States of America and the Russian Federation have resumed negotiations to reduce their nuclear arsenals. The existence of nuclear weapons represents an equal danger for everyone.

Any effort towards their reduction and elimination is an issue that concerns and interests all of us. We harbour the hope that those bilateral negotiations will achieve concrete results.

We note with interest the decision of the United States of America to resume its legislative process to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. This is also a positive sign that contributes to creating a favourable environment in which to continue working to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Mr. President, in order to start our substantive work quickly, my delegation is willing to immediately take up again the central elements of decisions CD/1864, 1866 and 1867.

Mexico calls on all the members of this Conference to renew our political will to adopt our programme of work and begin implementing it as soon as possible.

Mexico urges this Conference to consider the issues under review on their own merits. We should not make unnecessary connections among them, or prejudge or assign one or some of them greater importance than the rest of the agenda.

As for the issue of nuclear disarmament, Mexico believes that a collective security system capable of establishing, maintaining and consolidating world peace and security should not be built on a philosophy of balanced deterrence. Nor can it be based on doctrines of strategic security that include the development and build-up of nuclear weapons.

Through the exchange of opinions and information on this issue, and by identifying possible disarmament measures, we can establish a basis for a systematic process of conceptualization leading towards the future negotiation of agreements on the issue. Possible disarmament measures could include broadening nuclear-free geographic zones and implementing the principles of irreversibility, transparency and verification.

On the subject of banning the production of fissile material, my delegation is ready to negotiate and explore, constructively and without preconceptions, various positions and legally binding instruments that govern current arsenals and that include an effective verification system.

The inclusion of verification measures in a possible treaty is essential to building trust among the parties, especially among non-nuclear weapon States, and to resolve the issue of inequity raised by various other States that have accepted the establishment of comprehensive safeguards systems with the International Atomic Energy Agency. It would also allow all parties to be on an equal footing, thus avoiding competitive disadvantages with regard to the development of civilian nuclear programmes.

One of the essential components of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime is that the nuclear-weapon States guarantee unequivocally that they will neither use nor threaten to use nuclear weapons against any State that has voluntarily and legally renounced the nuclear option.

My country believes that the statements from nuclear-weapon States referred to in Security Council resolution 984 (1995) are, in some cases, partial, conditional, and inadequate.

The same resolution recognizes the "legitimate interest" of the non-nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT that "further appropriate measures be undertaken to safeguard their security". A legally binding instrument would allow those objectives to be met.

As you will recall, within the framework of the NPT and its Review Conferences, my country submitted, both as an individual State party and as a member of the New Agenda Coalition, proposals for a protocol or agreement that would bridge this gap and would give legal certainty to the political commitments of the nuclear-weapon States.

My delegation trusts that we can address this issue and the legitimate concerns of those among us who do not possess nuclear weapons.

Mexico reiterates that it is important that the exploration and use of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, be carried out solely for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all nations, regardless of their level of economic or scientific development. Furthermore, it must be done without harming the security of any State, in keeping with the letter and spirit of the Treaty of 1967 on that issue.

Mexico is particularly concerned that the scientific and technological advancements achieved in the exploration and use of outer space will make it possible to deploy anti-missile defence systems or other military systems that could trigger an arms race.

The existing legal system is inadequate to guarantee the non-militarization of outer space, and it needs to be strengthened through measures to increase transparency, trust and security.

Mr. President, under your leadership the Mexican delegation will continue to participate actively and constructively in our work.

The agreements that this Conference has reached in the past are proof that, with political will, it is possible to forge consensus and to move forward in the delicate task of building a nuclear-weapon-free world.

We must restore the credibility and relevance of the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement. I give the floor to the Ambassador of Spain, Mr. Gil Catalina.

**Mr. Gil Catalina (Spain):** Mr. President, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries; the potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Iceland, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Since this is the first time I have taken the floor under your presidency, allow me first to congratulate you on the assumption of the post as the first President of the Conference on Disarmament during its 2010 session. I would like to assure you and the other presidents of the Conference during 2010 of the full support of the European Union for your efforts to guide the work of this Conference. The EU will decide later how to react to the new situation with regard to the adoption of the agenda.

The European Union strongly values the system of work of the P-6 presidencies. This system has contributed considerably to progress in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The European Union would like to see this model of close and continuous coordination among the presidents of the annual session continue.

On 29 May last year the Conference on Disarmament finally agreed, by consensus, on a programme of work, as contained in CD/1864. This was a true breakthrough after 12 years of stalemate within the Conference. This programme of work is a comprehensive and balanced document, which was the result of extensive consultations under the able leadership of the Algerian Presidency. All six presidencies in 2009 — Viet Nam, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Argentina, Australia and Austria — contributed to the success in adopting the programme of work and to the intensive efforts made to implement it. It was widely welcomed by the international community as a sign that the Conference on Disarmament was returning at last to serious work and negotiations.

Allow me to underline once again the importance the European Union attaches to the Conference on Disarmament as the sole permanent multilateral forum at the disposal of the international community for disarmament negotiations. The European Union actively supported and warmly welcomed the adoption of CD/1864 and stood ready to seize the momentum created by its adoption. We sincerely regret that this was not possible. Now we will actively work towards adopting, on the basis of the political consensus arrived at in 2009, the programme of work for 2010 and towards implementing it without delay.

The European Union attaches a clear priority to the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation, in the Conference on Disarmament, of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of document CD/1299 of 24 March 1995 and the mandate contained therein, as agreed in CD/1864. This is a means of strengthening disarmament and non-proliferation

and constitutes a priority that is ripe for negotiation. The European Union also remains ready to engage in substantive discussion on the other items included in CD/1864: practical steps for progressive and systematic efforts to reduce nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal of their elimination, including on approaches toward potential future work of multilateral character; all issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space; and effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as on other issues on the Conference on Disarmament agenda.

Building on the political consensus achieved during the 2009 session, the Conference on Disarmament should rapidly begin substantive negotiations and work. The year 2010 presents a new chance for the Conference to make a substantive contribution to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. The European Union remains committed to this task and expects similar commitment from all members of the Conference. The European Union therefore appeals to all delegations to show flexibility in order to make swift consensus possible around the programme of work for 2010.

The European Union wishes success to the P-6 of 2010: Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria and Cameroon. Like last year, we will continuously support your efforts as we work towards the early adoption and implementation of the programme of work.

Finally, the European Union would like to recall our long-standing attachment to the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament, in particular to include those member States of the European Union which are not yet members of the Conference but which have already submitted their formal request for membership.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement. I now give the floor to Ambassador Mikhail Khvostov of Belarus.

**Mr. Khvostov** (Belarus): Mr. President, first, the Group of Eastern European States joins you in expressing its most sincere condolences and deep sympathy to the people of Haiti with regard to the devastating earthquake causing severe consequences with a shocking number of victims among the civilian population and United Nations personnel. Second, the Group warmly welcomes you as the first President of the Conference on Disarmament for the 2010 session. The Group commends your efforts to hold consultations during the intersessional period and fully supports the activity aiming at reactivating the work of the Conference. Third, the Group would like to express its deep appreciation to the six presidents for 2009 for their tireless efforts to make progress. The Group hopes that the six presidents for 2010 will make a substantive contribution to the work of the Conference. Fourth, the Group appreciates very much the video message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed to the Conference on Disarmament, which articulates the Conference's role as the world's only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. We also appreciate Mr. Ordzhonikidze's remarks in his capacity as the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

The Group of Eastern European States will evaluate the new situation in connection with today's deliberations on the agenda and decide how to deal with it.

Let me continue in my national capacity. As one of your fellow presidents for 2010, I look forward to working constructively with you and all the other presidents for the 2010 session. We shall not at present be submitting a comprehensive statement on the work of the Conference. That will be done later. We are confident that the informal bureau of the 2010 presidents, designed to enable continuity in the Conference leadership, will demonstrate effective cooperation so as to move the Conference forward. However, we believe that it is not the P-6 but all States parties who should invest in the work of the Conference and demonstrate the necessary flexibility in a spirit of constructive

multilateralism to find an acceptable basis to achieve consensus on the agenda and the programme of work. My delegation expresses its complete readiness to assist you in achieving that aim.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement. I give the floor to my predecessor in the presidency of the Conference, Ambassador Strohal of Austria.

**Mr. Strohal** (Austria): Thank you, Mr. President, and at the outset allow me to congratulate you most warmly on the assumption of your functions. As we have been in close consultation over the past months, as outgoing and incoming presidents, this makes me even more than confident that you will preside over the resumption of our work with great engagement and circumspection and success. Please rest assured of my delegation's continued support for you and your P-6 colleagues throughout the year.

We fully endorse the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to add some more personal remarks regarding the resumption of our work. It has already been said that last year entered history as the year of a breakthrough in the programme of work, but also as a year of no subsequent substantive work. As delegates to the Conference on Disarmament, it is our shared and common duty to prevent this from happening again and to prevent the Conference from sliding back into deadlock.

In my concluding remarks at last year's session, I identified some elements which had proven useful for our work. Let me just mention them very briefly: firstly, close cooperation among the P-6; secondly, interactive and transparent consultations among all delegations, which constitutes a confidence-building measure; and thirdly, the increased engagement of civil society and stronger interaction with them – experts and NGOs, and also the media. We certainly appreciate in this context, and support, the suggestion just made by my Canadian colleague. It is our hope that these elements will continue to guide our work this year as well.

We are convinced of the need not only to maintain and strengthen the momentum of the Conference and to rise to the expectations of the General Assembly and the Security Council but also, more importantly, to meet the expectations created in the wider political environment, which has just been summarized very convincingly by our Mexican colleague. Therefore, we expect the Conference to adopt — and implement — a programme of work based on the consensus of 29 May 2009. In the meantime, my delegation would appreciate the opening of structured substantive work around the core issues of our agenda, as contained in CD/1864.

In concluding, I would like to wish this year's P-6 — Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria and Cameroon — the best of success.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador Strohal, for your statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of China.

**Mr. Wang Qun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. President, the Chinese delegation congratulates you on assuming your duties as the first President of the Conference on Disarmament for the 2010 session. Although today is only your first day as President, we have noticed that you and your team have already worked hard to conduct open and transparent informal negotiations, ensure smooth relations among all parties, and move the work of the Conference forward. We are highly appreciative of this, and we are confident that under your outstanding leadership, the Conference will make positive progress over the coming year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing President, the distinguished Ambassador of Austria, for the great amount of work he did during the past session. At the same time, we welcome our new colleagues from Indonesia, Ireland, Mexico, Mongolia, Slovakia, Spain and Sri Lanka; I believe that they will bring new energy and optimism to the Conference.



At present, the multilateral arms control, disarmament and counter-proliferation process is beginning to revive, and the multilateral arms control agenda is growing increasingly demanding. In addition to the Nuclear Security Summit and the eighth NPT Review Conference, multilateral review and negotiation processes are moving forward in the biological, chemical and conventional-weapons areas as well. China believes that by continuously adhering to a United-Nations-centred multilateralism, upholding the concept of seeking security through cooperation, and resolving relevant issues through dialogue and coordination as equals from start to finish, States will reinforce and strengthen the current multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation system, create a harmonious and stable international and regional security environment, and promote universal security for all.

Over the past year, the Conference completed a programme of work and made certain progress, which has been universally welcomed by the international community. China praises the work done by all States Members of the Conference to achieve this. Our next task is to find ways to maintain this momentum and motivate the Conference to get started on its substantive work in all areas as soon as possible. While numerous difficulties undeniably stand in the way of realizing this goal, China believes that if all members respect each other's concerns and treat each other sincerely and as equals, the difficulties facing us can definitely be overcome through open and transparent intergovernmental consultation, and getting started on our substantive work will follow on in due course. China supports the Conference arriving at a programme of work through consensus in consultations as soon as possible, and starting substantive work in all areas. We will continue to consult and cooperate with all parties constructively, and will work to achieve the aforementioned goals.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador. I now give the floor to Ambassador Djani of Indonesia.

**Mr. Djani (Indonesia):** Mr. President, at the outset allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I have followed attentively your active role and determination in commencing the activities of the Conference, which have given us a sense of optimism and high expectation that we will be able to move forward with our work in the weeks and months to come. We certainly rely on you and the other 2010 presidents, and on your vast diplomatic experience, to see progress. In this instance, I would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Ambassador Christian Strohal and past presidents for their dedication and efforts to move forward and make progress.

Last year we managed to adopt a programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, and it is our hope that we will do the same this year, and also to advance it further in practice. By adopting the programme of work and the modalities for its implementation, we will be able to carry forward our common endeavours to a higher level in commencing substantive work after more than a decade of stalemate. Continued stagnation in the Conference signifies that we are insensitive to the current favourable international environment and the call of the international community, through the General Assembly and the Security Council. This certainly does not serve the purpose of enhancing our collective security.

Over the years the Conference on Disarmament has been entangled in a web of procedural debate. This is obviously reflected by the differing views expressed on whether to commence negotiations on one core issue first or to undertake simultaneous negotiations on all four core issues. Preconditions have also been echoed in the past on specific issues, such as in the case of negotiations on a fissile material treaty as to whether to include or exclude the issue of verification or not. Regardless of past history, we got a programme of work last year. We need to continue the momentum.

I would like to assert Indonesia's position that we would like to see progress on these important issues under the purview of the Conference on Disarmament. However, as has been mentioned by the Secretary-General, in line with our efforts in the field of disarmament, the 2010 NPT Review Conference is approaching. The Conference on Disarmament certainly can also provide impetus to that Review Conference. There is a strong indication that the Review Conference will devote much of its time to substantive deliberations, since most of the procedural issues were settled at the last meeting of the Preparatory Committee.

The Review Conference is expected to build on past agreements, namely, the 1995 and the 2000 agreements and beyond, so as to have balanced, concrete measures advancing the three pillars: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Review Conference is also expected to provide concrete results for global disarmament efforts and to provide further impetus to our work in the Conference on Disarmament and vice versa.

I should like to underline that achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the highest priority on our agenda. The longer we keep these weapons, the longer we continue to expose ourselves to their possible use and threat of use and the more likely we are to be at risk for various reasons – among others, from accidental use and terrorist acts.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Indonesia needs assurance against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. It is in this context that my delegation supports the initiative taken by you as President to get the Conference on Disarmament back on track. We acknowledge and commend the role played by you in facilitating and conducting informal consultations. I eagerly expect that those efforts will bear fruitful results.

In closing, I would also like to underline our expectation that in the future work of the Conference it will be necessary to accommodate the participation of NGOs, who are expected to present their views and out-of-the-box thinking that might be able to help us break away from this long impasse. The Conference on Disarmament is perhaps the only multilateral body that continues to exclude NGOs from most of its work. I certainly appreciate seeing people in the gallery.

I would like to end by assuring you of my delegation's full support for your efforts, and its readiness to cooperate closely with the presidency and other member States in moving toward consensus. Much is at stake and, for us, an impasse is not an option. The year 2010 is the year of the tiger in the Chinese calendar: I hope we can be as bold as a tiger and move the issue forward.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement, though I am not sure whether all of us can be tigers. We will certainly be hoping to make substantive progress in the Conference.

My list of those who wished to speak in the plenary is exhausted. Would anyone like to take the floor. I give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

**Ms. Adamson** (United Kingdom): Mr. President, we look forward to working with you.

I come here today, like many people, mourning some of our dear colleagues from the United Nations system, in particular, in my case, Mr. Luiz Carlos da Costa, Principal Deputy Special Representative to Haiti, Mr. Hédi Annabi, many others and many souls in Haiti who have been lost. I had the privilege of working with those people, particularly Hédi and Luiz, and what always characterized their work was their ability to find their way through insurmountable problems. So I hope that we will take that spirit forward even as we mourn them today.

I wanted to end this tribute on a positive note also. Many delegations have mentioned the importance of civil society, and I understand that this is the last week that Ms. Susi Schnyder of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is going to be working with us here in Geneva, so I did not want to let this moment pass without thanking her for keeping an eye on us, for helping us out with all her work through "Reaching Critical Will", and to say a great thanks to her and her colleagues. We look forward to working with her successor.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the United Kingdom, but I must say it is not only Ms. Schnyder who is keeping an eye on us: the whole world is looking at us. Would anyone else like to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case.

Before we conclude today's meeting, I would like to let you know that we shall be tentatively scheduling an informal meeting of the Conference on Thursday morning, 21 January, at 10 a.m. to discuss the draft agenda. Please look for the formal announcement which will be sent out. The secretariat will also send our invitations for presidential consultations to be held tomorrow afternoon. I will also be consulting the other presidents of the 2010 session prior to that.

This concludes our business for today. This meeting is adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.*