

Conference on Disarmament

26 June 2012

English

Final record of the one thousand two hundred and sixty-fourth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 26 June 2012, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. Jean-Hugues Simon-Michel(France)

GE.12-63642 (E) 210114 270114



* 1 2 6 3 6 4 2 *

Please recycle 



The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call to order the 1264th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. I propose that we begin the session.

It is a great honour for France to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the next four weeks, although it is also a great responsibility. You are aware of the importance that my country attaches to this body and of our long-standing commitment to disarmament. My main concern will be to take every opportunity to enable the Conference to fulfil its mandate, which is to conduct negotiations on disarmament agreements or, failing that, to prepare the ground for such negotiations.

I should like to thank my predecessors for the work that they have done since the beginning of the year, which has enabled us to consider two draft programmes of work and to draw up a schedule of activities for discussions on substantive issues. We, together with the representatives of Ecuador, Egypt, and Ethiopia, my European colleague Kari Kahiluoto, and, of course, Hellmut Hoffmann, who will take over from me, are equally committed to preserving this body, the only one in which the main stakeholders in disarmament negotiations come together on a permanent basis and in which the security interests of all members are safeguarded under the rules of procedure.

We must not, however, conceal the difficult and, for many of us, increasingly untenable situation in which the Conference on Disarmament finds itself. Like all members, I had occasion to comment on this matter two weeks ago.

Today, we embark on the last third of our work for 2012. Although the year is well advanced, I still see it as my duty to pursue the consultations undertaken by my predecessors in order to determine whether a political space has opened up, since March, for the adoption of a programme of work, bearing in mind all the proposals that you may put forward and the latest programme of work which the Conference adopted – document CD/1864 of 2009. That document is the outcome of the first-rate work done by the delegation of Algeria and was used as the basis for the draft that was prepared by our colleague, Hisham Badr, in March. I will, of course, meet with the regional coordinators and with the coordinator of Observer States, and I am at the disposal of all colleagues who wish to meet with me.

For the moment, we have the schedule of activities adopted under the presidency of our colleague Minelik Getahun. As indicated in document CD/WP.571/Rev.1, entitled “Revised schedule of activities”, the subject of today’s plenary meeting is “Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament” and the “Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters”, with a particular focus on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Before we begin our discussions of this subject, I should like to know if any delegation wishes to make a statement on a different subject.

That does not seem to be the case. For this meeting, I will briefly recap, under my sole responsibility, the main elements that I took away from the meeting of 31 May 2012. I am providing this short introduction in order to make our debate as interactive as possible.

The previous meeting on a treaty that prohibits the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices generated extensive debate. Besides the presidency, 23 delegations, from all regional groups, delivered statements. Most expressed support for negotiations on this subject, although many stressed that a treaty was not an end in itself but a step along the path to nuclear disarmament.

Many representatives expressed their views about what the appropriate forum for negotiating such a treaty is; the Conference on Disarmament seems the natural forum,

although some countries did not rule out the possibility of exploring other options. Delegations were able to express their views on the subject of the negotiation mandate. The “Shannon mandate” was mentioned many times.

All the sections that such a treaty should include were discussed, including its scope, the definition of materials, the definition of production and the important issue of verification of implementation of a treaty, the subject of numerous proposals. Many delegations welcomed the meeting of scientific experts organized by Germany and the Netherlands.

The following delegations are currently on the list of speakers for today: Egypt, Cuba, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Japan, Australia and Canada. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. El-Atawy (Egypt): Mr. President, let me start by congratulating you on assuming the presidency. We wish you luck. Let me also avail myself of this opportunity to thank the outgoing President of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto, for his efforts during the Finnish Presidency and to wish him well in his future offices.

We appreciate the efforts of the Finnish Government, which is hosting the 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, to be attended by all States of the Middle East. We are also closely following the efforts of the able Finnish Facilitator, Under-Secretary Laajava. We call upon the conveners of the conference and all countries to support the successful convening of this conference and the full implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which was an essential element of the outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and of the basis on which the Treaty was indefinitely extended without a vote. We look to the conference to launch a process towards the full implementation of the 1995 Middle East resolution, which will result in the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The creation of such a zone is crucial for international peace and stability and would contribute to the goal of establishing a world free of nuclear weapons. Indeed, the establishment of such a zone has been the subject of many decisions and resolutions in the framework of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The challenge before us is thus to implement the decisions we take so as not to cast a long shadow on the very institutions that take such decisions.

The topic of discussion today is fissile material. This is an issue of crucial importance to Egypt. Indeed, I would recall here that the New Agenda Coalition, which Egypt belongs to, included, in the so-called “13 practical steps” that we adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, an affirmation of the necessity to commence negotiations on a fissile material treaty in the Conference on Disarmament, to be concluded within five years. Twelve years on, we still await the commencement of negotiations. However, let me remind you of the exact language that was included in the 13 practical steps. It says, and I quote, “The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives.”

Indeed, a treaty on fissile material cannot be considered separately from the overall objective of nuclear disarmament. In this context I would like to make the following

remarks. First let me fully align myself with the statement delivered on Tuesday, 19 June by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition. Nuclear disarmament remains one of Egypt's highest priorities, a priority which we have constantly promoted in all different international disarmament forums. We stress our concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and reaffirm that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons. International peace and security can never be attained while such weapons exist.

Only a few weeks ago, in Vienna, Egypt was one of 16 countries to deliver a statement on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any nuclear explosion. It was said that any use of nuclear weapons would have a long-lasting, devastating humanitarian impact on mankind, which clearly would be incompatible with international humanitarian law. Indeed, considering their devastating impact, no distinction can be made between the possession of nuclear weapons on the one hand and their deployment and use on the other. The diversity of States on whose behalf the statement was delivered and their positive track records in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament testify to a growing concern about the lack of progress towards the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

The debate on nuclear disarmament is sometimes presented as a choice between an incremental process of mutually reinforcing steps through a sequence of legally binding treaties — the so-called “step-by-step approach” — or, alternatively, reaching one overarching and comprehensive treaty, namely the “Big Bang” of a nuclear weapons convention.

As far as Egypt is concerned, either approach could work. What is essential in any approach is to deal with the issue of nuclear disarmament urgently, given the grave consequences of the continued presence of nuclear weapons. This can only be achieved through serious and effective action to meet obligations and commitments.

With regard to the step-by-step approach, Egypt has worked within existing forums to reach agreement on the required steps. In the context of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and as part of the New Agenda Coalition, Egypt was instrumental in securing the agreement reached at the 2000 Review Conference on concrete steps towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons – the so-called 13 practical steps. Those steps were agreed to under the chapeau of the unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States to achieve nuclear disarmament. While reaffirming the 2000 package, the 2010 NPT Review Conference again agreed to an action plan that contained 22 actions on nuclear disarmament. As a first step in the step-by-step approach, actions agreed to in the 2010 action plan and the 13 practical steps of 2000 must be promptly, fully and faithfully implemented. Furthermore, the full implementation by nuclear-weapon States of their obligations under article VI of the NPT and the achievement of universal adherence to the Treaty are required to follow through with the step-by-step approach.

It is in this context of a step-by-step approach that a treaty on fissile material is often presented as the next logical step. While not engaging in a debate on what could be the next logical step, it is clear that for such a treaty — the fissile material treaty — to contribute to the attainment of the objectives of nuclear disarmament, as pointed out in the 13 practical steps, or for it to be a meaningful link in the step-by-step chain, the scope of this treaty must clearly be to deal with all fissile material. It should deal with all related issues pertaining to fissile material and it should ban the production in the future of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices and address the issue of past production. In other words, it is essential to include the issue of stocks in any treaty we negotiate on fissile material. This is not to pre-empt the difficult negotiations that lie ahead. Indeed, we do recognize that many of the details of such a treaty will be subject to tedious and difficult negotiations to hammer out such details and any arrangements that need to be

included for any period of time. Rather, it is to ensure that countries embarking on negotiations on a treaty are in fact negotiating the same treaty rather than engaging in wishful thinking, talking across one another, or simply recognizing the right of any country to raise any issue (which in itself does not say much, as it is an inalienable sovereign right of any State to raise whatever subject it wishes), only for that country to be dismissed out of hand and not taken seriously.

In addition to the issue of the previously produced fissile material stocks, any treaty on fissile material will also have to address issues related to other elements of the scope of the treaty; definitions of fissile material and production facilities; effective verification procedures; implementation of the treaty, including international cooperation and assistance; and many other issues. Egypt would be eager to engage in negotiations on all those elements. However, as an overall direction and to deliver a truly effective instrument, we think that any treaty to be negotiated must be as detailed and as comprehensive as possible.

As the current Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Egypt also fully subscribes to the “Big Bang” approach. In this context, Egypt continues to associate itself with the Non-Aligned Movement working paper on the “Elements for a plan of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons”. The paper was submitted to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, as contained in document NPT/CONF.2010/WP.47. Egypt believes that negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame ending in 2025, including on a nuclear weapons convention, are necessary and should commence without further delay. Needless to say, such an approach will also cover the issue of fissile material.

Whether we end up following the step-by-step or the “Big Bang” approach, certain principles must be followed in our efforts for nuclear disarmament, namely, the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency. Yet, there is another principle that we also need to introduce, the principle of urgency. The world cannot wait indefinitely for nuclear disarmament while knowing that the continued existence of such weapons continues to pose a threat to humanity and to be a potential cause of nuclear proliferation.

During the Egyptian presidency, we presented a draft programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, as contained in document CD/1933/Rev.I, which included proposals on the establishment of a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament and of another to deal with a treaty on banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of CD/1299 of March 1995 and the mandate contained therein, while dealing with all related matters. Indeed, the establishment of those subsidiary bodies is timely, as we seek to move towards the shared vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. This aim is indeed the top priority for both the Non-Aligned Movement and the G21, to which Egypt belongs. Egypt renews its call to the Conference to adopt, without delay, a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that would include such subsidiary bodies. It strongly believes that CD/1933/Rev.I continues to be the best basis to seek consensus.

The continued possession by nuclear-weapon States of nuclear arsenals for deterrence purposes, the development of new generations of such weapons, the provision of assistance to States that are not parties to the Treaty, thus perpetuating their non-adherence, and the continued deployment of nuclear weapons in territories of non-nuclear States, through nuclear-sharing arrangements of military alliances, undermine efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament. The international community must, therefore, redouble its efforts to ensure that the nuclear-weapon States and countries outside the NPT take the requisite steps towards the speedy, total and final elimination of their nuclear weapons.

Finally, let me just react quickly to one other issue. I would like to recall rule 30 of the rules of procedure, which states, and I quote:

“The subject of statements made in plenary meetings will normally correspond to the topic then under discussion in accordance with the agreed programme of work. However, it is the right of any member State of the Conference to raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference at a plenary meeting and to have full opportunity of presenting its views on any subject which it may consider to merit attention.”

This rule is very clear and needs no further adoption of the rules of any other body.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the next speaker, the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Yusnier Romero Puentes (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We wish you success and assure you of our country's cooperation in the future work of this distinguished forum.

We are at a crucial stage for the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The subject of the prohibition of fissile material is closely linked to the stalemate at the Conference, although it is by no means the main cause.

We are concerned at the selective and politicized analysis of this subject and are aware that it is mostly the interests of Western countries that are in play.

Cuba supports the idea of commencing negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and effectively verifiable treaty which prohibits the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and which addresses the question of stocks.

In our view, the negotiation of a treaty on fissile material is a positive measure, but it will not be enough unless we define the subsequent steps to be taken in order to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Since the treaty must be a new step towards attainment of the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, it is vital that it should contain provisions not just on non-proliferation, but also on nuclear disarmament.

Cuba stands ready to negotiate, at the Conference on Disarmament, on a treaty for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons; a treaty that prohibits an arms race in outer space; and a treaty that offers effective security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, like Cuba. The Conference on Disarmament has the capacity to tackle these negotiations all at the same time; what is lacking is the political will to do so.

In the view of Cuba, a treaty on this subject should prohibit the production of any fissile material that can be used for military purposes and should call for the declaration and irreversible elimination, within an agreed time frame, of all fissile material stocks. It should also prohibit the future production of material for nuclear weapons or for other nuclear explosive devices.

At the present time, various States are looking at alternative formulas for negotiating disarmament treaties. Our position on this subject is well known: Cuba will not support selective negotiation on given subjects. We reaffirm that the Conference on Disarmament is the only legitimate forum for negotiations on this subject.

Given the urgent need to eliminate the threat that nuclear weapons pose to international security, we urge Member States to do their utmost to adopt and apply a

comprehensive and balanced programme of work which takes account of genuine disarmament priorities.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Cuba for his statement and now give the floor to the Ambassador of Germany.

Mr. Hoffmann (Germany): Mr. President, on behalf of the German delegation, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency and to assure you of our full support. I also wish to use this opportunity to bid farewell to colleagues who are leaving Geneva this summer, to thank them for their cooperation and their friendship, and to wish them and their families well for the future.

Following our schedule of activities, today's thematic topic is once again the issue of a "treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive nuclear devices", as the title of the relevant resolution of the United Nations General Assembly reads. The fact that the delegation of Germany has taken the floor many times on this very subject over the years — actually one should say over the decades — is an expression of the significance my country attaches to taking the important next step on the road to a world free of nuclear weapons, which is to deal with the essential material required for nuclear weapons, that is fissile material, in an international treaty.

Like, I think, the overwhelming majority of States in the world, we would have very much wished to have this matter settled a long time ago. It will naturally remain a matter of historical speculation, but, who knows what beneficial effects such a treaty might have had at the global and in particular at the regional level?

Unfortunately, it was not to be, because of the ever new roadblocks set up by those who, for whatever reason, had no interest in bringing this project effectively forward. After so many years of missed opportunities and failure, and in view of the fact that the inability to get this process started continues to play a key role in paralysing the central multilateral disarmament forum, i.e. the Conference on Disarmament, it is high time that all those who have an immediate responsibility in this regard make renewed efforts to create the conditions for bringing this matter forward. That it is the States which have produced or are still producing fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes which carry a particular responsibility in this regard is obviously in the nature of the matter.

So, everyone should ask themselves what conditions really need to be fulfilled in a mandate to allow the Conference to start negotiating on an important subject such as banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes and related matters. Put the other way round, one should refrain from unnecessarily trying to prejudge questions in the mandate which clearly will be matters of contention in the negotiations proper.

In the past three years, only one State that is a member of the Conference has opposed and, thus, blocked the opening of such negotiations. If those among the other 64 members who want to move forward are seriously determined to move on with this, they should find pragmatic, but goal-oriented ways, for doing so. We need to show our determination to get going in a practical way and not satisfy ourselves by leaning back and blaming a spoiler for a persistent impasse.

Germany is of the opinion that all avenues should be explored to take nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation forward. One such avenue is to have experts work on technical issues when diplomats are stuck. This is what we tried to do with the meeting of scientific experts which Germany, together with the Netherlands, held in Geneva on 29 and 30 May.

I spoke briefly about that meeting in plenary on 31 May. I also made a few basic points about Germany's FMCT approach in general, to which I refer.

Today, I am pleased to communicate that the two co-hosts of the expert meeting, that is myself and Ambassador van den IJssel, have sent a joint report on the meeting to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Tokayev, asking him to issue it as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament. Copies of our letter including the report were put on your desks today and you will find them at the entrance. We will also request that the report be duly reflected in this year's report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The meeting of scientific experts on technical issues related to a fissile material cut-off treaty was attended by representatives of 45 States, including experts from capitals and representatives of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, IAEA, the European Commission (Euratom) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). The total number of participants was nearly 100.

The meeting was based on United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/44 of 12 January 2012, entitled "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices", which, *inter alia*, "encourages interested member States ... to continue efforts, including within and on the margins of the Conference on Disarmament, in support of the commencement of negotiations, including through meetings involving scientific experts."

The meeting examined ways of ensuring the principle of irreversibility in a future treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. Specifically, it addressed the following questions:

How facilities for the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons can be decommissioned in a verifiable and transparent manner;

Secondly, how to deal with facilities in nuclear-weapon States that were originally not designed for safeguards and how to handle the transformation of military into civilian facilities.

These topics were discussed in various panels with contributions by experts in their respective fields, followed by comments and interventions from participants.

The meeting heard an introductory presentation on the present state of play on the FMCT as a topic in the Conference and the technical basics of fissile materials and their verification. This was followed by the presentation of interesting case studies, such as the decommissioning of former French plutonium and HEU production facilities, the decommissioning of the former pilot reprocessing plant in Karlsruhe, Germany, and the role played by IAEA safeguards in such processes. Based on these practical cases, the challenges of implementation of safeguards in older plants that were formerly not under safeguard's regimes were analysed in a systematic fashion. As a regional case study, the situation with respect to military fissile material production in South Asia was looked at in some detail in the perspective of a future FMCT. Finally, the issue of safeguarding operational civil and former military facilities was addressed.

I think it fair to say that the report on the meeting contains rich material for further study and discussion. At this point, I would only draw the following general conclusion from this experience. The presentations and discussions clearly demonstrated a significant requirement for technical clarification. It was easy to see that we are faced with complicated technical issues, which will require a dense exchange between technical experts and diplomats. The latter, in most cases, do not hold degrees in nuclear physics or chemistry.

Experts can list various options and describe technical consequences without entering into a negotiating process. This can lay a useful basis for diplomats when they actually start to negotiate later on. But, of course, Germany's hope remains that proper

negotiations on a fissile material ban can be started as soon as possible, and we will make our contribution to that.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who participated in the meeting of scientific experts, in particular to the delegations which were also represented by technical experts from capitals. We thank, especially, all those participants who made active contributions. My colleague as co-chair, Ambassador Paul van den IJssel, will speak later about the second part of this initiative.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Germany for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the Ambassador of the Netherlands.

Mr. van den IJssel (The Netherlands): Mr. President, let me also start by assuring you of our full support during your presidency and, like the previous speaker, the Ambassador of Germany, I would also like to seize this occasion to say farewell to all those who are going to leave us this summer. I wish them good luck both in their professional and private life, including two members of my own staff, Peter and Eva, who will leave us.

We welcome this opportunity to continue our discussion on the topic of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), during this session of the Conference on Disarmament. In the previous session, on 31 May, I outlined our main ideas about a future FMCT and I also underlined the importance we attached to such a treaty as an indispensable step on the road towards a world free of nuclear weapons and a step we agreed to take on various occasions, inter alia, in the NPT action plan we agreed to in 2010. More detailed information about our view on some of the technical aspects of an FMCT can be found, among other places, in the working paper that the Netherlands tabled last year, together with Bulgaria, Germany, Mexico, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Turkey, CD/1910.

I would like to thank my German colleague for his summary of the expert side event on FMCT, which was jointly organized by Germany and the Netherlands. That event was held on 29 and 30 May. As announced earlier, we intend to organize a second round of these meetings, in the same format, on 28 and 29 August. During these expert meetings we intend to focus on the following three topics.

1. How to detect secret, undeclared, private activities, in particular of uranium enrichment.
2. The question of whether an FMCT-specific means of managing access is necessary and how may it be designed.
3. The scope of any possible FMCT safeguards to ensure the non-diversion of civil material or material declared as excess or material stored by nuclear-weapon States for future use.

We hope to send out an invitation for these expert meetings to all missions in Geneva shortly. It is our firm belief that continued input of scientists and technical experts is extremely valuable in preparing the ground for future negotiations. We, therefore, look forward to the active participation of many experts and, of course, diplomats in the expert meetings of 28 and 29 August.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of the Netherlands for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Lusiński (Poland) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, firstly, we congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. France bears very particular responsibilities in relation to global nuclear issues. I should like to assure you of my delegation's very warm support.

Poland agrees that there is a need for an in-depth debate and for negotiations on the issue of fissile material. It is a matter of the utmost importance, as it represents the first step on the road to complete nuclear disarmament. The cessation of the production of plutonium and uranium for the manufacture of nuclear weapons is at the very heart of the non-proliferation treaty and of the plan of action that we all endorsed at the 2010 Review Conference. It should also improve the atmosphere surrounding the issue of using nuclear energy, which is a valid option for many countries.

The recent debate held under the Finnish presidency shows that grave tensions can and should be defused. This may be a good opportunity to look for a third way which would be satisfactory to all States parties. We must and can make progress together on the reduction of arsenals in order to reassure non-nuclear-weapon States.

The swift launch of negotiations on a treaty to end the production of fissile materials should not just save the Conference but also restore confidence in multilateral diplomacy. This must be our common goal.

The President (*spoke in French*): I warmly thank the delegation of Poland for the kind words addressed to the Chair. The next speaker on the list is the Ambassador of Japan.

Mr. Amano (Japan): Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption to the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I assure you of my delegation's utmost support and cooperation as you guide the thematic debates.

I listened with great interest to my colleagues' interventions at the first session on the FMCT, while presenting my own country's position on this issue. Today, I would like to elaborate Japan's thoughts on two major points that seemed to generate divergent views among the members.

The first point is the relationship between an FMCT and a nuclear-weapons convention (NWC). During the last session, an argument was put forward that we should instead start negotiations on an NWC, since an FMCT would be part of that convention. Also, in another intervention, it was suggested that certain linkages between an FMCT and an NWC might be explored. As my delegation has previously stated, it is willing to participate, with a longer perspective, in discussions on what a multilateral nuclear disarmament framework or an NWC should look like in the final phase of our efforts to totally eliminate nuclear weapons. But, in the light of the current international circumstances, the negotiation of an NWC is neither realistic nor feasible. Rather, what is necessary to achieving a world without nuclear weapons is the steady accumulation of practical and effective measures. To realize this, we believe the next step after the CTBT is to immediately start negotiating an FMCT, which is the most mature issue for negotiations. Japan believes that this approach is supported by the vast majority of member States in this chamber. As such, we regard proposals such as linking an FMCT to an NWC or negotiating an FMCT as part of an NWC as not necessarily helpful to our discussions here.

The second point that I would like to highlight is the treatment of stocks. As we detailed in our last statement, Japan recognizes that an FMCT should at least prohibit, first, the transfer of stocks for nuclear weapons to a third country, second, the diversion to nuclear-weapon purposes of stocks for conventional military use, and third, the "reversion" back to nuclear-weapon purposes of stocks declared as excess. We intend to pursue these ideas in the FMCT negotiations once they begin. Nevertheless, since we are still awaiting the commencement of those negotiations at the present juncture, what is important, above all, is to get them started straight away. In this connection, we consider that reopening the Shannon Mandate to include stocks in the scope of a treaty as a precondition for commencement of the negotiations is not productive. We should instead start negotiations now, based on that mandate as it stands.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of Japan for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the next speaker on the list, the Ambassador of Australia.

Mr. Woolcott (Australia): Mr. President, as this is Australia's first intervention under your presidency of the Conference, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency and to assure you of Australia's support in your work and your efforts. I would also like to thank Ambassador Hoffmann for his excellent summary of the FMCT side event hosted by Germany on 29 and 30 May. Australia was pleased to have sent a capital-based expert to that side event.

It will be an important and welcome series of achievements when we begin negotiating, then conclude and finally bring into force a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the report of the Special Coordinator of 1995, CD/1299, and the mandate contained therein.

As Australia noted when it last spoke on this issue in the Conference, the conclusion of such a treaty will not be an end in itself; our work will need to continue. But a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices will be a significant step in irreversible nuclear disarmament and a milestone on the road to our shared destination of a world without nuclear weapons. After all, the pool cannot be drained, if the tap is still turned on.

When the Conference last addressed this issue a few weeks ago, Australia and many other States noted the importance of moratoriums on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. This point was also emphasized by Ministers at the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) Ministerial Meeting in Istanbul on 16 June. Production moratoriums are no substitute for legally binding, irreversible and effectively verifiable commitments through a treaty. Nevertheless, existing production moratoriums and, for that matter, efforts in facility dismantlement and fissile material disposition do build confidence and send clear signals about the need to move beyond production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

It is welcome that there are nuclear-weapon States which have declared their implementation of production moratoriums. At the same time, regrettably, there are still States that have yet to indicate that they are not producing fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. And it is even more regrettable that production of such fissile material in some cases actually continues.

Australia has no illusions about the many steps required to reach a world without nuclear weapons. But, even as we await the long overdue entry into force of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, the international community no longer tolerates nuclear test explosions. Even as we await the long overdue negotiation of a treaty in accordance with CD/1299, the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should no longer be a continuing reality.

The President (*spoke in French*): Thank you for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the next speaker, the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): Mr. President, let me first congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. In fulfilling your responsibilities I assure you of my delegation's support and cooperation. I have taken the floor today to express our views on the question of fissile materials.

The first round of discussions on this issue, as per the agreed schedule of activities, has already taken place. It was no surprise to us that the views expressed demonstrated a

divergence of opinion on the scope of a treaty on fissile materials, especially with regard to the inclusion of stocks and the definition of fissile materials. These two issues are central to determining what kind of treaty is being envisaged by member States. It is evident that some delegations which seek exclusion of existing stocks only want a fissile material treaty as window dressing for consolidating a discriminatory non-proliferation regime. Others, who call for inclusion of existing stocks, hope for a treaty that could become a meaningful step towards nuclear disarmament. In our view, these widely divergent views do not provide a consensual basis for achieving a commonly identified goal. Moreover, a careful and in-depth analysis of the views expressed by some major Powers and their close allies on the issues of definition and existing stocks clearly expose the real intentions underlying their desire for an FMCT, regardless of their idealistic rhetoric.

It has been argued that an FMCT is a step towards nuclear disarmament. However, it is also maintained that the issue of reduction of stocks cannot be a part of these negotiations, and a narrow approach is taken to the issue of a definition of fissile materials and the scope of the treaty. In these circumstances, we fail to understand how such a treaty could contribute to nuclear disarmament.

As everyone knows, trust is a commodity deeply rooted in experience. With regard to verbal commitments of some major Powers in the field of nuclear disarmament, let me briefly recount the experiences that we have had.

Ever since the United Nations General Assembly first adopted a resolution on nuclear disarmament more than six decades ago, we have seen no credible and sustainable steps towards nuclear disarmament. While, in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, these major Powers agreed to assume special responsibility for ridding the world of nuclear weapons and created the Conference for this reason, the fact remains that no progress has been achieved on global nuclear disarmament in the last 34 years.

Similar to the noble intentions we hear now with regard to FMCT, these major Powers concluded a discriminatory treaty 45 years ago through which they obtained legal assurances from non-nuclear-weapon States not to develop nuclear weapons in exchange for a vague promise to relinquish their nuclear weapons in some distant future. That distant future remains as far off as it was half a century ago. Interestingly, not only have they managed to keep their nuclear weapons, they are insistent that international and legally binding negative assurances from nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States are neither pragmatic nor necessary. Over the last half century, in addition to continued possession of nuclear weapons, these major Powers have used the non-proliferation agenda to further their global and regional strategic aims. They have used discriminatory policies that violate the rules and norms created by themselves as and when required and when it has suited their self-interest. And now they want us to believe that, after achieving a halt in fissile material production, they may again, in some distant future, consider the issue of stocks. Despite what they would like us to believe, we are sure of their true intentions.

Pakistan's position on an FMCT is well known in this august body. However, some elements of our policies need to be re-emphasized. In paragraph 29 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, we all agreed by consensus that "the adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage".

For a non-discriminatory treaty on fissile materials, it is imperative that the FMCT cover the entire production of such materials — past, present and future — it should include all types of fissile materials in its definitions. Only such an equitable treaty would ensure the security and trust of all States.

The proposal for the FMCT only to cover future production will neither contribute to nuclear disarmament nor address regional asymmetries. Such a measure would not even be a true non-proliferation instrument, since the limited scope would allow diversion of existing stocks as well as future accumulations through routes opened up by Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) exceptions. We have already explained in detail how such special dispensations have negatively impacted our national security. With an FMCT that excludes existing stocks, these selective and discriminatory policies would further exacerbate our security conundrum.

We have heard repeated references to the Shannon Mandate as the basis for addressing the issue of stockpiles. This so-called “constructive ambiguity” no longer provides any assurance to my delegation, especially in view of the discriminatory arrangements undertaken in our region. In the present circumstances, the issue of existing stocks needs to be addressed in a very direct manner. Alternatively, a level playing field, based on a non-discriminatory approach, needs to be established.

Lately, we have seen some delegations tying the future of the Conference to the commencement of negotiations on an FMCT, by expressing frustration at the continued deadlock on this issue. The Conference, we must remember, is not a single-issue venue and, if progress cannot be made on one issue, other issues can and should be taken up. In the first round of thematic debates in the Conference we saw that no delegation expressly opposed commencing negotiations on negative security assurances (NSAs). If that is the case, we should immediately establish a subsidiary body on NSAs. If not, the delegations that oppose it should clearly outline their position, as Pakistan has consistently elaborated the reasons for its principled position on FMCT.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the delegation of Canada.

Ms. Anderson (Canada): We have noted a number of comments made today and during the last session on a ban on fissile material production for nuclear-weapon purposes. In the spirit of interactivity, there are a number of elements upon which we would like to comment.

Firstly, we noted the statements by some delegations, particularly during the last debate, as well as during the debate on revitalization, which warned against the consideration of options to advance FMCT outside the Conference. Canada and others have long stated that we are prepared to consider such options if the Conference continues to be unable to commence FMCT negotiations. We do so cautiously and with great consideration for the potential impact such an action could have on the Conference on Disarmament, which we continue to value for its potential as a negotiation forum. Yet, over 15 years have passed and an FMCT remains elusive, despite strong support from almost all member States and calls by the General Assembly and the NPT. We believe that it is both prudent and necessary to examine all avenues in order to advance our common interests in seeing this treaty brought to fruition. Considering such options will not destroy the Conference. Indeed, we will argue the opposite. Inaction is killing the Conference. If we are not prepared to think creatively, the Conference will fade into insignificance as it fails to negotiate on an FMCT or any of the other core issues.

Secondly, we have listened carefully to a number of delegations, including some here today, which stressed that an FMCT is not an end unto itself. We want to stress that Canada fully shares this position. We have long advocated that the most effective way to achieve nuclear disarmament is through a step-by-step process which halts the spread of nuclear weapons, reduces existing stockpiles and irreversibly eliminates them. The next logical step, but not the only or last step, is negotiation of an FMCT.

Finally, my delegation welcomes the views expressed by a number of States which have made specific reference to elements that they would like to see in a future treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. However, discussion of such issues in this format serves only a limited role of helping to build understanding of our respective initial views. The Shannon Mandate makes it clear that the terms of any treaty banning the production of fissile material are to be addressed during the negotiations themselves. It is only by commencing negotiations that we will truly be able to elaborate on these difficult technical and political questions and seek real compromises to meet our collective and national needs.

The value of our discussion today lies primarily in its ability to inform FMCT negotiations. Failing that, we are simply repeating positions that are already well known. My delegation intends to continue to consult with interested delegations on how to advance the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. It will do so in the weeks ahead, leading up to the United Nations General Assembly sixty-seventh session. We have already spoken to a number of delegations individually and within regional groups. We regret that this was not possible in all cases and I would like to reiterate that Canada stands ready to meet any interested State in order to discuss this issue at any time.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the delegation of Canada for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the Ambassador of the United Kingdom.

Ms. Adamson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, as this is the first time that I have taken the floor under your presidency, I wish to thank you in advance for your efforts. I assure you of my delegation's support.

(*continued in English*)

The United Kingdom Government remains committed to achieving our long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons. For the United Kingdom, the next logical step along this road is the negotiation and conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

A treaty stopping the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices is a clear disarmament measure. Many States want to include stocks. We understand that, but let us not put the cart before the horse. Capping production is the first step. Putting conditions in the mandate only serves to limit our negotiations, not to broaden them.

As Ambassador Guerreiro from Brazil pointed out on 14 June, when States want substantive negotiations on a certain issue, they do not mind a lack of precision or clarity in the negotiating mandate. Whereas, when States do not want negotiations to commence on a certain issue, they insist on having precision and clarity in a negotiating mandate and are loath to leave room for ambiguity, constructive or otherwise. My delegation thinks that the Shannon Mandate has given us what we need.

The United Kingdom takes its disarmament obligations under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty seriously and is keen to move ahead with the implementation of the action plan agreed at the Review Conference in 2010. Strengthening the NPT through implementation of all points of the action plan, in particular those that relate to work that could be undertaken in this body, should be our common endeavour. The United Kingdom retains its strong commitment to starting negotiations on an FMCT within the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to depart from my prepared speech to address some terms that we are using in the chamber. I do not think that there is a United Nations grouping called "major

Powers”. I think, in the context of FMCT, that there are countries that have nuclear weapons and there are countries that have been or are still producing fissile material, and so, in this debate, the suggestion that there are major Powers who should be referred to as “they”, I think, is incorrect. It should be “we”: we who have nuclear weapons, “we” who have been or are still producing fissile material – it is “we” not “they”.

The Conference remains the best option for negotiating an FMCT with all the key nuclear and non-nuclear players. The inclusion of these key players in any treaty is essential if it is to fulfil the ambition of the international community of strengthening the global disarmament and non-proliferation framework in any meaningful way.

The strength of the Conference is the respect its members have for each member’s national security interests. Through the consensus rule, protection is offered to those interests, both during the negotiation phase and in the eventual signature and ratification phases of any treaty, but it should not be employed to block the adoption of a programme to get us back to work.

The United Kingdom, for its part, has repeatedly expressed its willingness to engage on all four core issues, which should all be part of a programme of work. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations said in his statement to the Conference on 24 January, “prior agreement on their scope or final outcomes should not be a precondition for the start of negotiations, or an excuse to avoid them”. We could have proceeded on the basis of CD/1933, which contained the constructive ambiguity that my Brazilian colleague mentioned and that was recalled by my Egyptian colleague earlier today.

Ultimately, time has run out. This week is the end of the second session for 2012. We were warned at the start of the year by the Secretary-General that “in 2012, the future of the Conference will be under the spotlight as never before. Lamenting the constraints of the rules of procedure or the absence of political will can no longer suffice as explanations for any further lack of progress. The General Assembly is seized of the matter and, if the Conference remains deadlocked, is ready to consider other options to move the disarmament agenda forward”.

We have not heeded this warning and we now face an uncertain future for the Conference and disarmament as a whole. This is not in any State’s interests. As I have said before, we are not making progress on any of the four core issues which are dear to individual members of the Conference. We now have a very limited opportunity before us to show that the Conference can work. We presented ideas on revitalization in the last session. We would keep on thinking as to how to restore the Conference to its central role. For the United Kingdom, securing an FMCT within the Conference is a core part of that.

I want to join others in wishing those who are departing well in the future paths. It has been a real joy to work with all of you and I wish you all very well.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of the United Kingdom for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the Ambassador of South Africa.

Mr. Minty (South Africa): Mr. President, at the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Ambassador Simon-Michel, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and to assure you of South Africa’s fullest support and cooperation in the execution of your task of guiding the work of the Conference at this critical juncture.

As we have stated on many occasions, nuclear disarmament remains our highest priority. Since becoming a member of the Conference in 1996, South Africa has consistently argued against maximalist positions that may inhibit efforts to secure progress on the nuclear disarmament agenda. My country has, therefore, supported a systematic and progressive approach towards achieving our goal of a world without nuclear weapons. It is

in this context that my delegation has also remained supportive of the commencement and conclusion of negotiations, in the Conference, on a treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices — a fissile material treaty (FMT) — and that would fulfil both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament objectives.

A simple fissile material cut-off treaty, or FMCT, as promoted by some Conference on Disarmament members, would clearly not meet the demand from the vast majority in and outside this chamber for a treaty that would not only freeze the status quo, but that would also contribute to our shared objective of achieving and maintaining a world free from the threat posed by nuclear weapons. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the acronym “FMCT”, which has never been agreed to in the Conference, has crept into the Conference lexicon in recent years.

A few delegations have argued that to address any issues beyond the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons would make the negotiations and content of a future instrument more complicated and more costly. If, indeed, such a treaty is to be part of a comprehensive framework of mutually reinforcing instruments, we remain unconvinced that a very limited instrument, in terms of scope and verification modalities, would make any meaningful contribution to nuclear disarmament. Beyond reinforcing existing inequalities between the non-nuclear-weapon States and the nuclear-weapon States, we have also heard the concern that such an instrument could, in fact, freeze the inequalities that exist between those possessing fissile materials that can be used in the development of nuclear weapons. It would also mean that vast numbers of new nuclear weapons could continue to be developed, thereby undermining the basic rationale for the conclusion of such an instrument in the first place.

My delegation does not subscribe to the view, promoted by some, that a fissile material treaty is the only item ripe for negotiation. Given the nature of the Conference as a negotiating forum, we believe that the Conference is able to negotiate any issue on its agenda, even though we recognize that the finalization of a legally binding agreement in the near future may be more likely on some issues than on others. While we may not all agree on the issues that are more or less ripe for the conclusion of an agreement, this should not prevent us from dealing substantively with the issues on our agenda.

We are all aware of the long history of the international community’s efforts to conclude such a treaty in the Conference. In this regard, we recall in particular Ambassador Gerald Shannon’s 1995 report to the Conference on the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a fissile material treaty, as well as the calls by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 and 2010 NPT review conferences for the Conference to commence negotiations on such a treaty. It is now 17 years since the Shannon report was submitted and the Conference continues to be occupied with a seemingly endless debate about a mandate for a subsidiary body to deal with this issue.

We all know that fissile materials, such as weapon-grade plutonium and highly enriched uranium, are critical ingredients for the production of nuclear weapons. What is clear is that control of such material will directly impact upon control of proliferation. For my delegation, the finalization of a fissile material treaty would constitute an important building block for the establishment of any comprehensive framework to underpin a future world without nuclear weapons. If we are indeed serious about nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, the negotiation of a fissile material treaty should no longer be postponed.

South Africa believes that such a treaty should be non-discriminatory and verifiable, fulfilling both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. As the first country to have developed and then completely eliminated its own nuclear weapons, we are

fully aware of the complexities associated with a future treaty. Contrary to the arguments that are being advanced by some about the limitations of a future treaty, South Africa's experience has shown that, while significant technical complexities will need to be acknowledged, they can all be overcome, if the necessary political will exists. While we acknowledge, for example, the difficulties associated with the past production of fissile material, we strongly believe that stocks should be addressed by a future treaty if it is to be a credible instrument. A fissile material treaty that fulfils disarmament objectives will also necessarily have to give effect to the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verification. For such a treaty to be fully effective, we believe that it should be the product of multilateral disarmament negotiations.

It is not only since the adoption of CD/1864 in 2009 that the Conference has not been able to commence such negotiations: members will recall that many issues have over the years complicated agreement on the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material treaty. We agree that many of these issues are important matters that will have to be resolved, but we believe that most of these issues can only be resolved during actual negotiations.

During the many formal and informal debates and discussions on the Conference's agenda and programme of work, my delegation has endeavoured to contribute to the FMT debate. In this context, it is worth recalling that South Africa submitted a working paper to the Conference on this issue, distributed as CD/1671. The paper contains reflections on the possible scope and requirements of a fissile material treaty. Let me once again emphasize that, for my delegation, a fissile material treaty is not an end in itself. It is but one of a number of critical steps that would need to be taken on the path towards nuclear disarmament and a world free of these inhuman instruments.

In closing, my delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in this debate. We hope that we will soon be able to contribute to negotiations on a complex issue, which should no longer be postponed.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of South Africa for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Khelif (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, at the outset, the delegation of Algeria would like to congratulate you sincerely on assuming this important responsibility at this sensitive time for the Conference on Disarmament. We wish you success in your task. We all hope that the assumption of the presidency by a representative of a nuclear State means that you will give us the tools and will lead us to find an appropriate solution.

(*continued in French*)

The delegation of Algeria was not planning to take the floor today to address the question of a treaty on the production of fissile material. However, given what has been said by the representatives of Member States, it would like to say, first of all, that Algeria has always supported the negotiation of a treaty to prohibit the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which would make a real contribution to nuclear disarmament. For it to make a real contribution to nuclear disarmament, such a treaty must necessarily address the issue of stocks.

Her Excellency the Ambassador of the United Kingdom reminded us today that there are two categories of State in this Conference: non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon States that possess fissile material for these explosive devices and for terrifying weapons. We believe that the debate at the Conference on Disarmament should proceed on this basis. Although each State is entitled to defend its security interests at the Conference, we should not forget that we at the Conference have a mandate that was

entrusted to us by the international community. The mandate dictates that the interests of national security end where the collective will of the international community as expressed in 1978 begins with calls for an end to nuclear weapons and for reflection on ways to rid the world of this weapon. This is an absolute priority which we must meet, a matter of the highest priority that we have a responsibility to.

We have heard from some delegations for which a treaty to end the production of fissile material is a must, meaning that either we negotiate a treaty or we have to think about other options that may be outside the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. The Algerian delegation would like to say that we should be careful not to rush into things, because of disappointment over the stalemate that has prevailed at the Conference for several years. We should be careful not to devise solutions that could undermine the multilateral work of the Conference on Disarmament and that do not provide us with viable solutions for nuclear disarmament.

We have eight weeks left. We hope, during this time, that we will be able to explore ways of restarting our work. We have two possibilities before us: to find an option that supports nuclear disarmament or to surrender to the unknown, an unknown that could prove disastrous for the Conference.

Mr. President, the Algerian delegation will provide you with all the support that you need to lead us along this path, which we hope will lead to results that feed into our future work. We listened to the proposals made at earlier sessions about the approach to a programme of work. The Russian Federation shared an idea about a light programme of work. A light menu does not always go down well, but sometimes it is the only solution if we are to recover. Let us try out these options. The Algerian delegation has always supported the idea of a simplified programme of work. Let us try to simplify matters. Perhaps, we will lay the ground for fruitful future work. On this note, I wish you good luck, Mr. President.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the delegation of Algeria for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the last speaker on the list, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Daryaei (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, at the outset, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference. I would like to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation as you discharge your important tasks.

The existence of nuclear weapons is a great threat to the security of all nations. Immediate action by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate that threat is indispensable. The approach of reducing surpluses of nuclear weapons and materials little by little and selling them as a disarmament measure is not a response and is not sufficient to eliminate this danger, taking into account its seriousness and magnitude. Thus, we very much support the start of negotiations on a nuclear-weapons convention which totally and systematically prohibits possession, production, development, stockpiling and the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. As I have already said, by negotiating a nuclear-weapons convention, we will be able comprehensively to tackle the issue of fissile materials as a meaningful disarmament measure. This convention as a framework and chapeau convention will include, inter alia, a ban on the production of all weapon-grade fissile material for military explosive purposes and destroy all stocks of these materials in an irreversible manner within an agreed timetable. Therefore, it will be seen in the framework of nuclear disarmament as a concrete measure for the total elimination of nuclear weapons under the formative chapeau of a nuclear-weapons convention.

Having heard the views of other distinguished colleagues, I would like to emphasize that the added value of any FMT depends on the following criteria.

First, the purpose of the FMT should be defined in a manner that contributes to the realization of nuclear disarmament. The main aim of an FMT is to ensure a comprehensive ban on all weapon-grade fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. These prohibitions already exist in the actions of non-nuclear-weapon States that join the NPT and renounce the nuclear-weapon option. Therefore, the FMT will not add any new legal undertaking to the non-nuclear-weapon States that belong to the NPT. Rather, it would impose a new, firm obligation on the nuclear-weapon States, though only if it embraced all nuclear-weapon States and those who have the nuclear-weapon capability outside the NPT.

Second, the scope and definition of an FMT depend on the purpose of the treaty, which, in this case, is nuclear disarmament. Therefore, it should provide the ground for banning all fissile materials that are necessary for manufacturing nuclear explosive devices.

Third, the FMT should provide for an effective, non-discriminatory verification system. These characteristics of a verification mechanism depend on the scope and purpose of the treaty, which is nuclear disarmament. The implementation of a verification system already exists in non-nuclear-weapon States, through the application of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system. Therefore, the verification system of the FMT will not have anything to add to the existing, well-established comprehensive safeguards system for the non-nuclear-weapon States. The nuclear-weapon States and the non-NPT parties that have unsafeguarded stockpiles of fissile materials are the only target of the verification system of the FMT. Thus, the objective of this verification system is to impose a legal obligation on the nuclear-weapon States and non-NPT States, and to bring the legal obligation of these States to the same level as non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT.

Fourth, the FMT should cover all past, present and future stocks of weapon-grade fissile materials of the nuclear-weapon States, and this should be clearly mentioned in the negotiation mandate of the FMT.

Fifth, it should be noted that the FMT should not in any way impair the inalienable right of non-nuclear-weapon States in the NPT to produce fissile material for peaceful purposes. There are non-weapon applications for fissile material that must be taken into consideration during the negotiation of an FMT. As was already mentioned relative to the safeguards system of the IAEA in INFCIRC/153, all States have a legitimate right to produce fissile material for military, non-explosive purposes, such as naval propulsion and for civilian uses such as fuel cycle activities and the production of radio isotopes. Therefore, these activities must be permitted under an FMT.

In conclusion, an FMT should be universal. The purpose, scope, definition and verification needs of such a treaty should be based on disarmament requirements. A treaty should redress the imbalances in the legal undertakings between the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States. Having said that, the best place for negotiations of an FMT is the Conference. We call on the Conference members to avoid divergent, unhelpful efforts outside the Conference which call into question the credibility of this body. We urge all members to adopt and implement a balanced and comprehensive programme of work on the basis of its agenda and deal with all core issues in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the kind words addressed to the Chair and now give the floor to the United States delegation.

Mr. Reid (United States of America): Mr. President, at the outset please allow us to congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency and to assure you of our highest cooperation throughout the term of your upcoming presidency.

First of all, I would like to bring to colleagues' attention to the fact that the United States of America will have the pleasure for the rest of this week of hosting senior representatives from the United Kingdom, France, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China at a very high-level conference in Washington that would build on previous such conferences in London and Paris in recent years. There, we would discuss our efforts to continue to take forward our pressing business in nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. You can look to Washington for further information that will arrive in the context of that conference.

Ambassador Kennedy could not be with us today, because she is, in fact, joining the Secretary and our Acting Under-Secretary in hosting these colleagues for this important gathering.

As regards the discussions today, where we have been talking about a fissile material cut-off treaty, as colleagues may recall, we made an extensive prepared statement in our previous session and I would certainly draw your attention to those important remarks, where we spoke to very specific aspects of key criteria of how we believe a future negotiation can unfold on a fissile material cut-off treaty. I would recall to colleagues, as we look at this important treaty — and we certainly attach the greatest importance to the earliest possible start to negotiate on it — that the key lenses for us remain CD/1864, embedded in which, of course, is CD/1299.

Any efforts to try and move far away from those two important touchstones are only likely to significantly complicate our efforts to find that enduring international consensus on how to take this important treaty instrument forward.

Finally, I would bring to colleagues' attention to our conviction that continuing to frame the philosophical approach to this treaty as either non-proliferation or disarmament-oriented is really engaging in a syllogism. I do not think any of us should be beguiled by this rather stale argument. It has been rehearsed many, many times here in this chamber and on the margins of this chamber and I think further complicating our efforts by trying to frame it one way or the other is not going to take us forward, which is our key priority at this juncture, that of trying to move forward towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

Finally, on that last point, the United States remains very proud of its nuclear disarmament agenda accomplishments of the last three decades. We continue to try and move forward with key relevant partners in that same vein. Most recently, testimony was given, earlier this week, by Acting Under-Secretary Rose Gottemoeller to the United States Senate on very significant advances in the implementation of the New START Treaty. The proceedings are available on the United States Senate website. In particular, she speaks to new advances and strategic nuclear disarmament verification and the added opportunities it gives us to go yet further towards our goal of global zero.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the United States delegation for its statement and for its kind words. Our work is finished for today. The next plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament will take place after the break over these next few weeks, which means that the next session will be held on Tuesday, 31 July, at 10 a.m. in this room.

I thank you and I thank the Secretariat and the interpreters.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.