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# Conference on Disarmament

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English

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## Final record of the one thousand one hundred and forty-sixth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 2 July 2009, at 10.20 a.m.

*President:* Ms. Caroline Millar.....(Australia)

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\* Reissued for technical reasons.

**The President:** I declare open the 1146th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome today to some additional members of the Australian delegation, members of Australia's Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, led by the Committee Chair, Mr. Kelvin Thomson, and including Mr. John Forest, Ms. Jill Hall and Mr. Luke Simpkins. It is a great honour, privilege and pleasure to have them with us.

Before giving the floor to the speakers on my list, I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Bernhard Brasack of Germany. His term as a representative of his country in the Conference on Disarmament is now reaching its end. Since his arrival in Geneva in 2005, he has represented his country with distinction and worked effectively in the fields of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation. Ambassador Brasack, who has always displayed great competence, human qualities and much wisdom, leaves us an example to follow in successfully completing our work. On behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, I would like to convey to a dear colleague, our friend and his family our very best wishes for his success and happiness in his new functions.

I have the following speakers for this plenary meeting this morning: first of all, the representative of Germany, to be followed by the representative of the United States of America. I give the floor to Ambassador Brasack.

**Mr. Brasack (Germany):** Madam President, thank you for the much too kind and slightly undeserved words. Since this is the first time that I have had the honour to take the floor under the Australian presidency of the Conference, let me first of all congratulate you on your assumption of the Conference on Disarmament presidency, to which I pledge the full and sincere support of the German delegation, present and future. At the same time, allow me to thank your predecessors in this year's P-6, and particularly, the last presidency Argentina.

In my opening statement to the Conference, on 5 August 2005, I stated that: "Despite the long stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament, I start my work here in Geneva with great optimism and confidence. I am deeply convinced that all delegations ultimately are striving for the same objective, are supporting effective multilateralism in the area of disarmament and arms control. I fully share the view expressed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, in his report 'In larger freedom', that success through multilateralism is not always guaranteed, but that 'States have no reasonable alternative to working together, even if collaboration means taking the priorities of your partners seriously to ensure that they will take seriously your own in return'."

In applying the principles mentioned by Kofi Annan, we came at last to an important turning point on 29 May 2009: the adoption of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament. Yet there is no room for complacency. The expectations of the international community as regards the Conference have clearly risen. Also, a programme of work is not yet action, but a promise of action. We cannot afford to get into sleepwalking mode again. We are therefore now engaged in a great test. Before we can really benefit from a driving vision in the Conference on Disarmament, we have to get rid of some of the nightmares that we inherited.

In spite of the adoption of the programme of work, it is obvious that differing perceptions and priorities persist. The remaining barriers of mistrust and possible hidden agendas and maybe even secret reservations will have to be brought to light and broken down on a daily basis as soon as negotiations and substantial discussions on all issues start. It is not only the mandatory task of the Conference to negotiate, but also its mandatory duty

to do so, and to do so in an effective manner with meaningful lasting outcomes in the shortest possible period of time.

Allow me to restrict myself today to a few forward-looking, very personal words of advice as regards the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Since these are personal remarks only, which I have not put forward to my own capital for agreement, I would be grateful if you would refrain from holding my successor accountable for the pieces of advice that I am about to lay before you.

Not so long ago, I heard the view that when the FMCT negotiations start, we will first need to discuss the underlying definitions and agree on them. This alone might take more than a year. We could only go forward to any further steps as regards the scope of an FMCT and an effective international verification mechanism once the definitions are fully agreed. I believe that such a view is wrong and would be a guarantee for failure, or at least endless delay. Without at least a prior general understanding on the scope of an FMCT and without definitions that are in tune with existing — or at least feasible, practical and affordable — verification techniques, such an approach to FMCT negotiations would lead to a dead end in my view.

These deliberations should not take place in a compartmentalized, closed-box system. A practical integral approach to definitions, scope and effective international verification in a triangular manner is needed.

Definitions are a servant — or handmaiden — to the intended scope. They should be in tune with effective verification measures. They should enable and facilitate verification, not prevent verification or make verification less feasible, more cumbersome, technically more difficult or too expensive. They should also reflect the intended scope.

Therefore, as I mentioned before, there is a clear triangular relationship between definitions, scope and the possibility of effective verification. Accordingly, they have to be treated in parallel. They have to be fine-tuned neatly to each other in parallel throughout the negotiations.

If the verification task were to be entrusted to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) — and I frankly do not see any other feasible and affordable option — this would require a dramatic overhaul of the Agency, particularly as regards the inspection system and inspection resources. A gradual increase in the IAEA inspection capacity would be possible with the acceptance of IAEA verification of fuel-cycle plants in nuclear-weapon States on a voluntary basis, as a measure of a steady phase-in. This would at the same time alleviate one of the inequalities of the NPT, the fact that non-nuclear-weapon States must submit all their fuel-cycle activities to safeguards while nuclear-weapon States so far have no such obligations.

It would be another recipe for failure if the members of the Conference who produce or have produced fissile materials for explosive purposes were to try to “pre-cook” the FMCT negotiation outcomes behind the scenes, in the back rooms, and then try to impose their lowest common denominator, for example as regards the scope or the verification mechanism, on the large majority of non-nuclear Conference members. Such a strategy did not turn out to be viable, for example, in the context of the deliberations on cluster munitions in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Such a strategy would again lead to the failure of the FMCT negotiations.

An approach of pleading almost unlimited verification requirements for all the others — for example, non-nuclear-weapon States in the NPT context — while at the same time raising an unlimited number of questions and concerns and asking for manifold exemptions as soon as the FMCT verification of one’s own relevant nuclear installations

are concerned, would also doom the FMCT negotiations to failure. Basically, the same yardstick has to apply to everyone.

In my view the establishment of a group of scientific and safeguards experts with practical experience in the implementation of IAEA safeguards, as regards the technical as well as the legal aspects, is now an immediate requirement. Germany has made such proposals on many occasions in the last two years.

It would also not be advisable in my view to approach the question of the inclusion of stocks upfront in a generic way, in a “yes” or “no” manner, or to seek a solution in a generic way in the discussions about the scope. A discussion on this topic could, for example, be started in the context of the requirements for an effective verification system. If, for example, the effective verification of a production ban required a specific tangible baseline for the cut-off, it might be necessary to provide data on the size of existing stocks, at least in an aggregate manner. The issue of existing stocks would also have to be addressed when dealing in the text with transfers or possible transfer bans.

In addition, without an immediate binding moratorium on any further production of fissile material for explosive purposes, a premium would be put on complicating matters unnecessarily and delaying the FMCT negotiations.

A universal Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, together with a universal Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and FMCT, would constitute a solid basis for a process of step-by-step nuclear-weapon reductions until the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world could be achieved. Among other things, this would make any step irreversible.

The verification mechanism for the FMCT, together with the verification system of the NPT, could also constitute a decisive building block for a future mechanism to verify a nuclear-weapon-free world, and would indeed be a necessary precursor for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Allow me, finally, to express my profound gratitude to all colleagues in this chamber, as well as the many colleagues who have left Geneva before me, for their friendship and cooperation throughout my four years here. Special, deeply-felt thanks go to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, and to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte. They support our common efforts in differing ways, but any progress achieved so far would have been unthinkable without their assistance and advice.

A special thanks also goes to Jerzy Zaleski, to Peter Kolarov, who was invaluable to me in my capacity as regional coordinator of the Group of Western European and Other States in CCW matters, and to Ambassador Caughley. Thanks also go to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which has been and continues to be a powerhouse of ideas and inspiration.

I have profited a lot from and was supported by a number of very different institutions, and I would like to mention *pars pro toto* the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, the Geneva Forum, the Middle Powers Initiative, the Monterey Institute of International Studies and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, as well as the websites of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

My grateful thanks also go to all the members of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Implementation Support Unit of the Biological Weapons Convention, the interpreters, the meeting-room clerks and the technicians, who provide excellent services on a constant basis, here in Geneva and also in New York.

Sometimes I am asked if I feel any regret or even bitterness that I have been assigned by my authorities to other duties just as the prospects for substantial work in the Conference on Disarmament are finally bright. Such a question always brings back to my mind's eye Mount Nebo, which I visited when I attended the Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention at the Dead Sea in Jordan. This is where, according to the Bible, Moses saw the "land of milk and honey" — it must have been the valley of the River Jordan then — after having roamed with his people in the desert for years. Here I have to add three remarks: Firstly, it depends very much on the delegations to the Conference on Disarmament if the implementation of the programme of work is to be comparable to that land of milk and honey. Secondly, I have reservations, or at least no immediate plans, about dropping dead instantly, as Moses did on Mount Nebo, because thirdly, I would never compare myself with that great ancient leader anyway.

**The President:** Thank you very much, Ambassador Brasack, for your very thoughtful valedictory statement, and I think it addresses very important matters of substance which should guide us in the work we have ahead of us. I hope it will also be helpful to members of the Australian parliamentary committee undertaking inquiries into Australia's non-proliferation and disarmament obligations.

The next speaker I have on my list is the representative of the United States of America.

**Mr. Larson** (United States of America): Madam President, I want first of all to extend my congratulations to you as you begin your tenure as President of the Conference on Disarmament. We stand confident that the Conference will continue its work under the same very high standard of leadership that we have witnessed throughout this year, and assure you of our full support in your efforts. I would also like to echo your thanks and commendations to Ambassador Brasack for his very distinguished service to this body.

As many in and outside of this chamber have observed, a new spirit and a new optimism are now apparent in the arms control realm. We noted with great interest the remarks of former Australian foreign minister Evans to the Conference earlier this week, and his observations that this year may be in fact the beginning of a renaissance of disarmament and non-proliferation progress.

We feel this renewed sense of mission acutely in the United States. The Obama Administration has already begun numerous efforts which are widely seen as aiding this process. Most categorically, perhaps, as is well known, this April, President Obama stated the United States' "commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons". We are pursuing this goal, distant as it may be, with energy and flexibility. In one track we are well under way in our negotiations with the Russian Federation to draft a treaty which, by December of this year, is projected to follow on from the precedent-setting Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) of 1991. On another, separate, track Vice-President Biden has been directed to work with his former colleagues in the United States Senate to secure ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

At the same time, along with these efforts to achieve statutory arms control landmarks, work with our friends and allies continues apace on the ground. Just this week, we removed the last highly-enriched uranium from Romania under our Global Threat Reduction Initiative. Concerted efforts with Romania, the Russian Federation and IAEA have contributed to securing these vulnerable nuclear materials and reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism.

Internally, the Administration has begun a number of intensive "blank slate" reviews of our defence and security policies, ranging from the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Nuclear Posture Review to the Missile Defense and Space reviews. These too are being conducted pursuant to President Obama's goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. As

appropriate, and as they are completed, we expect to draw on the conclusions reached in these reviews in our substantive discussions of the issues before us here on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

We are encouraged by the sense that our renewed flexibility has contributed significantly to the adoption of the Conference's programme of work, contained in CD/1864, and its charge to the Conference to begin negotiations on a verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The achievement of the 29 May consensus owes much to the collective hard work, flexibility, innovation and commitment to advancing international security demonstrated by the delegations in this chamber, and particularly to the leadership of the Conference by Ambassador Jazairi and all members of the P-6. These qualities will continue to be needed as we proceed through the procedural aspects of meeting the mandate in CD/1864 that all members have agreed to.

We recognize that, as the work programme moves forward, delegations must be confident that there will be full opportunity to exercise their national security obligations under the rules of procedure. At the same time, we are confident that these rules will provide the necessary protections throughout the process of deliberations. With this assurance in mind, we join the many delegations who have called for rapid agreement on draft texts CD/1866/Rev.1 and CD/1867 in order to meet our common goals and obligations.

Madam President, you have the fullest support of my delegation for your efforts, especially as you seek the necessary consensus on our slate of chairs and special coordinators and our calendar of work. We eagerly await, under your leadership, undertaking the work programme in earnest at the start of the August session.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the United States for his statement, including the important update on issues in the United States. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Pakistan.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Madam President, allow me at the outset to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Australia has always played an active and constructive role on disarmament and arms control issues. The presence of the Australian parliamentary delegation in today's plenary is testimony to this fact. Its presence is also an indication of the importance the people of Australia attach to this august forum. We are honoured by their presence.

You have made a very good and sound start through your diligent efforts to build consensus in the Conference. I am certain that your efforts will be successful. We are confident that your professionalism, dedication, enthusiasm and leadership will prove to be an asset for the Conference and enable us to move forward on the basis of consensus on pending issues at the earliest possible. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

I take this opportunity to also express my deepest appreciation for the transparent, constructive and impartial manner in which Ambassador Moritán of Argentina, your predecessor, conducted his presidency. He has built a solid foundation for our future work and spared no effort in seeking a consensus.

The Conference on Disarmament is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. It has produced key disarmament treaties. It has played an important role in strengthening international peace and stability. We are convinced that it will continue to do so in the future as well. We are not impressed by insinuations to the contrary.

The Conference on Disarmament cannot function in isolation from the global environment since we work on the basis of equal security for all. The positive developments the world is witnessing have helped to resolve the stalemate in this body.

After 10 long years, the Conference has adopted a programme of work which envisages working groups on four core issues – nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances, outer space and a fissile-material treaty. All four issues are equally important and progress in the form of legally-binding instruments is the way forward. The Conference cannot afford to ignore any of them as they reflect a delicate balance of interests among the member States.

We must also proceed with due diligence and foresight, so as to avoid any unforeseen pitfalls. My delegation therefore believes in a cautious and calculated, yet constructive and proactive approach. We must prepare for our future work, not for the next few days or weeks but for the months and years ahead.

The next step is to decide on the chairs of the working groups and special coordinators, and to finalize the calendar of activities for the remaining part of the 2009 session. In this regard, a number of delegations, including mine, have made proposals and sought clarifications on some aspects of the two draft documents before us. Among these is the suggestion that the special security interests of the non-nuclear-weapon States that do not belong to a military alliance or enjoy a security umbrella deserve special consideration, even in procedural matters, so that they are better placed to protect their interests. If there are cogent reasons to the contrary, we would like to hear them.

We also believe that for the sake of clarity the documents before us should be merged in order to implement the programme of work and clearly indicate that these working arrangements are for the remaining part of the 2009 session.

You have already initiated consultations to seek consensus. We encourage you to persevere with these consultations so that all delegations can join the consensus as soon as possible. We are ready to constructively engage in this process.

Allow me to take this opportunity to bid farewell to our illustrious German colleague, Ambassador Brasack, who is proceeding to take up his new assignment. We shall miss his wise counsel and constructive role. I would like to wish him every success in the future. I would also like to express a warm welcome to our new Japanese colleague, Ambassador Suda, and look forward to working with him.

**The President:** I thank the Ambassador of Pakistan for his statement. I have no other speakers on my list. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

**Ms. Paterson** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Madam President, as this is the first time I have taken the floor under the Australian presidency, let me first of all congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency and offer you the full support of my delegation. May I also thank the other members of this year's P-6 platform, and in particular Ambassador Jazaïry, for their tremendous efforts, which have brought this chamber to a point where we can resume our rightful role, that of negotiating badly needed arms control and disarmament treaties to ensure global security.

I should like to offer this delegation's heartfelt thanks to Ambassador Brasack for his solid contribution to our work throughout his time in Geneva and to offer our warmest wishes to both him and his family for their forthcoming posting. I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome our distinguished visitors from the Australian Parliament who have taken the time and the effort to come to visit the Conference. We are very grateful for their close interest in the work we are doing and for the time and effort they have put into seeing that we carry out the work that we are intended for.

I shall keep my intervention brief because it is not a prepared statement. I simply wish to affirm that the United Kingdom is fully committed to implementing the historic

decision taken by the Conference on 29 May this year, that is, to begin our programme of work.

I would like to support some of the comments made by the representative of the United States of America with regard to the Conference on Disarmament, and I would like to say that the achievement we have reached this year is the result of collective hard work, flexibility and innovation. It is my delegation's fervent hope that whilst respecting colleagues' sensitivities — and we all have sensitivities — we will be in a position to meet and to talk in working group format when we return at the beginning of the next session.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for her statement. I now have two more speakers on my list, the representative of the Republic of Korea, followed by the representative of Colombia.

**Mr. Im Han-taek** (Republic of Korea): Madam President, at the outset let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the fifth presidency of the 2009 session of the Conference on Disarmament. It is well known that Australia has always been a strong advocate of multilateral disarmament and has played a leading role in many areas, and in this regard I am sure that we will overcome the current difficult situation under your able leadership. You have my delegation's full support in your endeavours to take our work forward. My sincere thanks also go to your predecessor, Ambassador Moritán of Argentina, for his tireless efforts to bring about results in a very accommodating manner. I also wish to express my best wishes to outgoing Ambassador Brasack in his new endeavours. Ambassador Brasack has been a source of experience and ideas for the work of the Conference.

We are delighted with the adoption of CD/1864 amidst thunderous applause in this chamber. Many expected that the Conference would immediately begin its substantive work of negotiation after its decade-long stalemate. However, one month has already passed and, much to everyone's disappointment, it seems that the atmosphere of frustration and inertia, which we have just dispelled, has resurfaced again in this chamber. Despite the limited amount of available time in 2009, the very beginning of our substantive work is being delayed by procedural matters, such as the appointment of the chairs of the working groups and special coordinators, as well as agreement on the schedule of activities.

Given the future implications that basic structures of negotiation and discussions may have on our future work, the need to carefully set up the framework for our work cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, I see some logic behind the concerns raised by some delegations over CD/1866 and CD/1867, and believe that they ought to be duly addressed one way or another. It would be ideal if we could address these concerns before we have to take up substantive work.

It is true that CD/1866/Rev.1 and CD/1867 contain some points of uncertainty. However, in the real world we will find it most realistic and inevitable to maintain what is called "constructive ambiguity" for some time to come. At the same time, I believe that once we conclude these procedural matters and begin our work, we will be given ample space and time to have more constructive discussions on those concerns with each working group and special coordinator's session. Taking into consideration the mandate stipulated in CD/1864 on each agenda item, I would also like to remind colleagues that according to the proposed schedule of activities we will have two plenaries each week where we can continue to discuss such concerns whenever needed.

As for document CD/1867, on the list of chairs and special coordinators, my delegation has no reservations at all. However, we wish to share our understanding with other members of the Conference that nothing in the rules of procedure of the Conference will preclude any member from serving as chair or special coordinator of subsidiary bodies



on any grounds whatsoever. All member States ought to be treated as equals in that respect, as long as they are chosen by consensus of the Conference.

In concluding, my delegation would like to express support for CD/1866/Rev.1 and CD/1867 and to ask other delegations to show more flexibility once again, as was done a month ago in this chamber, so that we can keep up the momentum and lay solid groundwork for our future work next year. We do hope the Conference will reach consensus on these documents and embark on its substantive work as early as possible.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador Im, for your statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

**Mr. Avila Camacho** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Madam President, as this is the first time that the delegation of Colombia is taking the floor under your stewardship, allow me to convey our congratulations to you on taking up this responsibility and assure you that you can count on our full backing and support in carrying out your work. I also wish to acknowledge the important delegation from the Australian Parliament that is present in this forum. We would also like to acknowledge and express our appreciation of the excellent work accomplished by Ambassador García Moritán and his delegation. Their efforts have enabled us to move forward with our consultations on the various issues that we are grappling with at this time. I have asked for the floor with a view to acknowledging the important work of Ambassador Brasack in this forum. On many occasions his leadership, his words, ideas or contributions, not only in the Conference on Disarmament but also in many other important areas such as anti-personnel landmines and small arms and light weapons, have been of great importance and utility for the work we are all pursuing. Mr. Ambassador, we will miss your valuable contribution and work. We wish you and your family well in your future endeavours.

Finally, Madam President, supports all the efforts which have been made by you, as well as all the Presidents in the P-6 platform. Consequently, we would like to reiterate our firm endorsement of the documents introduced by the Argentine presidency and by yourself at the last plenary meeting.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Colombia for his statement. Are there any other delegations that would like to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

**Mr. O'Shea** (Ireland): Madam President, as it is the first time my delegation has taken the floor under your leadership, can I say how pleased we are to see you in the chair and wish you the very best of success during your tenure. I would like, as other colleagues have done, to extend our gratitude also to other members of the P-6 and, especially, the Ambassador of Algeria, for bringing us to where we are today. I would also like to join in the tributes to Ambassador Brasack of Germany, whom we are sad to see leaving. He has made an excellent contribution to the work of the Conference and to work in disarmament in Geneva.

As other delegations — in particular, the representative of the Republic of Korea — have mentioned, it is over a month since this Conference adopted its programme of work on 29 May, and I have to confess to a certain amount of disappointment. We had hoped that by this stage, by the end of the second part of the annual session, the Conference would be “up and running”, that our working groups would have been established, that we would have been involved in the work which we are all here in Geneva to do. Madam President, we hope that you will get through the remaining procedural steps which need to be taken to get to that situation as soon as possible.

I wish to comment briefly on the statement by the Ambassador of Pakistan, in particular on his reference to the fact that the special security interests of the non-nuclear-

weapon States that do not belong to a military alliance or enjoy a security umbrella deserve special consideration, even in procedural matters, so that they are better placed to protect their interests. As delegates will be aware, Ireland is one such State, and while I would not presume to speak for all such States, it seems to me that my delegation certainly does not seek any special treatment in procedural matters. In procedural matters, as we see it, all States members of this Conference should be on an equal basis. Also, if the remark is intended to refer to the issue of the positions of chairs and special coordinators from the Group of Western and Other States, I would comment that we see the roles of the occupants of such positions as being to work in the interests of the Conference as a whole and not to “protect their interests”.

On more substantive matters, of course it is true that there are States in this Conference that are in particular positions from a security point of view, but it is our hope that in the longer term there will be no more distinction in this Conference between States with and without nuclear weapons, and that we will have a world free of nuclear weapons where we will all be on an equal footing from that point of view.

We wish you and your team the very best of luck in establishing and getting the working groups up and running and finally resuming work when we come back in August.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Ireland for his statement. Are there any other delegations that would like to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

**Mr. Etensel** (Turkey) (*spoke in French*): First of all, Madam President, I would like to congratulate you on taking the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament. I would also like to join the previous speakers in thanking this year’s Presidents who enabled us to accomplish a lot of work and make progress, and in particular to thank Ambassador Jazairy of Algeria, who took the historic decision of 29 May.

I would also like to welcome the distinguished members of the Australian Parliament; their presence here today attests to the importance your country attaches to the Conference on Disarmament.

I would also like to join the previous speakers in saying goodbye to Ambassador Brasack of Germany, and on behalf of my delegation to wish him every success in his new duties.

Madam President, I look at the murals in this room, the work of the Spanish artist José-María Sert, and I see partly opened curtains which offer a glimpse of an outstanding future for the Conference on Disarmament. We took a decision on 29 May and my delegation, like many others, hopes that we will be able to implement the decisions which were taken. We would like to reiterate our full agreement with the documents which have been presented, and we hope that we will be able to achieve consensus as soon as possible.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Turkey for his statement. Are there any other delegations that would like to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Mr. Baeidi Nejad** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Madam President, let me at the outset express the congratulations of my delegation to you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. In fact, you have assumed this presidency at a critical juncture in the work of the Conference. I would also like to welcome the Australian parliamentary delegation to today’s meeting.

We believe that this Conference has a golden opportunity under your presidency to reach an important agreement on the modalities of implementing its programme of work. My delegation believes that we should utilize all the means available to make this happen.

Otherwise, we will be faced with a serious setback in our work at the Conference on Disarmament. We are quite optimistic that we can realize this goal under your presidency.

However, time is short, and we need to move fast. We need to be vigilant and quite wise in outlining the steps for a smooth and possible decision on implementing the programme of work. Such a decision of course requires more than ever a common understanding on the key elements of the modalities envisaged for the implementation of the programme of work. Many such modalities, namely, a fair distribution of time to the ad hoc groups and special coordinators and a timetable for their meetings, have already been worked out in consultations, the results of which have been presented to us by Ambassador Moritán, the previous President of the Conference. We are therefore only one short step from a final decision on the implementation of the Conference's programme of work.

Immediately following the Conference's decision on its programme of work, some questions were raised with respect to future modalities of the implementation of the programme of work. Such questions are relevant and need to be responded to, although in general terms. We do not think that continuing to ignore such questions will be conducive to a smooth and speedy conclusion of our work at this stage. Each phase of the work in the Conference requires a pertinent method of its own. Although we could adopt a programme of work by persevering with a particular Conference document, at this stage we need to be flexible in our approach and to be creative.

The present phase of our work, which is the phase for outlining the practical steps for starting actual negotiations at the Conference, requires a common understanding on the practical part of our work. Questions therefore need to be addressed at this point, and we have a variety of flexible approaches to respond to such questions and clarifications.

The point of departure for my delegation is that the members of the Conference have all manifested their commitment to engage in serious negotiations after 13 to 14 years of stalemate, by agreeing on a programme of work. What remains is to agree on the technicalities of starting actual work at the Conference. We are confident that through your consultations in the coming days we will be in a position to agree on the modalities for commencing our work and to start negotiations as soon as possible early in the third part of the current session of the Conference.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of China.

**Mr. Li Yang (China)** (*spoke in Chinese*): Madam President, the Chinese delegation would like to take this opportunity once again to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the Conference. We believe that with your tireless effort, rich diplomatic experience and political wisdom, the work of the Conference is sure to move forward and will quickly progress to the next step in organizing our substantive work. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Australian parliamentary delegation's attendance at the plenary session of the Conference; I hope that contacts of this kind will help to further promote mutual trust and understanding.

Madam President, distinguished colleagues, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify a few points so as to allow delegations an accurate understanding of China's position. Before doing so, however, I would like to say that we have taken note of the statements made by other delegations, in particular those of Pakistan and Iran. Their statements were very constructive and valuable, and contained many reasonable elements that merit our serious attention. I think that in sum they were raising two points: first, that this Conference cannot dodge issues of concern to delegations, but must address and resolve them conscientiously through broad, serious and thorough discussion; and second, that the delegation of Pakistan expressed a number of concerns regarding the security of their country.

As a member State of the Conference, Pakistan has the right to raise concerns regarding its national security. On this point, no other delegation has the right to prevent them doing so or take such concerns lightly. We also need to find ways to resolve their concerns; otherwise it is hard to imagine how so many positive accomplishments could have been made in the work of the Conference. We cannot, on the one hand, be eager to promote the work of the Conference while being reluctant to address conscientiously the security concerns of any Member State on the other. Now I would like to move on to a short description of China's position.

First of all, in the previous plenary session I compared our objectives here in the Conference, that is to say starting our future substantive work, including negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty, to building a high-rise. The task we are engaged in at the present moment is digging the foundation for that high-rise.

It should be noted that there are similarities and differences between China's position and those of other delegations. What is similar is that we are all pursuing the same goal, which is getting this high-rise built. What is different is that China insists that the foundation we build for that high-rise must be a good one. Nor do I think that China is alone in that insistence; there are some delegations in this meeting hall that support our position. At the same time, however, there are some delegations who feel that a simple foundation is all that is needed, or even no foundation at all. Which of these positions is the more constructive should be self-evident.

The great Deng Xiaoping began China's process of reform and opening-up back in 1979. I imagine that at the time, Mr. Deng would certainly have wished for China to have US\$ 1.9 trillion in foreign-exchange reserves by the following year, but in the event it took China another 30 years to attain that level of economic achievement.

In 1979, I was still a child; when I heard on the radio that a father in the United States had bought a car for his son as a birthday present, I wondered when I too could have a car. I worked hard for 27 years, and in 2006 I finally got my first car, which is parked outside this building. I'm telling you this story only because I hope that it will help everyone understand something that we probably all know already, which is that to do anything you must do it step by step.

Some delegations are in a hurry. To be honest, China used to be in a hurry as well. China launched a great leap forward in 1958, and we suffered as a result. Now, some States members of the Conference would also like to launch a great leap forward; they want to put up the high-rise without even laying a foundation. But I must remind everyone that if we don't want to spend time laying the foundation, I'm afraid the high-rise won't get built; the best we'll be able to do is put up a big tent for our 60-odd delegations to have a picnic in.

The second point I want to talk about is who deserves to be criticized. Because some delegations have proposed that we should be taking some more time to prepare the necessary rules and frameworks and lay a good foundation for the next step in the Conference's substantive work, and find themselves the targets of criticism as a result. They are blamed for trying to delay the work of the Conference and causing the loss of favourable momentum.

I don't know what sort of momentum it is that these critics want the Conference to maintain. It is as if we are about to take part in a 200-kilometre bicycle rally with no clear idea of the route or the rules, but with some people still in a hurry to start the race. If we were really to start the race under those conditions, I don't think it would create much favourable momentum. The Conference managed to agree on a programme of work on 29 May, but has yet to reach consensus on procedural arrangements, and we are being criticized for this. So here I would like to raise my voice to ask, who is it really who deserves the criticism?

The Conference adopted the programme of work more than a month ago, but we still don't have a clear idea of how the presidents and special coordinators will rotate, or of how long each of them will serve. What will their official capacities be? Where will the rolling text come from, what will it be, and how will meetings be arranged? Over the past month, we have had not a single serious, open and thorough discussion of any issues in this regard. It isn't that Ambassador Moritán is reluctant to organize such a discussion, it's that some people don't want such a discussion to be organized; they want our future substantive work to be guided by the two draft documents already proposed, so they are at pains to avoid those issues.

I think you all know the Chinese saying "To cover one's ears while stealing a bell". It refers to a person who wanted to steal a bell; however, because the bell rang out when he touched it, he covered his own ears out of fear that the owner would hear. What I want to say here is, don't think that the bell won't actually ring just because you've covered your own ears; i.e. don't think that these thorny issues don't exist just because we choose to ignore them.

Third, I'd like to clarify China's position a bit further. Some delegations misunderstand it, thinking that China is only concerned about work arrangements for 2009. That is not actually the case; it's not just the 2009 work arrangements we're concerned about. China has no substantive difficulties with the two draft documents on work arrangements for 2009. What we are considering is the long-term issue, that is, how to lay down a good, reliable foundation for our future substantive work. The related issues cannot be avoided; if we don't discuss them now, they'll still have to be addressed later.

Some of our colleagues argue that using the two current draft documents to guide our future substantive work will enable us to minimize disputes, save time and get started on that substantive work as soon as possible. I understand the good intentions behind such proposals, but some processes cannot be cut short just to save time, because doing so would be very dangerous. Those two draft documents may be able to resolve the issues of 2009, but they can't resolve the long-term issues. My son is wearing size 15 shoes this year, but next year he'll need size 16 or even 17. Now, I may be stingy, but I would never be so stupid as to refuse to buy him new shoes next year and make him wear this year's old ones just to save money.

My dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, today is 2 July 2009. At the moment, there may be no more than 10 people here in the audience who agree with my viewpoint. I am confident, however, that by our third session this year there will be at least 30 people who agree with me, and that by this time next year everyone present will agree with me. Thank you for your patience.

**The President:** I thank the representative of China for his statement. Are there any other delegations that would like to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

**Mr. El Dandarawy (Egypt):** Madam President, allow me at the outset to express my delegation's deep appreciation for the role you have ably played thus far in guiding our work. And similarly, our recognition for the effective and dynamic roles of all your predecessors and also our sincere respect for the Ambassador of Germany and his valuable input during his tenure here in Geneva.

Egypt attaches great importance to the work of our Conference and the goals it aspires to achieve. In that regard, you have our full cooperation. Like other countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, we place special weight on the achievement of nuclear disarmament and see that measures such as an FMCT and negative security assurances are all steps towards that common and ultimate goal. I will refrain from entering into substantive elements at this stage, but suffice it to say that the valid security concerns of all

parties need to be adequately addressed in a manner that ensures consensus is achieved, which is, for this Conference, a prerequisite for moving forward.

We stand ready to extend to you our full cooperation during the coming period and we look forward to commencing actual and practical negotiations during the third part of the 2009 session.

**The President:** Thank you very much for your statement. Are there any other delegations that would like to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

**Ms. Gómez-Oliver** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Madam President, allow me to begin by congratulating you on taking the Chair of this forum and assuring you that my delegation will cooperate fully with you in discharging your duties.

We also welcome the members of the Australian Parliament and thank them both for their interest and for their presence this morning in this Conference. We wish every success to Ambassador Brasack in his future duties and in particular acknowledge his important contribution to this forum and especially the thoughts he shared with us today on a possible treaty on fissile material. My delegation sincerely hopes that the positive climate in which the programme of work was adopted will quickly be reflected in the adoption of document CD/1866/Rev.1 and document CD/1867. We believe that, insofar as there do not seem to be any major substantive difficulties with these two documents, we could go ahead at the time you consider most appropriate and take the step which finally will enable us to begin our activities in accordance with document CD/1864. In this context, Mexico would like to appeal to all delegations to take advantage of the favourable climate prevailing in the field of disarmament to inject new energy into this Conference, so as to restore its credibility as the sole negotiating forum on this issue. We believe that our conviction in support of a world without nuclear weapons will not be demonstrated by means of punctiliousness on matters of procedure, which it is hard to view as a threat of any kind to the security interests of any State. We are convinced that we will demonstrate our commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons by devoting ourselves to building trust, seeking consensus and establishing a future in which the threat which for the moment hangs indiscriminately over the whole of mankind does not exist. Mexico is in a hurry, Mexico does think it is urgent to achieve these objectives. Finally, we are ready now and we will be ready in August when our session resumes to work devotedly and resolutely for the implementation of our programme of work. You can count on Mexico's support in discharging your duties and attaining that goal.

**The President:** I thank the Ambassador of Mexico for her statement. Are there any other delegations that would like to take the floor? I see none.

I should therefore like to give the floor briefly to a member of the Australian delegation, Mr. Kelvin Thomson, in response to some requests from the floor, to speak briefly about the work of the inquiry.

**Mr. Thomson** (Australia): Thank you, Madam President, and I thank delegations for their welcome and their good wishes. I should acknowledge also the presence of my parliamentary colleagues, Jill Hall, Luke Simpkins and John Forest, who represent different political parties and different states in Australia.

We are members of the Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, which has been asked by the Prime Minister of Australia to carry out an inquiry into nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and particularly to examine the international treaties involving Australia which relate to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, how these treaties advance Australia's objectives in this field, how the treaties might be made more comprehensive or effective, how inter-parliamentary action

can assist in strengthening treaty-based aspects of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and how our committee can contribute to the work of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. Delegations can readily appreciate from those terms of reference that we are on a similar mission to that of the Conference on Disarmament, and we welcome this opportunity to listen to members and learn something of its work. We will certainly take back to Australia an appreciation of the significance, the relevance and the importance of this Conference.

Our report will be due in the next month or two. We have, of course, yet to finalize the content of it. But the evidence which has come before our committee has been about the need to get real outcomes at the NPT review scheduled for next year, the need to strengthen the arms control and non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, and some of the steps along the way which have been mentioned this morning, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, strengthened IAEA safeguards, the fissile material cut-off treaty, multilateral fuel assurances and other steps along the road.

It is also clear to us from the evidence that we have received that we live in a time of not only significant and rising threats, but also significant new opportunities. It has been suggested to us that there will be something of a renaissance in nuclear energy, but that the necessary safeguards and framework for dealing with that are not in place. A great deal of work needs to be done.

Finally, can I say that the evidence that has come before us suggests there is a great hunger on the part of people in Australia, and I suspect in other countries as well, for their parliamentary representatives and the representatives of many different countries in bodies such as the Conference to do everything possible to make the world safe from the threat of nuclear weapons. I hope that our work and the work of the Conference will enable people in the future to appreciate that we did everything possible to achieve that outcome.

**The President:** Thank you very much, Mr. Thomson, for those words. Are there any other delegations that wish to take the floor? I see none.

I have been consulting many delegations on the draft decisions CD/1866/Rev.1, on the schedule of activities, and CD/1867, on the appointment of the chairs and special coordinators. It is clear that there remain a few issues of concern to some delegations, as indeed we have heard this morning, that will need to be addressed before we can put these decisions forward for adoption.

In response to some of the concerns mentioned this morning, I should just like to assure all delegations that issues raised in this chamber and with me and my other P-6 colleagues will be very seriously addressed and considered. I also fully appreciate that many delegations have serious security concerns. I should also like to remind delegations that decisions of this Conference are adopted by consensus and, therefore, that flexibility by everyone will be needed if we are going to find a way through.

As President, I will continue to consult very closely with a range of delegations during the intersessional period. During that time, I would appeal to all delegations to reflect on what they would like to see the Conference achieve in the final part of its 2009 session. You will have six weeks, including the time needed to prepare the report. In my consultations, most delegations have emphasized their desire not to repeat the same old tired debates, but to use the remainder of this year wisely. The serious preparatory work will enable the Conference to start serious negotiations on an FMCT in 2010, and serious deliberations on nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as well as on the other three agenda items.

The Conference on Disarmament adopted a programme of work on 29 May after years of failing to do so. This was warmly welcomed and applauded by world leaders. We

have yet to implement that decision. And the same leaders, our Governments, are watching and waiting for us to do so. We should not disappoint them.

Before I adjourn the meeting, I have one more procedural matter on my list. I should like to submit to the Conference another request from a non-member State to participate in our work as an observer. The request is from Thailand, and has been distributed to delegations.

Do I take it that the Conference agrees to allow Thailand to participate as an observer?

*It was so decided.*

Finally, I should also like to advise that there will be a meeting of the P-6 with regional coordinators this afternoon at 4.30 p.m. in Room I, just to touch base before the July recess. And on that note, I wish you all a very good break in July. I look forward to talking to some of you during that period, and I look forward to see you all back here in this chamber in August.

That concludes our business for today. The meeting is adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.*