

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND TWENTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Monday, 22 May 2006, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Mr. Doru-Romulus COSTEA (Romania)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1022nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the passing away of Dr. Lee Jong-wook, Director-General of the World Health Organization. Dr. Lee worked for WHO for 23 years, and he was the first South Korean to head a United Nations agency. As Director-General of the WHO, he contributed greatly to preventing the spread of bird flu and preparing for a potential human influenza pandemic. On behalf of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to extend sincerest condolences to the Government of the Republic of Korea and to Dr. Lee's family.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Han Jae-young.

Mr. HAN (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea and Dr. Lee's family, I would like to express appreciation for the condolences that you expressed on the death of Dr. Lee Jong-wook, Director-General of WHO, who sadly failed to recover from the brain surgery he underwent during the past weekend. Certainly, I will duly relay the message of condolences to his family.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea.

In accordance with the timetable of meetings, today's plenary meeting is the last one during the presidency of Romania, and it will be devoted mainly to wrapping up the discussion on the FMCT. Delegations are also invited to address other issues if they so wish.

I have the following speakers on my list for this plenary meeting: the Russian Federation, Peru, Colombia, Canada, Austria, on behalf of the EU, China, Japan and Switzerland. In addition, I will also make a statement as my term of office comes to an end at the end of our proceedings.

So I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Valery Loshchinin.

Mr. LOSHCHININ (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): First of all, the Russian delegation would like to associate itself with the condolences expressed on behalf of the Conference to the delegation of South Korea in connection with the premature and sudden death of Dr. Lee. We knew him well. He did a lot to develop cooperation between Russia and the World Health Organization. He was in Moscow quite recently, and he left a very strong impression. We had very good specific and constructive plans for future work. I would like to ask the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to transmit our deepest and sincere condolences to the family and friends of Dr. Lee.

First of all, Mr. President, we would like to congratulate you on your successful conduct of the week's thematic discussion on the FMCT. We have participated in a discussion, which displayed a high level of interest, and which touched on both the political and the substantive

(Mr. Loshchinin, Russian Federation)

aspects of the question. A number of proposals were made. The delegation of the United States has introduced a draft treaty to ban the production of fissile material and a mandate for work on this question. Many practical ideas have been put forward, building up a lot of food for thought and future work. I would like to thank those delegations which, both in word and deed, have provided further support for the initiative put forward by the six CD Presidents for 2006.

In our view, the fact that experts from capitals have participated in the work of a number of delegations and that some delegations have prepared working papers has enriched the Conference's work and prepared the ground for further progress. A good precedent has been set. We are certain that the results of this thematic week will improve understanding of the problems which still stand in the way of reaching compromise on a programme of work for the Conference, and will thus foster progress towards that compromise. In all of this we discern a major contribution by the President from Romania, and we heartily congratulate you.

Time is moving quickly forward. The next question on which we will have to conduct a focused thematic debate is the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We would like to draw delegations' attention to the new fourth working paper prepared by the delegations of Russia and China in furtherance of their proposal put forward in document CD/1679 for the drafting of a new treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects. Our new working paper is devoted to the topic of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. We have tried to show the importance and urgency of this problem, analyse existing experience, explain how work on confidence-building measures in outer space can form part of the work of the Conference on Disarmament in preparing a new treaty on the non-weaponization of outer space, and make concrete proposals. We hope that it will promote a focused discussion during the forthcoming thematic week on the question of PAROS. The working paper will be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

We would also like to inform you that we have asked the secretariat to publish as official documents of the Conference the three previous working papers prepared by the delegations of Russia and China in the context of the proposal for the drafting of a new treaty on the non-weaponization of outer space. Let me remind you that they were devoted to existing lacunae in international space law which make it possible to place weapons in outer space without formally violating existing rules, the issue of terms and definitions in the new document, the new treaty, and also verification issues. Since we have touched on the topic of PAROS, I would like to mention an important, interesting and practically useful international conference on issues of space security organized by the Governments of Canada, China and Russia, the Canadian Simons Foundation and UNIDIR which took place in this room on 30 and 31 March at the end of the last meeting of the first part of the Conference's session. We hope that in the future we will have an opportunity to discuss the results of this conference in greater detail.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Loshchinin of the Russian Federation for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Mr. Diego Beleván.

Mr. BELEVAN (Peru) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, as my delegation is taking the floor for the first time during your term of office, allow me to congratulate you on the efficient manner in which you have been guiding our work over these past few weeks, and in particular the way in which you organized last week's structured debates. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Tim Caughley on taking up the post of Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament. I also wish to congratulate all the Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament for 2006 for the significant coordinating work accomplished, which we hope will lead as soon as possible to the resumption of substantive work in the Conference. I would also like to express my delegation's condolences to the Republic of Korea on the sudden passing of Dr. Lee, Director-General of WHO, today.

The international system is still in a transitional phase, and this has particular repercussions for issues relating to weapons of mass destruction, which represent one of the major challenges to peace, security and international stability. Nuclear disarmament remains the ultimate objective, but it is necessary to renew efforts to move forward through the different phases that will lead us towards that goal. As far as my delegation is concerned, one of the most important ones would be prompt initiation of negotiations and the adoption of a treaty on fissile material that would meet the security perceptions of the entire international community. In this connection, last week's structured debates were of twofold importance. First of all, they enabled diplomats working in Geneva to gain more extensive and in-depth knowledge of the various elements that a possible treaty on fissile material must necessarily contain; but above all, they helped to clarify positions and perceptions.

In this respect, I would like to highlight, as various delegations did last week, the importance of the extensive statement made by Mr. Rademaker, Assistant Secretary for Disarmament and International Security of the State Department of the United States, as well as the presentation of a draft treaty on the prohibition of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, and the corresponding mandate of the ad hoc committee entrusted with the task of negotiating such an instrument. We welcome this type of initiative, and hope that it will bear fruit in the future.

As those present will remember, the Peruvian President of the Conference on Disarmament made a statement at the informal meeting on 13 December last on certain conclusions he had arrived at on the basis of the consultations he had carried out, as well as the replies received to the questionnaire that we circulated to all delegations during the intersessional period. My delegation at the time stated that the package of the so-called "four core issues" in all their possible variants, on which work had been done for more than five years through the various proposals relating to the programme of work, including document CD/1757 submitted by the President when Peru was in the Chair, seemed to be the cause of the impasse facing the Conference on Disarmament. Hence my delegation considers that, in the present circumstances, all the members of the Conference should re-examine the approach under consideration. We are convinced that a first step in this direction has been taken by the coordinated work of the Presidents for 2006 as well as the appointment of Friends of the Presidents, whose conclusions on the issues assigned to them we hope to learn of shortly.

(Mr. Beleván, Peru)

While my delegation appreciates the document submitted by the United States, it reiterates its conviction that any international instrument on the subject must of necessity have a verification instrument. We have seen the positive outcome when international treaties have compliance clauses, however imperfect, as well as the significant limitations imposed on those that have no verification mechanism. Also, we have heard the views of various experts who during our meetings last week described the possible methods that could be used to verify the correct application of an instrument on the subject. Nonetheless, as we attach importance to an early start to negotiations, we are flexible as regards the mandate of the ad hoc committee on the understanding that all issues, including verification, will be duly taken up during those negotiations. At the same time, and after listening to the various statements made last week, we think it necessary for any future legally binding international instrument relating to fissile material to meet the disarmament and non-proliferation objectives that are necessary to satisfy the security priorities of the international community as a whole. In this respect, the problem of stocks of fissile material should necessarily be dealt with in the context of the negotiations.

It would be inconceivable for us to leave aside the tremendous quantities of material that could be used to modernize existing weapons or build new ones. The nuclear States, whether or not they are parties to the NPT, have a particular responsibility towards the international community. We welcome the moratorium declared by four nuclear States parties to the NPT to refrain from producing fissile material for nuclear weapons. However, its voluntary and easily reversible character merely underscores the importance of having a legally binding international instrument that would rule out the possible diversion of fissile material in the future.

If we assume that nuclear devices of military effectiveness are beyond the reach of virtually all international terrorist organizations or the States that support them, the most probable route towards possession of a nuclear device for those groups would be that of obtaining fissile material through purchase or theft for building an improvised nuclear weapon; such a weapon would obviously be less sophisticated than a military weapon, but it could be very effective in causing mass casualties. It might not call for any greater know-how than is already available in documents that are publicly available. As we have seen from the interesting discussions last week, if we bear in mind the amount of existing nuclear material scattered over the planet in the military and civilian sectors, there is a considerable increase in the risk that the suggested scenario will be realized. Given that the standards for registration or inventories are not universally high in all States, it is far from clear whether the authorities would be capable in all cases of determining whether a significant quantity of material has disappeared. This underscores the priority that must be attached to accounting for and safeguarding nuclear material that is of a high enough grade for the manufacture of weapons. Obviously, both functions have very complex financial and logistical implications. This calls for standing international commitments to ensure that storage facilities remain secure and that monitoring machinery is effective. A treaty on fissile material must necessarily cover both functions.

I would also like to take the opportunity to draw the attention of those present to two initiatives that are tangential but intrinsically related to the issue that we are now dealing with, which would make it possible to step up protection against attacks on nuclear facilities such as reactors and research centres, safeguard low-grade nuclear materials and close loopholes

(Mr. Beleván, Peru)

allowing the acquisition of fissile material. I am referring first of all to the Action Plan for the Safety and Security of Radiation Sources, which must be actively supported as it would help to improve the protection of sources of fissile material. At the same time, and even though, fortunately, neither the international community nor IAEA has so far been faced with delicate situations that might stem from what are referred to as “small quantities protocols”, my delegation, as stated several times in Vienna, shares the opinion of the Director-General of IAEA that these protocols constitute at present a weak point in the system of safeguards. We therefore think that we should not wait to put to the test the heightened risk posed by such instruments, and that now is the time to take definitive measures to resolve this issue.

Before concluding I would like to congratulate the delegation of the Netherlands for organizing an open-ended meeting on fissile material which was attended by important experts, including one of the co-chairs of the International Panel on Fissile Material. Also, I would like to express my delegation’s appreciation for the frank presentation of issues relating to fissile material, as well as the concrete proposals that were made by various participants throughout the course of last week. Lastly, we thank the secretariat of the Conference for providing us in good time with a compilation of basic documents dealing with this important issue on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Peru for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia, Mr. Rafael Quinteros Cubides.

Mr. QUINTEROS CUBIDES (Colombia) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, as my delegation is taking the floor for the first time since you took the Chair, allow me to congratulate you on the efficient way in which you have been presiding over our work and at the same time to congratulate your distinguished predecessors and, jointly, the six Presidents for the 2006 session on the holding of this exercise of thematic debates, whose successful outcome has already begun to emerge.

Colombia upholds without change the position it has repeatedly expressed of favouring the prompt initiation of substantive negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

On this occasion, accepting the invitation extended to us through the holding of this cycle of debates, we would like to share our country’s view on the subject, starting by reiterating what has already been said in our statement on 7 July 2005, when we called on the members of the Conference on Disarmament to consider the adoption of a “gentlemen’s agreement” which could take the form of a political declaration whereby the member States of the Conference on Disarmament would adopt a collective commitment to tackle sequentially, in addition to the FMCT, each of the items on the agenda through the mechanism of negotiating rounds focusing exclusively, and for a specific period of time, on each of the issues, all following the same premise of not prejudging outcomes or linking issues in advance.

(Mr. Quinteros Cubides, Colombia)

Although of course it is necessary to start by reiterating that it should never have been necessary to possess any quantity of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, it is clear that such material is in excess, as we have been reminded by the figures presented by the experts who addressed the Conference. And it has been in excess for a long time, as is shown by the fact that it was possible for a unilateral moratorium to be decreed by four nuclear States parties to the NPT, which despite the fact that they claim to have ceased production for almost a decade have recognized that they are saturated by their excessive stocks, given that, among other threats, the risk that this type of material might fall into terrorists' hands is increasingly disturbingly possible. It is also clear that the reason for their existence, that is, building nuclear weapons, has also been largely superseded, as is demonstrated by the fact that a large number of nuclear warheads have been dismantled and removed without this leading to any change in the balance of power in the world.

Allow us, then, to ask: if the last thing the world needs is more nuclear weapons, if those that are already in existence are excessive and need to be reduced until they eventually disappear completely, then what is the need for the existing fissile material, and, of course, what is the need for yet more such material? The most rational alternative from our standpoint is to refrain from producing one more gram anywhere in the world and to convert all fissile material stocks for the production of nuclear weapons to their sole legitimate purpose: the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In this respect the proposal submitted by Canada in document CD/1770 could be an excellent basis for taking these factors into account.

The main purpose of the future treaty should therefore be to serve as a comprehensive instrument for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation: nuclear disarmament through the elimination of existing stocks, and non-proliferation through a verifiable ban on the production of such material and the establishment of measures that would prevent the possible diversion of fissile material to terrorist groups. For Colombia the future legally binding treaty should be based on three pillars: it should be non-discriminatory, it should be effectively verifiable, and it should guarantee the responsible free use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

We are convinced that for the sake of consistency with the current state of affairs in the international community as regards security and disarmament, which is reflected most clearly in the Conference on Disarmament, all States present here must display an open mind, flexibility and political will. This is expressed through recognition that the concerns of others are as valid as our own, and hence by promoting what is self-evident, that we should hold a dialogue on all concerns, theirs as well as ours. Listening to others as we hope they would listen to us, while not confining ourselves to listening in silence but conducting a dialogue in this respect.

What we are not under an obligation to do, of course, is to agree with everyone and on everything. Prejudging means both thinking that we will get nowhere as well as thinking that we must arrive at a single conclusion. We are pleased to see that the Geneva spring has brought a flowering of interesting statements, working papers and official proposals. We would like to thank all those States that have presented them, as well as the experts who have come from

(Mr. Quinteros Cubides, Colombia)

capitals and have enriched our discussions so much during these meetings. In particular I would like to refer to the proposal submitted by the United States of America for a draft treaty on a halt to the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and the draft mandate for the ad hoc committee that would be established. My delegation appreciates the submission of this proposal, which we have referred to our capital and on which we will comment in due course. We interpret the presentation of this proposal as a sign of support for the Conference on Disarmament and for multilateralism in general. We would like to interpret it also as a proposal that offers scope for optimism that we will arrive at a programme of work for the Conference. If the document that has been placed on the table by the United States is accompanied by a willingness to hold a dialogue on the cessation of an arms race in outer space and on negative security assurances, then the offer will be almost irresistible. The other parties would perhaps consider it favourably, and the exercise would begin - in other words, the Conference could return to substantive work. My delegation is convinced of this because we recognize in this possible scenario the fundamental elements of the programme of work that we have lacked for eight years. From our standpoint, a willingness to discuss without prejudging issues is the gentlemen's agreement, and the possibility of arriving at different points on each issue represents the incremental approach. On this hypothesis, what remains is to agree on the procedural or sequential aspects.

If the proposal is supplemented by a willingness to conduct a dialogue on PAROS and on negative security assurances, then an effective and decisive step will have been taken towards overcoming the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. If, however, the proposal is not accompanied by such willingness, but is a "take it or leave it" proposal, then perhaps we will just be having one more interesting new document to send to our capitals.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Colombia for his statement as well as for his kind words addressed to the Chair. The next speaker is the distinguished representative of Canada, Ambassador Paul Meyer.

Mr. MEYER (Canada): Let me join other colleagues who have expressed their condolences to the delegation of the Republic of Korea on the tragic passing of Dr. Lee. He was truly an exemplary leader in this community and will be sorely missed.

I'd wanted to take this opportunity to summarize my delegation's initial impressions on the FMCT discussions we had last week. First I would like to note the utility of the way that the discussions were structured. Prior announcements of which specific topics would be covered at which times allowed for an in-depth and coherent discussion of each issue, with the participation of appropriate experts. This in turn gave all participants a far better understanding of the range of sub-issues involved, where the differences remain, and where work is most needed as we move forward. I think in this regard the week went just about as well as we could have hoped.

Of course, in recognizing the success of such a focused and structured debate we should not minimize the challenges that remain. There are contrasting visions and perspectives on what an FMCT should cover - and even on how we should refer to such a treaty. The question of verification has also been clearly identified as an area where we do not enjoy a consensus approach. But despite all the differences of opinion that have been expressed, we seem to agree that all are susceptible to finding their resolution eventually in the course of negotiations.

(Mr. Meyer, Canada)

Once we get down to negotiating an FMCT, the discussions of last week will provide a solid factual base to build on. The records of discussions, and the papers presented, will yield ideas on how we can deal with some of the most delicate issues, such as verification and existing stockpiles. Once we reach this stage, we will again recognize the value of the work conducted last week.

So the chief remaining question in our minds is: how do we get from where we are today, having interesting discussions, to where we want to be tomorrow, in a sustained process of negotiations? Mr. President, when you assumed your presidency of this Conference on 23 March, you compared us to Alice in Wonderland, and earlier this year, during our 1000th plenary on 31 January, Ambassador Rapacki likened us to Sleeping Beauty, waiting for our handsome prince to awaken us with a kiss. These references remind us that the real world - where Alice in Wonderland and Sleeping Beauty are simply characters in fairy tales - will not wait for us forever.

Regardless of the reasons for its protracted period of inactivity, it is long past time that the CD woke up and got back to productive negotiations. Last week's activity offered us a glimmer of hope that we may be back on the right track. We will certainly be working with others to see where we go from here, in the hope that the much-needed momentum generated last week will propel us forward on a very productive path.

Once again Mr. President, we thank you, and through you the remainder of the six Presidents, for your continued efforts on behalf of our Conference in this year 2006.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Canada for his statement and for his kind words and encouragement that he addressed to the Chair and to the other Presidents. I now give the floor to the representative of Austria, Mr. Markus Reiterer, who will speak on behalf of the EU.

Mr. REITERER (Austria): I am taking the floor on behalf of Ambassador Petritsch, who due to other unforeseen obligations is not able to join us here in the Council chamber today. I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union and the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania.

First, let me join others in expressing the EU's deep respect and sincere condolences on the premature passing away of Dr. Lee to the Republic of Korea and to his family. His important contribution to the work of WHO in all its aspects, and in particular most recently on preventing the outbreak of an avian flu pandemic, will never be forgotten.

The EU would like to commend you, Mr. President, on the efficient and able manner in which you guided our work throughout your tenure as President of the Conference on Disarmament and in particular, during the focused structured debate on FMCT.

As we have stated previously, the EU attaches a clear priority to the negotiation, in the Conference on Disarmament, of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices as a means to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation

(Mr. Reiterer, Austria)

and disarmament. We call again for the immediate commencement of negotiations as well as the early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, universally applicable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, without preconditions, and bearing in mind the Special Coordinator's report and the mandate for an ad hoc committee contained therein. Pending the entry into force of an FMCT, the EU calls on all States to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and welcomes the action of those four States which have decreed such moratoria.

The EU welcomes the rich discussions that took place last week on a fissile material cut-off treaty. We have listened carefully to the statements made and the input provided, which helped to inform our deliberations and produced a clearer picture of the issues related to such a treaty. We welcome the large participation of the member States in the deliberation and the fact that no objection was raised to the principle of an FMCT negotiation. We note with appreciation the participation of a substantial number of experts from a range of countries as well as the submission of various working papers and suggestions, including the documents presented by the United States. The EU notes that the FMCT mandate proposed by the United States is broadly in line with the EU's position on FMCT stated above, and notes that nothing could be precluded from the negotiations. The EU warmly welcomes the decision of the Conference to invite IAEA to participate in our deliberations in accordance with rule 41 of the rules of procedure. We are looking forward to profiting from the profound expertise IAEA possesses in this area.

Let me conclude by expressing my sincere hope that the focused structured debates we have had and will have during this year will create sufficient momentum to overcome the current deadlock and bring this august body back to substantive work. We encourage the presidency of the CD to consider quickly and actively how to continue our deliberations on this issue during the remainder of the 2006 session.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Austria for his statement on behalf of the EU. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of China, Ambassador Cheng Jingye.

Mr. CHENG (China) (translated from Chinese): With the untimely passing of Dr. Lee Jong-wook, the Director-General of WHO, I wish to express my deep condolences to the delegation of the Republic of Korea. Dr. Lee made great contributions to the work of WHO.

Mr President, you played a very important role in presiding over the debate on FMCT last week. I wish to thank you for that. The comments and working papers on the subject provided by various delegations are undoubtedly interesting and useful. The participation of national experts helped to enrich our debate. It is my hope that our debate will contribute to the early adoption by the CD of its programme of work.

I wish to take this opportunity to tell everyone that on 18 May, the delegations of China and the Russia Federation jointly submitted to the CD secretariat four working papers on outer space issues, requesting that they be distributed as CD documents. The titles are as follows.

(Mr. Cheng, China)

First, transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities and the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space. Second, existing international legal instruments and prevention of the weaponization of outer space. Third, verification aspects of PAROS. Fourth, definition issues regarding legal instruments on the prevention of the weaponization of outer space. The last three papers had already been distributed as non-papers, while the first one, on transparency and confidence-building measures, was jointly drafted by the Chinese and Russian delegations recently.

That document consists of four parts: a general introduction on transparency measures and CBMs, the history and role of CBMs in international law and outer space activities, the relationship to CD/1679, and specific ways of adopting transparency and confidence-building measures in current outer space activities. It is our hope that all delegations will carefully study this and the other three documents, as they provide important food for thought for the forthcoming focus debate on PAROS. We would also like to mention that on 30 and 31 March this year China, together with Canada, the Russian Federation, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Canadian Simons Foundation, ran an international seminar on “Building the architecture for sustainable space security”. Discussions focused on threats to the peaceful use of outer space, ways of bringing about space security, using the existing international legal instruments and confidence-building measures in a lively and frank exchange. The report and a compilation of the statements are being put in order by UNIDIR for distribution to all delegation.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Japan, Ambassador Yoshiki Mine.

Mr. MINE (Japan): I would first like to express my deepest and most sincere condolences to the Government and people of the Republic of Korea on the sudden passing away of Dr. Lee, the Director-General of WHO. It was a very painful loss, not only to the international community but also to us, Japan.

Firstly, Sir, I would like to express my appreciation for your excellent handling of last week’s structured focused session on FMCT. Thanks to your excellent leadership, it has turned out to be an outstanding success. The results speak for themselves. Over 30 experts from capitals took part; about 10 working papers were submitted; and lively, constructive discussions took place on definitions, scope, verification and existing stocks. Also, I would like to note that so far this has been one of the permanent achievements of the P6 initiative.

Another point of distinction from last week’s CD session was the many valuable proposals put forward, in particular the United States proposal on the draft of an FMCT. Although the draft treaty needs to be examined in detail in capitals, I certainly welcome the proposal on the draft FMCT and mandate and the nomination of a new Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, Ms. Christina Rocca, as a positive step forward by the United States.

(Mr. Mine, Japan)

I would also like to note that Mr. Rademaker suggested that the United States is open to discussions on any other traditional items, namely, nuclear disarmament, PAROS and NSA, while negotiations are taking place on an FMCT. In this connection, I would like to call on all States to demonstrate the flexibility to allow the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Japan for his statement and for his very kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Switzerland, Ambassador Jürg Streuli.

Mr. STREULI (Switzerland) (translated from French): First of all I would like to express my sincerest condolences to the Korean delegation for the premature death of Dr. Lee. For us Dr. Lee was not just a great director of WHO, but also a friend of Geneva and of Switzerland.

Mr. President, the thematic debate on the FMCT last week was extremely useful. Thanks to your commitment to a structured approach to the central aspects of an FMCT treaty, the most interesting and most intensive discussion of recent years took place under your presidency. My delegation participated in it and contributed actively by circulating official working papers of the Conference on Disarmament on a pragmatic approach to the verification of an FMCT (CD/1771).

Without seeking to go into the details of the discussion at the expert level, the committed and substantive exchanges among the experts have shown us diplomats one thing: the FMCT is ready to be negotiated. Yes, there remain major elements to be resolved during a negotiation phase, but it is the experts in particular who can guide us in those aspects. For that reason, Switzerland hopes that an ad hoc committee can be set up in the Conference on Disarmament to begin negotiations on a treaty.

The only thing which is still lacking for us to be able to begin the negotiations at last is a consensus mandate adopted by the CD. For that reason my delegation welcomes the United States initiative of 18 May. Even if the draft treaty has yet to be studied in depth in our capital, we can already accept the draft mandate for an ad hoc committee and Mr. Rademaker's additional explanations. The draft mandate is formulated in an open manner as regards certain aspects of the treaty which do not yet enjoy consensus at this initial stage. In addition, the United States and other delegations have shown their willingness to continue the discussion on other traditional and new subjects within our Conference.

My delegation believes that the only thing we still lack is a little creativity on the part of all of us so as to arrive at a programme of work which will be acceptable to all the delegations in this Conference. After all, we have an agenda which enables us to discuss the major subjects of the CD. Do we really still need additional mandates for discussion under a programme of work?

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Switzerland for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco, Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki.

Mr. LOULICHKI (Morocco) (translated from Arabic): I would like first and foremost, on behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco, to extend our most sincere condolences to the friendly Korean delegation after the passing away of Dr. Lee, Director-General of the World Health Organization. When I visited Dr. Lee three months ago, when I arrived in Geneva, I discovered not only a Director-General who was fully expert in his areas of responsibility, but also Dr. Lee's humanity and his modesty. I hope that the Korean delegation will extend the condolences of the Kingdom of Morocco to the family of Dr. Lee.

Sir, at a time when your term as President of this session is coming to an end, I would like to express my appreciation and the gratitude of the Moroccan delegation for all of your efforts since you took the Chair, and in particular for conducting our meetings so successfully and so reasonably over this past week, during which we discussed the treaty to ban the production of fissile material for military purposes.

The delegation of the United States of America has over the last few days presented a draft treaty regarding the production of fissile material for military purposes. I would like here to take this opportunity to confirm that this draft will be studied most carefully by the competent Moroccan authorities. I would like, however, to say here that the very fact that the United States has taken this initiative and has shown its readiness to discuss drawing up a treaty is in itself a positive indication for the coming days. Our Conference is always in need of such initiatives, in order to break the stalemate that it has known for nearly nine years. This stalemate does not serve the interests of any of the member States, and it thwarts the aspirations of the international community and of international public opinion. The Moroccan delegation hopes that the American draft, and the discussions that will accompany it, will reinvigorate our discussions in this Conference, and hopes that the draft will be followed by other initiatives and constructive points of view, which will bring us closer and closer to achieving the objectives for which this Conference was established.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Morocco for his kind words and for his words of encouragement addressed to me. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? That does not seem to be the case.

I would like, before making my concluding remarks, to share with you the contents of a letter we received from the management of IAEA in answer to our invitation for the Agency to send a representative to our debates. This letter reads among other things: "The Director General was pleased to learn of a decision of the Conference on Disarmament to invite a representative of IAEA to discuss issues related to a fissile material cut-off treaty. The Director General would be pleased to send a representative of the Agency to discuss FMCT issues during the third part of the 2006 session of the Conference on Disarmament. At present, it would not be possible for the Agency to prepare a presentation at short notice for the CD during its current session."

At the beginning of my closing statement, I would like to join colleagues in expressing deep feelings of sorrow and sadness at the passing away of Dr. Lee. Dr. Lee was on a visit to Bucharest last September. He had been to Romania several times, and he was a great friend of

(The President)

ours. His abrupt passing away leaves us thinking about the merits of Dr. Lee as an able manager of one of the most important organizations in the system. I would like to ask the delegation of the Republic of Korea to convey, on behalf of the Minister of Health of Romania, who is presently at the World Health Assembly - and on behalf of this Mission - our entire sympathy and compassion to the Government of the Republic of Korea, as well as to the family of Dr. Lee.

(continued in French)

Since there is no one asking for the floor, and since this is the last meeting to be chaired by my country, this is the last time I will have the honour to address you from this podium. Allow me to make a few concluding remarks.

(continued in English)

As the 2006 session of the Conference will be remembered as the year of the P6, I hope the remaining presidencies will be associated with the topic of the focused, structured debate we held during our tenure - the ban on the production of fissile material for military purposes. Consequently, allow me also to make a focused assessment on the meetings we had last week and share with you some of my personal considerations.

Due to the frequency of meetings, I think we have come closer to the normal rhythm of work such a body should have. Due to the structure and the nature of the debates, we return to the normal mixture of political and technical components the CD needs in conducting its activities. Due to the participation of experts - 48 from 18 countries - as well as having nine working papers that were introduced as documents of the Conference, we have acknowledged the high level of expertise that deliberations and decisions need to rely on.

The proposal of the 2006 Presidents of the Conference to organize structured debates indeed allows for a more in-depth technical approach, to the benefit of all delegations and of the Conference as a whole. From the statements we have heard so far, I see this as a conclusion shared by everybody.

While moving along according to the P6 timetable, I think it is worth building on the momentum we have reached. We should not waste 11 more years until we revisit FMCT. Important ideas and proposals were launched last week. The first reactions to them should be further elaborated. This exercise has not been an aim in itself, but rather to find starting points for our ultimate goal: the relaunch of the substantive activity of the Conference.

We are encouraged by the consensus-building messages we have heard, according to which the FMCT negotiations should constitute a priority of this body, while recalling that priorities are not mutually exclusive.

From among the very many wise remarks we heard last week, let me quote a particular one: "The difficulties in attempting to define a future FMCT need not result in negotiations on a treaty being stalled until the matter has been solved."

(The President)

The message that I would like to convey to you at the end of my term as President of the Conference on Disarmament is that the job that is never started takes longest. I urge delegations to continue to engage in such debates and to work together on solving the pending issues before this Conference, the FMCT being widely recognized as one of them.

(continued in French)

Allow me to thank all the delegations for the encouragement they have given me in my efforts and for responding to my suggestions regarding the organization of work during Romania's term in the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Tim Caughley, and all the members of the secretariat of the Conference for their efficient support. I also thank Conference Services and, of course, the interpreters, who have helped us to understand each other better. It remains for me to extend my best wishes to Ambassador Valery Loshchinin of the Russian Federation, who will be succeeding me in the Chair. I wish him, and equally the Ambassadors of Senegal and Slovakia, every success as they carry out their duties, and assure them of my full cooperation within the P6.

(continued in English)

This concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 1 June 2006, at 10 a.m. in this conference room. Presidential consultations will be held on Wednesday, 31 May at 3.30 p.m. in the usual place.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.