

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 24 June 2008, at 10.10 a.m.

President: Ms. Christina ROCCA (United States of America)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1109th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Dear colleagues, it is an honour to preside over this Conference, and I wish to start by thanking my predecessors in the Chair this year: Ambassador Labidi of Tunisia, Ambassador Üzümcü of Turkey, Ambassador Bersheda of Ukraine, and Ambassador John Duncan of the United Kingdom. The common sense of purpose shown by all members of the presidency, their joint aim in getting the CD back to work, the genuine collegiality, is all impressive and gratifying. It is a demonstration of how harmony can be created from disparate voices, given the will to do so.

The members of the Conference began this year as we should have, by quickly agreeing on our agenda. We confirmed, again promptly, that our common focus remained on four key issues. Our informal discussions, ably directed by the seven coordinators, informed the presidency's deliberations, as did the interventions of numerous high-level speakers, beginning with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon himself. National statements framed the picture thus formed, and broad consultations by the presidency helped fill in the gaps.

When in March the presidency tabled the draft programme of work known as CD/1840, it was the logical and direct consequence of this work. We have heard numerous statements in support of its focused emphasis on facilitating substantive discussion on our agreed key issues, while commencing negotiation on the issue that is ripe for negotiations. It must be acknowledged that some delegations have questioned the need for the differentiation among the key issues shown by CD/1840. But it is unquestioned that CD/1840 is a compromise - and thus, by definition, unable to meet anyone's goals perfectly, but well-suited to advance everyone's interests - to get the CD back to work. No one in this room would ever advance this as their national position - and that was never the objective of CD/1840 - to create winners or losers. It is also the closest this Conference has come to a breakthrough in a very long time; we would argue its promised breakthrough is long overdue. If CD/1840 is adopted, we will all win much and lose a little. While we would have preferred to see this Conference adopt its programme of work earlier in the year, there is precedent for late adoption by the Conference of its programme, followed by substantive and useful work.

As President, the United States intends to continue to work closely with the P-6 and to continue to support the direction set through the hard work of the previous Presidents of this year, indeed of the Presidents of the past three years. We will remain open to supporting broad dialogue, we will continue consultations, and we will work to build upon and broaden the already almost unanimous support underlying CD/1840. Our hope is to see the CD become relevant again.

In the weeks leading up to our presidency we have also been listening, and we plan to respond to the calls from a number of member States for additional discussions of the agenda items. While we will continue to focus on CD/1840 as the desired outcome of this year's CD activities, with the support of the P-6 we propose a series of informal meetings during part III, in

(The President)

late July and in August. The purpose would be to enable States to address, again, the full range of issues on the agenda we adopted at the beginning of this year. We have asked our seven coordinators to resume their roles and to chair our discussions again. They all stand ready to facilitate our discussions, for which I express my thanks.

The full exchange of views in our renewed informal discussions will help refresh all the issues in members' minds, will help advance consensus on CD/1840 and will help inform our final report. It is proposed that each agenda item will get equal treatment which, given the limited time left to our session, will be a half-day meeting each. By scheduling these meetings after our break, this will enable delegations to consult more fully with capitals before our discussions and arrange for the presence of experts during those meetings as well, if so desired. It is our hope and objective that these seven informal meetings will allow us to review our entire agenda and further develop support for CD/1840. The secretariat will be handing out a draft schedule of activities.

There is still enough time left this year to return the Conference to substantive work and to restore value to the seemingly empty phrase that the CD is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. We know from past precedent that the Conference can accomplish substantive work, even late in its session, and we encourage all delegations to show flexibility in our deliberations and enthusiasm in our discussions.

I would now like to turn to the list of speakers for today's meeting. I have the following delegations wishing to take the floor: Australia, Japan, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Canada, France, Sri Lanka, China and New Zealand. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Australia, Ms. Caroline Millar.

Ms. MILLAR (Australia): Madam President, may I congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency. We look forward very much to working with you and offer our full support. I should also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Duncan, and members of the P-6 for their work to date. You can be assured of the Australian delegation's continuing full support.

I take the floor today to inform this Conference of an announcement made by the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Rudd, on 9 June 2008, in a speech in Kyoto, Japan, on the establishment of an international commission on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

In a joint statement of 12 June 2008, Prime Minister Rudd and Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan renewed their determination to strengthen the international disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime and to cooperate closely to achieve a successful outcome to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Australia has long taken a leading role on arms control and disarmament, including through the establishment of the Australia Group, the convening of the Canberra Commission, our contribution to strengthening the nuclear safeguards system and our work in the United Nations on the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

(Ms. Millar, Australia)

The International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament will follow up on the important work undertaken by the Canberra Commission and the Tokyo Forum in the 1990s. The Commission's findings will be considered by a major international conference of experts, sponsored by Australia, in late 2009. A key objective for the Commission will be to enhance global efforts to strengthen the NPT by paving the way for a successful Review Conference in 2010. The Commission will be co-chaired by International Crisis Group head Gareth Evans, who, as former Australian Foreign Minister, supervised the work of the Canberra Commission.

We expect that Commissioners will be senior international experts from a range of countries. Australia and Japan are bilaterally consulting on the specific terms of cooperation for the Commission, and I should add that I spoke to Mr. Evans this morning and he asked me to convey to the Conference on Disarmament his interest in consulting very broadly with all interested States, both NPT parties and States not party to the NPT in the lead-up to establishing the terms of reference for this Commission. So I look forward to having discussions with colleagues here.

I should also like to take this opportunity to voice my delegation's full support for the proposals of the Presidents for 2008 on a programme of work as contained in document CD/1840. This proposal builds on the excellent work conducted by last year's P-6, culminating in the L.1 proposal. My delegation also strongly supported the L.1 proposal. Document CD/1840 represents a balanced and well-considered proposal for commencing our work. You and your P-6 colleagues have conducted wide and good-faith consultations on this proposal. It does not prejudice any countries' position on any core issue and it allows us to commence meaningful work on all four core issues. Australia joins the many delegations that have already spoken in support of document CD/1840 this year. Australia finds it difficult to accept the prospect that this Conference will for another year fail to fulfil its mandate. The vast majority of delegations in this room support this proposal. We urge those few States which have not yet accepted it to reconsider urgently their positions. For it is not acceptable by any standard that the world's principal forum for negotiations on arms control and disarmament is still unable to commence substantive work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for her statement and for her kind words addressed to the Chair. The next speaker on our list is the Ambassador of Japan.

Mr. TARUI (Japan): Madam President, since I am taking the floor for the first time under your presidency, I would like to express my congratulations to you, Ambassador Rocca, on your assumption of the high post of President of the Conference on Disarmament.

Before I deliver my country's statement on draft decision CD/1840 on a programme of work, I would just like to add to the comments made by my Australian colleague, Ambassador Millar, on the initiative of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

On 12 June, the Prime Minister of Japan, Yasuo Fukuda, and the Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd, released a joint statement to reaffirm the particular importance of the

(Mr. Tarui, Japan)

Japan-Australia relationship and to strengthen further the comprehensive and strategic partnership between both countries. In the joint statement, both leaders renewed their determination to strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. What is more, Japan welcomed Prime Minister Rudd's proposal, on 9 June in Kyoto, to establish an international commission on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Japan and Australia are bilaterally consulting on the specific terms of cooperation for this commission, and we hope that it will contribute to reinforcing the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the lead-up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Turning now to the issue of CD/1840, my delegation highly commends the dedicated efforts of this year's six Presidents, based on the achievements of the past two years, to turn the CD back to substantive work. In this vein, we fully support the President's approach of continuing consultations with the member States that still have concerns over the draft decision on a programme of work. You can rely on Japan's fullest cooperation.

It is to be acknowledged that CD/1840 is a well-balanced compromise, as was the package proposal in L.1. In addition, CD/1840, building upon the package proposal, addresses the specific concerns that have been expressed by delegations. Japan can accept the adjustment made to the L.1 package and supports the adoption of CD/1840.

With regard to an FMCT, Japan would like to re-emphasize that no delegation has expressed opposition to negotiations on the prohibition of production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, notwithstanding differences over the modality and the scope of such negotiations. While stating the clear objective of negotiating a ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear-weapon purposes, CD/1840 does not in any way prejudice the outcome of negotiations. In other words, the draft decision provides a framework for negotiations without preconditions. Thus, as for what should constitute the "modality and the scope of negotiations", for instance, whether and how to include verification and stocks, CD/1840 allows each member State to freely pursue their respective positions and priorities and to submit proposals on any issue they deem relevant in the course of negotiations.

For advancement in disarmament, the discussions in each field should progress independently and on their own merit, and logically it is inappropriate to hold back potential progress in one area just because of slower progress in others. Having said this, CD/1840 is comprehensive and balanced, since it allows substantive discussions on the other three core agenda items, with a view to enabling future compromise(s) and agreement(s) and including the possibility of future negotiations under any agenda item. Therefore, we fail to find a reason against accepting CD/1840 and recommencing the substantive work of the Conference on the basis of this draft decision.

Lastly, Japan believes that it is indisputable that the Conference on Disarmament will contribute to the improvement of international security by fulfilling its role as the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. By continuing the deadlock in the CD, we perpetuate the ongoing crisis in the international security environment created by our own failure to act. We must therefore have a stronger sense of alarm at this precarious situation. I implore all the CD member States to act now with the utmost urgency.

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

Mr. LOSCHININ (Russian Federation) (spoke in Russian): Madam President, the Russian delegation warmly welcomes you as President of the Conference and we would like to assure you of our full support and cooperation and wish you every success.

The Russian delegation believes that a great deal of useful work was done during the Conference's winter session this year. The result was the draft decision of the Conference prepared by the six Presidents on the programme of work (CD/1840). This really is the result of a lot of work, of numerous consultations with all delegations, and the logical outcome of our efforts over the last period to normalize the situation in the CD. We have every reason to congratulate each other on this significant step forward. Of course, far from everything in this proposal suits us. Indeed, other delegations are not fully satisfied either. We, for example, would like a stronger and more focused mandate on what is for us the priority item on the agenda, item 3, PAROS. We would, naturally, be interested in a negotiating mandate on the draft PPWT and in the establishment of an ad hoc committee on PAROS. We also have individual issues of a procedural nature. Nevertheless, we are prepared, for the sake of the earliest possible resumption of the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament, not to oppose this document. We have already stated this in our national capacity and the same position was confirmed in the statement by the Eastern European Group at the beginning of the spring session, with which the Russian delegation fully associated itself. Only by such steps towards one another is it possible to achieve consensus and contribute to the revival of the role of multilateral disarmament on the global agenda.

Madam President, we are interested in seeing your consultations with States members of the Conference and regional groups, which you intend to continue, be constructive and fruitful. At the same time, we are convinced that the search for consensus on the Conference's programme of work, would also be furthered by the continuation of the in-depth thematic discussions on all agenda items that we began in the winter session. We are convinced that this sort of conversation would be useful for the Conference and would bring us closer to a consensus on the draft programme of work. In this connection, we should like to support the Presidents' proposal for the organization of the concluding stage of the work of this year's session. We see this in document CD/WP.549/Add.2.

It is our expectation that the discussions scheduled in this document for 5 August on the matter of priority for Russia, ensuring security in space, will make it possible to continue the topical discussion begun in the spring, including about the Russian-Chinese draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects (PPWT), and about the question of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities.

Clearly, the half-day set aside for this can hardly be enough for the discussion of the various aspects of the draft treaty, including the questions that have come from a number of countries. In this connection, we, together with our Chinese colleagues, would like to suggest to

(Mr. Loschinin, Russian Federation)

all interested delegations that the discussions be continued the following day, 6 August, in the context of an open-ended informal meeting, as a side event and of bilateral consultations. We would, of course, entirely welcome the participation of experts from capitals in this type of consultations. Russian experts would be ready to answer questions and to make comments on the draft treaty. We invite everyone to take part in them, including, as I have said, experts from capitals.

By way of information, we should also like to say that, by agreement with the authorities of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, a representative of our Mission in Geneva gave a presentation on the draft outer space treaty in Vienna on 17 June, at the fifty-first session of COPUOS. The statement detailed the reasons why Russia and China launched this initiative, explained the basic elements of the treaty and set out in detail the legal arguments behind its key provisions. Most delegations' and observers' reaction to our proposal for the commencement of real interaction between the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the question of a PPWT was extremely positive. The bureau of the Committee and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs are looking at possible forms of joint work in this regard. We consider the introduction of the draft PPWT in Vienna to have been a useful practical step for the organization of joint work between the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in ensuring space security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Russian Federation for his kind words to the Chair and for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Ms. MTSHALI (South Africa): Madam President, at the outset, please allow me to add my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and to express our appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the 2008 CD Presidents thus far to steer our discussions in this forum with a view to moving forward on a programme of work.

Since the tabling of document CD/1840 in March of this year, my delegation has closely followed the interventions of numerous delegations that have spoken about the CD's continued inability to agree on a programme of work. Many delegations have also lamented the stalemate that has existed in the Conference over the past number of years.

However, if one looks at the Conference on Disarmament, one cannot claim that the structure of the Conference does not allow negotiations to take place. Indeed, if this were the case, then it would not have been possible for the CD to have negotiated any treaty to date. One cannot argue that if the CD secretariat had more staff, then negotiations would commence. One cannot say that a lack of funding prevents the CD from negotiating. Neither can one make the case that the Conference's agenda does not allow for negotiations to take place.

Similarly, the rules of procedure are often said to be in need of revision. But the rules of procedure do not prohibit negotiations. On the contrary, the rules merely seek to structure, guide and expedite the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Nevertheless, there seems to be an abundance of experts on the rules of procedure, just as there appears to be an abundance of

(Ms. Mtshali, South Africa)

interpretations of various rules. An ad hoc committee would sometimes appear to mean two different things to different delegations, whilst a programme of work can apparently even mean three different things to only two different delegations.

The consensus rule in the CD has so often also been mentioned as the main reason why the Conference has not been able to negotiate anything in the last couple of years. But is it not perhaps the misuse of the consensus rule, rather than the rule itself, that has created the problem? The consensus rule does not apply by itself; it is the members of the CD that choose when and how to apply it. When it is used to block the commencement - not the finalization - of negotiations, one can perhaps understand why some refer to the "tyranny of consensus". We should therefore not forget that it is the member States which decide whether or not to negotiate - not the "machinery", or the institution.

The lack of negotiations in the CD has been ascribed to a number of things, but many delegations and commentators often refer to the lack of political will as a cause - or perhaps the main cause - of the absence of progress in the Conference over the past years. In this regard, we should not overlook the fact that we, as representatives of our countries, have an important role to play in recommending courses of action to our principals that may influence or shape the exercise of political will.

In his closing remarks as CD President last week, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom reminded delegations that the perfect should not become the enemy of the good. My delegation would in fact go further by saying that if we wait for the perfect programme of work to be adopted by the CD, we will probably wait for a very long time. None of the 2008 CD Presidents has claimed that CD/1840 is perfect, a fact that has been recognized by a number of delegations since the formal tabling of the document and as we have just heard from our colleague from the Russian Federation. My delegation certainly also does not believe that CD/1840 is perfect, much as document L.1 was also not perfect in 2007. However, whilst not perfect, my delegation believes that CD/1840 represents that which is possible and practical under the present circumstances.

All member States obviously have priorities, but different priorities need not necessarily be mutually exclusive. With a little ingenuity and a lot of flexibility and compromise, it should be possible for us to work with - and not against - each other. My delegation therefore stands ready to join a consensus on document CD/1840.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of South Africa for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. GRINIUS (Canada): Madam President, please accept congratulations on your ascension to the presidency.

Canada has the honour, on behalf of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, to table in the Conference on Disarmament the report of the conference entitled: "Security in Space: the Next Generation", which took place in Geneva from 31 March to 1 April of this year. This year the conference was convened with the financial and material support of



(Mr. Grinius, Canada)

the Governments of the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation and Canada, as well as from the Secure World Foundation and the Simons Foundation. In addition to the summary report, UNIDIR will also prepare a publication which should be circulated later in the year.

As many of you are aware, this conference was the latest in a series of annual conferences held by UNIDIR on the issue of space security, the peaceful uses of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This initiative is one of the few opportunities to bring together members of the CD with academics, experts, non-governmental organizations, scientists and the private sector to discuss the challenges in space and to stimulate our thinking on how to address these issues. As a first-time participant at the conference, I found it highly educational.

Canada would be grateful if this report were issued as an official document of the CD and distributed to all member States. We would also suggest that a reference be made to it in an appropriate section of this year's report of the CD to the United Nations General Assembly. Those delegations wishing to have a copy of the report of the conference immediately may contact UNIDIR directly.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Canada for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of France.

Mr. DOBELLE (France) (spoke in French): Madam President, since this is the first time that I have spoken since you have become President of the Conference on Disarmament, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your accession to that office. I would also like to take this opportunity to assure you of the full support of my delegation in the discharge of your duties.

With regard to the programme of work of the CD and resolution 1840, I would refer you to the statement which was made on behalf of the European Union on 15 May last by the Slovenian presidency, a statement to which we of course subscribe.

As you know, in his speech at Cherbourg on 21 March 2008, the President of the French Republic, Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, proposed an ambitious disarmament plan and he has taken transparency measures without precedent on the part of a nuclear-weapon State. The White Paper on Defence and National Security which the President presented on 17 June last, stresses this once again: France is firmly determined to move forward on this path.

At Cherbourg, the President proposed, in particular, inviting international experts to come and witness the dismantling of our facilities for the production of military fissile material at Pierrelatte and Marcoule. It is my honour today, dear colleagues, to renew that invitation before you and I am happy to announce that a visit to those facilities will be organized for 16 September next. All member States of this forum are invited to send a representative, if they so desire. My delegation will be prepared in the coming weeks to provide you with all the necessary practical information.

(Mr. Dobelle, France)

As I stressed in my statement on 27 March last, France is playing the game of transparency to enhance confidence. Its commitment to disarmament is reflected in concrete action. The invitation which has been renewed before you today testifies once again to that. It is because confidence, transparency and reciprocity constitute the very basis of collective security and disarmament that we call upon the international community to set about implementing the plan of action proposed by the President of the Republic.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. JAYATILLEKA (Sri Lanka): Madam President, may I join my colleagues in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency and wishing you all the best, not least because we know you in your earlier incarnation as a good and close friend of Sri Lanka.

I wish to strike two notes, somewhat different from each other, but certainly not contradictory. One is a note of optimism.

Looking at the global political horizon, it is possible to discern the prospect of change, which may enable us to bring once again to the fore the highest ideal of this Conference, the ideal of comprehensive and general disarmament, a possibility which we last saw flicker in Reykjavik in 1986 but which has disappeared since then. So, this is the optimism that I wished to share with you, and I hope that in the foreseeable future we will be able to make serious progress on something to which, unfortunately, only lip service has been paid.

The second note that I would like to strike is one of realism.

As you know, Sri Lanka has long been associated with the cause of disarmament and has institutionally contributed, has chaired important module points of the process. Because of our location, of our situation, we also have a stake in this, but it is no secret that we are not players. In that sense, we can reflect somewhat more objectively on the discussion and the debate. In doing so, I think that we have to be somewhat more realistic than we have been so far. It is indubitable that CD/1840 is a good basis for discussion. Of that Sri Lanka has no doubt, having contributed to its precursor. However, I would also wish to draw attention to certain underlying structural anomalies or problems of geometry, which have to be addressed if this effort is to be successful.

What do I mean by this? CD/1840, like its precursor, favours one agenda item over the others. Now there may be a sound logic for that. The argument is that there is far more prospect of substantive negotiation on that agenda item. But that particular item, which is elevated over the others, involves certain member States more than it does certain others. Now if those member States feel that their fundamental national interests are at variance with the spirit of CD/1840, then it is not simply a question of a handful of holdouts, who have been convinced that those actors assume a greater specific gravity, if I may say so, and therefore, their concerns have to be very seriously engaged with. And if it is the perception of these States that this is more than a matter of nuance, that it is their core strategic and security interests that are at stake, we may have to do better than we have done in getting them on board. And doing that may, in fact, mean

(Mr. Jayatilleka, Sri Lanka)

looking afresh at the other agenda items, because it is no secret that for certain States, there is an underlying linkage, and there may be the possibility of making progress on fissile material, for instance, if there is progress on some of the other agenda items. So, depending on how serious we are, even in this prioritization, how sincere we are, it may be necessary, precisely, in order to make progress, to revisit and upgrade the status of some of the other agenda items.

With these, I just wanted to share those thoughts with you, while reiterating that we do believe that CD/1840 is definitely a basis for very serious negotiations and should not be rejected out of hand by anybody.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. WANG Qun (China) (spoke in Chinese): Thank you, Madam President. First of all, the Chinese delegation warmly congratulates Ambassador Rocca on her accession to the presidency of the CD. We are very pleased that Ambassador Rocca is bringing the gender perspective to the CD, and we hope that this will inject vitality into the work of the Conference. We wish you success. The Chinese delegation will cooperate fully with you in your endeavours.

Secondly, the Chinese delegation notes that in her statement Ambassador Rocca made her wishes quite clear, namely that the CD will reach consensus on the programme of work, even if it is a bit late. We have also noted that, since the second part of the session, some delegations have expressed a range of views, including some concerns, with regard to the work of the Conference. We sincerely hope that all the parties concerned will be in a position to continue working towards the launching of a constructive dialogue and consultations with a view to narrowing their differences and reaching agreement on a programme of work that is acceptable to all as soon as possible.

Thirdly, we note that in her statement Ambassador Rocca has suggested that informal discussions be held in late July and in August on the work of the Conference before we agree on a programme of work. We also note that the distinguished Ambassador of the Russian Federation has put forward a specific proposal on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS), which China fully supports.

In short, the Chinese delegation is ready to work together with other delegations to make progress in the work of the Conference.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. MACKAY (New Zealand): Madam President, could I echo the comments made by other colleagues congratulating you on your assumption of the Chair? We look very much forward to working with you, as we have with other colleagues who have assumed the presidency during the course of this year.

(Mr. MacKay, New Zealand)

I wanted to take up a couple of points that have arisen during this morning's discussion, and I think we have had a good discussion on a range of things this morning. First of all, I would like to thank you for the proposal that you have made in your statement that we recommence some informal discussions on the core issues, and certainly we would be very happy to see that happen. We think that anything - to use your words, Madam President - which helps to refresh all the issues on members' minds and actually reminds all of us of the issues that we have before us can only be positive, and certainly if it also goes further and helps advance consensus on CD/1840, that, too, will be invaluable. It is also important, obviously, as you note, that we at this stage keep very much in our minds the nature of the final report that the CD will be presenting as the result of its deliberations during the course of this year.

We noted the proposal by our distinguished Russian colleague, supported by our distinguished Chinese colleague, that, in the event that there was some spillover of discussion, if it was not possible to complete discussion in a particular session, there should be room to spillover, for example, into a side event or some other arrangement, and we think that that is a very good idea. Clearly, we would not want to cut the discussion short at this stage. I think it is also fair to say that we are caught in a bit of a cleft stick, and I think the CD has for some time been caught in a number of cleft sticks. I think it is apparent to all of us that until we actually begin negotiations States are not actually willing or able, in the case of many States, to provide the sort of resources that are required to have a fully-fledged discussion of any of these items. But having said that, we have seen, I think, some very good discussion of them in the past, and as I say, your proposal, I think, is a very sound one that we would very much support.

The second comment that I wanted to make relates to CD/1840, and a number of colleagues have referred to that in their interventions this morning. We would certainly support your comments and your urging that colleagues should move forward to reach a consensus on the basis of CD/1840. As you say, it does not suit everyone's interests, but in our view, too, it is the best basis for advancing our work in the CD. And although, as our distinguished colleague from China noted, it is quite late in the day to agree on a work programme, it is actually never too late in the day to agree on a work programme. We would very much echo the comments that have been made here with regard to CD/1840.

As far as our own national position is concerned, we would also be very happy to commence negotiations on any of the core items that are before the CD. We would be very happy to commence negotiations on any of them. As a non-nuclear-weapon State and a State that has taken a very strong position on nuclear weapons, we would particularly wish to see negotiations commence on nuclear disarmament. But having said that, we acknowledge that it is necessary to start somewhere, and while it is certainly true, as our distinguished colleague from Sri Lanka said, that there are many different views within the CD on precisely what our work programme should contain, we do have to begin, in our view, with one of the core elements. The reality is that no delegation - I think certainly no delegation that is not a huge delegation - no delegation here is in a position to begin serious negotiations on all of the core issues before the CD. That is simply not a practical proposition. If you look at the last major triumph of the CD - and it was a major triumph and unfortunately a long time ago - the last major triumph of the CD was of course the Convention on Chemical Weapons. The CD at that time did not attempt to negotiate the Convention on Chemical Weapons and one or two or three or four other

(Mr. MacKay, New Zealand)

issues at the same time. That would simply not have happened. If we had tried to do it in the case of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, we would not have got a chemical weapons convention, and the international community would be that much the poorer, and we would all be that much the poorer, and all of our national securities would be that much the weaker. So, again, I go back to the point that we need to start somewhere, and I think it is clear from the comments that have been made, not only this year but also previously, that the item that offers the greatest prospect of forward movement is FMCT, as identified in CD/1840.

Now I think sometimes, colleagues - and we all do this - that we make the mistake of looking at an FMCT in isolation. Going back to my earlier comments, as a very strongly committed non-nuclear-weapon State, a State that is strongly committed to nuclear disarmament, we would like to see, we want to see, my instructions from capital are to see, progress on nuclear disarmament. We believe that an FMCT would contribute to nuclear disarmament. We believe that the more comprehensive an FMCT is, the more it will contribute to nuclear disarmament. We would like to see therefore verification. We would like to see existing stocks included in such a treaty, an FMCT treaty. But what we do not expect is for everyone to agree in advance on the contents of an FMCT. When we begin negotiations, we will certainly argue vigorously and present very strong arguments in favour of inclusion of verification and existing stocks. But it would not be realistic, in our view, before we commence negotiations, for everyone in this room to sit down and set out what they believe an FMCT should contain. That is the outcome of the negotiation. It is not something you determine in advance of the negotiation.

Could I then move on to the third point, which also links very neatly, I think, with nuclear disarmament, and that is the statement made by our distinguished colleagues from Australia and Japan with regard to the initiative that was being taken for a new international commission on nuclear proliferation and nuclear disarmament? Again, this was something that we very much welcome. We see considerable prospects for a commission of this sort, building on the Canberra Commission, the Tokyo Commission and other recent work that has been done, including obviously the Blix Commission and work that has been done under the auspices of the Secretary-General to address this extremely important item from both the non-proliferation and the nuclear disarmament perspectives.

Certainly, as we and other colleagues have said in the NPT PrepComs, as we move into the lead-up to the 2020 Review Conference, there is a pressing need to develop a common approach in the lead-up to the Review Conference, and I think it is very clear, and it will be clear to all of us, that what is needed also is high-level, cross-regional leadership. We very much welcome, as I say, the announcement by Australia and Japan, which will undoubtedly take us further in providing not only fresh thinking, but also that cross-regional leadership. We want to thank our Australian colleague for the indications given that Senator Evans, who has extremely strong credentials in this area, as in many others, will carry out wide consultations as the process continues.

Finally, in terms of welcoming announcements, I wanted to welcome the announcement from our distinguished colleague from France with regard to the transparency and confidence-building measures that his Government is taking and the invitation issued to member States of the CD to participate in that. I think that one of the clear themes again that came

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through from both the NPT Preparatory Conferences and also the discussion that we have had here in the CD informal discussions, for example, with regard to nuclear disarmament, is that transparency and confidence-building measures can play a pivotal role in terms of helping to contribute to nuclear disarmament, and the statement, as I say, made by the distinguished representative of France, on the inspection inviting transparency with regard to the destruction of fissile material is obviously an important part of that.

So, once again, thank you very much, Madam President, for your proposals, which we have no doubt will lay the ground for further, very good discussion in the CD.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of New Zealand for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

There are no more speakers on my list. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? That does not seem to be the case.

This concludes our business for today. The Conference will convene tomorrow, Wednesday, 25 June, in a plenary meeting in order to listen to a statement from Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union. The meeting will be held tomorrow promptly at 10 a.m. in this chamber.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.