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# Conference on Disarmament

11 August 2011

English

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## Final record of the one thousand two hundred and thirty-second plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 11 August 2011, at 10.15 a.m.

*President:* Mr. So Se Pyong .....(Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

**The President:** I now declare open the 1232nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. Before we turn to our business today, allow me to seize this opportunity to bid a belated farewell to our distinguished colleague from South Africa, Ambassador Matjila, and wish him success in his new assignment.

Today the following delegations have requested to take the floor: the Ambassador of Japan, and the Ambassador of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 21. I give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Japan. You have the floor, Sir.

**Mr. Suda (Japan):** Thank you, Mr. President. This month of this year marks the sixty-sixth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In Japan, 6 August for Hiroshima and 9 August for Nagasaki are days for remembering the tragedies that befell these two cities and for renewing our determination to build a world free of nuclear weapons.

Sixty-six years is a long time. Over the years, the *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) and their friends and supporters have been doing everything possible to communicate to the world the devastating effects of the atomic bombings. However, they have been ageing, and an increasing number of them are passing away.

In an attempt to preserve and share the stories of the survivors, the Government of Japan asked the *hibakusha* in September of last year to talk to people around the world as Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons in order to pass on their experiences, particularly to the younger generations. Since then the Special Communicators have participated in 15 events around the world, including here in Geneva this past spring.

The sixth and ninth of August should not be only for remembrance, but also for taking stock. What progress has been made in our endeavours to come close to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons?

We can list several important and positive developments since the Prague speech in April 2009, including the productive achievements of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. However, aside from the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States of America on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (the new START Treaty) and some unilateral moves, we have seen very little concrete progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the past two years.

Who is responsible for such inactivity of many years, particularly for the past two years, which have betrayed the high expectations of the international community, including the people gathered at the Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemorations? I must say that we, all the members of the Conference on Disarmament, have to share a significant part of that responsibility.

We, the Conference members, all knew what we should do in order to assume our responsibility with regard to multilateral disarmament when we adopted document CD/1864 by consensus in May 2009. But immediately afterwards we became lost in a forest of mischievous arguments over the strict consensus rule, the overriding interests of an individual State, the lack of political will, and so on.

This august chamber is not a money-consuming discussion forum but is rather supposed to be the single multilateral negotiating body for disarmament treaties. The dysfunction of this body is now seriously affecting not just the Conference's credibility but the entire process of multilateral nuclear disarmament, which many of us cannot stand anymore.

My brain is built simply, so that the questions before us look very simple to me:

- First question: Whether we are willing to work together to make progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Certainly the answer should be yes.

- Second question: Whether we can achieve our goal in a short time and by an almighty treaty. Unfortunately, I think the answer is no.
- Third question: Whether we should immediately start negotiations on a possible concrete step forward and at the same time conduct substantive discussions on other important but more difficult issues, without excluding future negotiations. I hope our answer is yes.

Then why cannot we agree immediately to start substantive work on the basis of CD/1864?

If the Conference cannot give a simple answer to these simple questions before the end of this session, then Japan believes, as many others do, that we should seek other ways to start substantive work on nuclear disarmament, including the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador. I now give the floor to Ambassador Akram of Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the Group of 21.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Thank you, Mr. President. I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the Group of 21. As this is the first time the Group has taken the floor under your presidency, allow me to express our recognition for the skilful and decisive manner in which you, as a representative of a fellow member of the Group, are undertaking your work as President of the Conference. We are sure that your leadership will guide our work towards a fruitful path.

The Group of 21 expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his interest in the revitalization of multilateral work on disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Conference on Disarmament.

In this regard, the Group recalls the high-level meeting on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations held in New York on 24 September 2010 and the follow-up to the high-level meeting held in New York from 27 to 29 July 2011.

The Group underscores the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and reiterates its determination to promote multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

While reaffirming the importance of the Conference as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, as mandated by the first special session on disarmament, the Group expresses its disappointment that the Conference has not been able to undertake substantive work on its agenda. The Group takes note of various efforts to reach consensus on the Conference's programme of work, in particular the adoption of the draft decision contained in CD/1864 in 2009, and supports redoubling efforts to develop consensus on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work for 2011. The Group, therefore, bearing in mind the urgency of eliminating the threat posed by nuclear weapons to international security, reiterates its call for the Conference members to adopt and implement a balanced and comprehensive programme of work based on its agenda and dealing with, inter alia, the core issues, in accordance with the rules of procedure, and taking into consideration the security concerns of all States. The Group also calls on all members of the Conference to demonstrate flexibility to enable the Conference to resume its work.

The Group of 21 maintains that the Conference on Disarmament remains the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, and in that context the Group stresses that its highest priority continues to be nuclear disarmament.

In this regard, the Group continues to support the early commencement of negotiations within the Conference on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame, including a nuclear weapons convention. This convention will prohibit the possession, development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of nuclear weapons, leading to their ultimate destruction.

The Group reaffirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and reaffirms further that non-nuclear-weapon States should be effectively assured by nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group reaffirms the need for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States as a matter of high priority. It expresses concern that, despite long-standing requests by the non-nuclear-weapon States to receive such legally binding assurances, no tangible progress has been achieved in this regard. The Group further stresses the significance and positive security implications of the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances.

The Group believes in the importance of examining the possibility of expansion of the Conference membership.

The Group supports strengthening the Conference's interaction with civil society in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, in keeping with the nature of the Conference as a negotiating forum.

The Group believes that promoting the work of the United Nations disarmament machinery hinges on creating a suitable political environment, taking into account the security interests of all States, rather than changing the rules of procedure.

The Group recognizes that the first special session on disarmament put into place the disarmament machinery and that there is a need to address challenges to its effectiveness. At the same time, it is important to recall the achievement arrived at by the international community through the United Nations disarmament machinery. In this regard, the Group, while expressing its deep concern over the persistent lack of consensus on the multilateral disarmament agenda and machinery, reaffirms its support for the early convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Finally, the Group believes that any possible follow-up should be inclusive and member-State-driven, and should strengthen the role and work of the Conference, as mandated by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and efforts aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament.

The Group remains committed to advancing the work of the Conference and will deliver another statement on the issue of nuclear disarmament at our next plenary meeting.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation. You have the floor, Sir.

**Mr. Vasiliev** (Russian Federation): Thank you, Mr. President. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, since Russia is currently coordinating this group.

The Group attaches great importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, and we support the efforts that have been undertaken recently to revitalize the work of the Conference, both through the meeting of the General Assembly in New York and the meetings here in Geneva.

In this vein, we support the proposals, and we are ready to consider the proposal by Colombia on the establishment of a working group to consider revitalization of the work of

the Conference on Disarmament, though of course we believe that it is important to consider further this proposal and some elements of the proposed document.

**The President:** Thank you for your statement on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Slovakia. You have the floor, Sir.

**Mr. Rosocha** (Slovakia): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor. My delegation expressed its view on the situation in the Conference during the debate in the General Assembly on 29 July 2011. In this regard, I would only like to echo a few points related to the programme of work of this Conference.

Slovakia supports the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty which would address the issue of a fissile material ban. Indeed, we consider such a treaty as an indispensable step towards achieving our final goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, in the building of a future global security environment, we need to look beyond individual steps and focus on the final goal. We believe that we can achieve this goal through a framework of mutually reinforcing and guaranteed instruments.

Such an approach would furnish a perspective to, and thus progress in, multilateral disarmament negotiations. Binding ourselves to a single approach which, however high a standard it might provide, would not allow any flexibility might not take us forward. A programme of work tailored as a uniform to be worn at every occasion might not help us to begin to move towards nuclear disarmament.

We need an open mind and an approach which would stress the ultimate goal. It should also ensure progress in developing an appropriate framework of relevant instruments for its achievement.

The Conference has the responsibility to conduct multilateral disarmament negotiations. Slovakia stands ready to work with all delegations as well as civil society with a view to bringing the Conference's deadlock to an end and taking multilateral disarmament negotiations forward.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador. I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Ri Jang Gon** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Thank you, Mr. President. Let me first state that my delegation associates itself fully with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 21.

The Conference on Disarmament is going through one of the most important times since its inception. At this moment, the Conference members are called upon to strengthen their efforts in order to collectively overcome the current situation.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea believes that now is the time to renew the necessary political will of member States to accomplish the ultimate goals of this body. The Conference, as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, has the primary responsibility to negotiate and conclude multilateral treaties banning all threats from nuclear weapons.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is firmly convinced that multilateralism is the best vehicle for advancing the work of the Conference and that multilaterally adopted norms and agreements are the key to collective security. The Conference can, we believe, play a fundamental role in this regard. However, the Conference is not in a position to start a formal negotiation process here, due to the absence of a programme of work. As long as the lack of political will and mutual trust prevails, the Conference will continue to be faced with difficulties in reaching consensus on the programme of work.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a member of the group whose priority is nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament is the primary issue to be addressed in the field of disarmament. Disarmament can be said to have attained its goal only when the total elimination of the nuclear arsenal has been achieved. To this end, it will be urgently required to address the issue of removing all sorts of nuclear threats, putting an end to qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, destroying nuclear weapons deployed abroad, withdrawing the nuclear umbrella and providing negative security assurances, and so on.

My delegation cannot go along with any move to minimize this important aspect of nuclear disarmament. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in favour of starting substantive work through the adoption of the programme of work as early as possible. We are ready to work closely with all members in this regard.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to work together with all member delegations to find common ground in reaching consensus on the programme of work.

**The President:** Thank you. There are no more speakers on my list. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I see none. This concludes our business for today, but before adjourning I would like to give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who will make an announcement.

**Mr. Tokayev** (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): Thank you, Mr. President. Allow me to take this opportunity to inform you of the decision by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to strictly implement the word limits for reports, as specified by the General Assembly.

While these limits are applicable only to reports originating in the Secretariat, and documents emanating from Member States or intergovernmental bodies are subject only to a recommendation not to exceed 10,700 words, I wish to draw your attention to the Secretariat's restricted capacity, particularly with regard to translation, and the increasing financial constraints imposed on the Secretariat. Therefore, to ensure timely delivery of the end product, I kindly ask for your cooperation in ensuring that the length of reports is not excessive. The Secretariat remains available to assist Member States in this regard.

I also wish to remind members to regularly check their mailboxes on this floor.

**The President:** Thank you, Mr. Tokayev, for this information.

The representative of the Russian Federation has expressed his group's views on the proposal by Colombia for setting up a working group for revitalization of the Conference. So I will just remind the coordinators of this and other groups to give me the views of their groups by today, as I requested during my consultations with the coordinators of the groups.

The next plenary meeting will be held on Thursday, 18 August at 10 a.m. in this chamber. The meeting stands adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.*