
Conference on Disarmament

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English

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President: Mr. Luiz Felipe de Macedo Soares(Brazil)

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The President: I declare open the 1187th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. The following delegations have registered on the list of speakers for today: India and Thailand.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Hamid Ali Rao, Permanent Representative of India to the Conference, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 21. I have been informed that he will address two different items and will therefore make two statements, one after the other.

Mr. Rao (India): Mr. President, as you rightly stated, I have asked for the floor as Coordinator of the Group of 21 to make two statements on behalf of the G-21. The first statement is on nuclear disarmament; the second statement is on negative security assurances.

Mr. President, I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the Group of 21.

The G-21 reiterates its concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their proliferation will remain.

We would like to recall in this regard that the very first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 1 (1) of 1946, adopted unanimously, called for the elimination of nuclear weapons from national arsenals.

We would also like to recall that the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, accorded the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 1996, concluded that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

The Millennium Declaration in 2000 also reaffirmed the commitment of the Member States of the United Nations to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons.

Therefore, the Group, as it has done in previous statements to the Conference on Disarmament, reiterates that achieving total nuclear disarmament remains its highest priority.

The G-21 would like to draw attention to the following contributions of the Group to the deliberations on nuclear disarmament in this Conference:

- Working paper on cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, submitted on 12 July 1979 (CD/36/Rev.1)
- Working paper on cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, submitted on 9 July 1980 (CD/116)
- Working paper submitted on 4 February 1983 (CD/341)
- Draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 2 of the agenda, submitted on 18 March 1988 (CD/819)
- Proposal for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, submitted on 14 March 1996 (CD/1388)
- Proposal on a programme of work, submitted on 5 June 1997 (CD/1462)
- Proposal on a programme of work, submitted on 4 February 1999 (CD/1570)

- Draft decision and mandate for an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, submitted on 18 February 1999 (CD/1571)

The G-21 has noted a number of recent official statements made by States, including some nuclear-weapon States, as well as by statesmen and scholars, on issues related to nuclear disarmament and on their vision for a nuclear-weapon-free world. The Group, while believing that the implications of these initiatives need to be further investigated, hopes that they will lead to new opportunities to make serious progress on nuclear disarmament including in the Conference.

Stressing its strong commitment to nuclear disarmament, the Group reaffirms its readiness to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention.

Therefore, we are of the view that an international convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would be an important step in a phased programme towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, with a specified framework of time.

In this regard, the Group stresses that the fundamental principles of transparency, verification and irreversibility should be applied to all nuclear disarmament measures.

The G-21 notes the measures taken by the nuclear-weapon States for nuclear arms limitation and encourages them to take further measures. While reiterating its deep concern over the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States towards accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, the G-21 underlines the importance of effective, step-by-step implementation of concrete measures in order to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The G-21 reaffirms that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are substantively interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

As noted in its plenary statement of 2 February 2010, the G-21 would like to highlight the fact that, in the final document of the 2009 Sharm-El Sheikh Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirmed the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and reiterated their call on the Conference to formulate a balanced and comprehensive programme of work by, inter alia, establishing an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament as soon as possible and as the highest priority. They emphasized the necessity of starting negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention. They reaffirmed the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

The G-21 States parties to the NPT note with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which was convened in New York from 3 to 28 May 2010. They welcome the endorsement by the Review Conference of the proposal to convene in 2012 a conference, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. They also welcome its reaffirmation of the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards and hope that this will lead to the full implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The G-21 States parties to the NPT further note the fact that the nuclear-weapon States agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference to report on their undertakings related to nuclear disarmament to

the 2014 Preparatory Committee and that the 2015 Review Conference would take stock and consider next steps for the full implementation of article VI of the Treaty; they reiterate their call on the nuclear-weapon States to accept a specified framework of time for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons that is legally binding. Furthermore, they are encouraged by the commitment of nuclear-weapon States to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and express their hope that this will lead to the full and unequivocal implementation of practical steps for nuclear disarmament. They also recall that all States parties to the NPT agreed, *inter alia*, that the Conference on Disarmament should immediately establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament.

The G-21 emphasizes that progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects is essential in order to strengthen international peace and security. The Group reaffirms that efforts towards nuclear disarmament, global and regional approaches and confidence-building measures complement each other and should, wherever possible, be pursued simultaneously to promote regional and international peace and security.

There is also a genuine and urgent need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies in order to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their elimination. In this regard, the Group recalls its strong support for the objectives set out in General Assembly resolution 63/41 of 2 December 2008, entitled "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems" as well as General Assembly resolution 64/37 of 2 December 2009, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger".

Pending the achievement of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group reaffirms the urgent need to reach an early agreement on a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In this context, the Group recalls paragraphs 32 and 59 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, which underscored the need for effective arrangements, as appropriate, to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The G-21 stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, *inter alia*, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. The Group reiterates that, if the objectives of the Treaty are to be fully realized, the continued commitment of all signatory States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to nuclear disarmament is essential.

The G-21 reaffirms the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and expresses its determination to promote multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in these areas. In this regard, the Group strongly supports the objectives set out in General Assembly resolution 64/34 of 2009, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation".

Therefore, the G-21 calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and particularly in the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work by the Conference on Disarmament. It is the Group's sincere hope that, at this year's session, the Conference will be able to achieve consensus on the much-needed programme of work in order to move forward on the disarmament agenda.

In view of the Group's strong commitment to nuclear disarmament, the G-21 reiterates its support for the following concrete steps to promote the goal of nuclear disarmament:

- Reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of nuclear-weapon States to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons
- Elimination of the role of nuclear-weapons in security doctrines
- Adoption of measures by nuclear-weapon States to reduce nuclear danger, such as de-alerting nuclear weapons and decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear-weapons systems
- Negotiation of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons
- Negotiation of a convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons
- Negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their destruction, thereby leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time

The Group of 21 expresses the hope that it will be possible for the Conference to promptly commence negotiations on nuclear disarmament as part of its programme of work.

Mr. President, I now turn to the second statement which I read on behalf of the Group of 21. This is a statement on negative security assurances.

The Group reaffirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The Group remains convinced that as long as nuclear weapons exist, so too will the risk of their proliferation and possible use remain with us.

Pending the achievement of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group reaffirms the urgent need to reach an early agreement on a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Such an instrument should be clear, credible and without any ambiguity and should respond to the concerns of all the parties.

The Group believes that there is a need to recognize the right of non-nuclear-weapon States not to be attacked by or threatened by the nuclear-weapon States with the use of nuclear weapons and strongly calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to refrain from any such action or threat, whether implicit or explicit. This position is a long-standing one.

The Group underlines the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

The Group highlights the objectives laid down in General Assembly resolution 64/34, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", which, among other things, reaffirms multilateralism as the core principle in resolving disarmament and non-proliferation concerns.

The Group remains deeply concerned at strategic defence doctrines which not only set out rationales for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, but also maintain unjustifiable concepts regarding international security based on the promotion and development of military alliances' nuclear deterrence policies.

The Group believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned and taking into

account provisions agreed to at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is a positive step and an important measure towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this context, the Group welcomes the nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Semipalatinsk and welcomes Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. The Group reiterates that, in the context of nuclear-weapon-free zones, it is essential that nuclear-weapon States should provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zones concerned.

The Group reiterates its support for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all nuclear weapons. To this end, the Group reaffirms the need for the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. The G-21 States parties to the NPT welcome the 2010 NPT Review Conference's endorsement of the proposal to convene in 2012 a conference, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

While the Group believes that nuclear-weapon-free zones are positive steps towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, it does not subscribe to the argument that the declarations that have been made by the nuclear-weapon States are sufficient, or that security assurances should be granted only in the context of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In addition, given their geographical limitation, security assurances guaranteed to States members of nuclear-weapon-free zones cannot substitute for universal, legally binding security assurances.

The Group recalls that the demand for security assurances was raised by the non-nuclear-weapon States in the 1960s and that it crystallized in 1968 during the concluding phase of the negotiation of the NPT. The response of the nuclear-weapon States as reflected in resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995) of the Security Council was considered incomplete, partial and conditional by the non-nuclear-weapon States. The demand for assurances persists.

The Group accepts that, while various approaches exist, efforts to conclude a universal and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be vigorously pursued. The Group considers that the conclusion of such an instrument would be an important step towards achieving the objectives of arms control, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

The President: I thank Ambassador Rao of India for the two statements he has made on behalf of the Group of 21. I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Thailand, Ambassador Phuangketkeow.

Mr. Phuangketkeow (Thailand): Mr. President, I am honoured to deliver this statement today on behalf of the Informal Group of Observer States to the Conference on Disarmament. Since this is our first statement under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of your duties and to express the Group's wishes for a productive and successful Brazilian presidency.

One of the reasons for establishing the Informal Group of Observer States was to enhance interaction among the observer States and, most importantly, to promote our engagement with the Conference. Disarmament is an issue of concern not only for the member States of the Conference, but also for the global community. It is therefore important for the future work of the Conference to be based on the principles of inclusiveness and transparency.

The Informal Group of Observer States therefore expresses its appreciation for your initiative to convene an informal meeting with the observer States as soon as you assumed the presidency. It was also the first informal meeting between the President and the Group of Observer States in recent years.

The meeting was informative and proved your willingness to engage with all interested parties. The high level of participation at the ambassadorial level of the observer States in turn bore witness to our readiness as a group to be more involved with the work of the Conference in accordance with the rules of procedure.

We also wish to thank the representatives of both the Belarus and Belgian presidencies for their willingness to brief our Group. We hope that this tradition will be carried on by upcoming presidencies.

We affirm our support as a Group for your efforts to reach consensus on an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work that addresses the interests of all States concerned. The Group appreciates your hard work in holding consultations during the past weeks in order to reach such a consensus.

We believe that the immediate commencement of the work of the Conference is essential in order to prove the relevance of the Conference and to fulfil its mandate as the only multilateral disarmament negotiating body. The informal consultations on all agenda items held during the past weeks are a step in a positive direction, but they should by no means substitute for or divert attention from formal negotiations.

Given the universal impact of disarmament and any legal disarmament instrument, all Member States of the United Nations should have an equal opportunity to take part and share concerns in the deliberations on future discussions or negotiations.

In this connection, the Group welcomes the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene a high-level meeting in September 2010 on security assurances and fissile materials. The Informal Group appreciates Austria's support during the NPT Review Conference for the amendments proposed by Thailand on behalf of the Conference on Disarmament observer States in order to include all Member States of the United Nations in the high-level meeting and notes that these amendments were later adopted by the NPT States parties. We believe that a successful outcome of the meeting in September will be a positive step forward for both the Conference and for disarmament.

The Informal Group of Observer States looks forward to working with you and future Presidents of the Conference on ways to further enhance inclusiveness in the disarmament process.

The President: I thank Ambassador Phuangketkeow of Thailand for his statement on behalf of the Informal Group of Observer States to the Conference on Disarmament. The observer States have formally requested to be invited by the Conference to participate as observers, and the Conference on Disarmament has, in due course, as it has been doing every year, formally granted those requests from every State interested in observing the work of the Conference. That is why their interest, as reflected in their formal requests and the Conference's formal acceptance, has to be taken into account in our substantive deliberations. I appreciate the contribution of all the observer States and I am sure that this interaction, this mutual enrichment of our deliberations, will continue in the future, certainly during the present presidency.

Would any other delegation like to take the floor? I recognize the Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Khabbaz Hamoui (Syrian Arab Republic): Mr. President, I would like first of all to congratulate you on your presidency of the Conference. We very much hope that with your wisdom and with the energy of your mission we will achieve real progress that is acceptable to all, takes into account the interests and concerns of all and has a solid foundation in the rules of procedure. I would like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Alex van Meeuwen, for his considerable efforts during his presidency.

Moreover, my delegation welcomes the important statement made to the Conference by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mr. Celso Amorim. It gave us a ray of hope, particularly as Mr. Amorim's efforts in disarmament matters are considerable, crucial and well-known at the regional and international levels.

Furthermore, we welcome your invitation to all members of the Conference to participate in the informal consultations held over the past two weeks to consider the present and future phases in depth. We are convinced that our positions are now very close and all that is needed in order to arrive at a programme of work is some understanding and mutual concessions. Clinging to positions is not useful and will not help to end the present impasse in our work.

In this regard, my delegation would like to thank you for your efforts in preparing the Brazilian document that was presented to us. We are awaiting the results of consultations with the Group of 21 and instructions from our capital.

My delegation wishes to note with great concern the serious escalation by a member of the Conference, namely, Israel, two weeks ago, when it launched the military satellite Ofek-9 (Horizon-9) into outer space. Israeli officials acknowledge that the satellite is designed to spy on countries in the region. This step should be condemned, because it exacerbates regional and global tensions and is evidence of Israel's firm desire to move forward in all areas of the arms race. This serious and aggressive escalation should be condemned by all; it should not be passed over in silence. Moreover, this hostile step only strengthens our resolve to address the four disarmament issues, including the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS), the militarization of outer space and the prevention of the use of outer space for acts of aggression and espionage.

Mr. President, my delegation supports your efforts. It will assist you in your mission and work with you honestly and sincerely through the Group of 21, to which it belongs. Thank you.

The President: I thank Ambassador Hamoui of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement and his kind words. I recognize Ambassador Danon of France.

Mr. Danon (France): I will be very brief. I would like to voice two slight regrets with regard to the statements made this morning. The first concerns the statement from the Group of 21 on the whole disarmament procedure and the specific steps to take in the future. I would just like to express regret that the negotiation of a treaty to end the production of fissile materials was not mentioned even once. My second regret concerns the second statement, that of the observer States. I deplore the fact that, in the penultimate paragraph of the statement, the observer States suggest that the high-level meeting to be convened in September further to the request of the NPT Review Conference submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations should only consider security assurances and fissile materials. The ground to be covered will, I think, be broader and more important. I think that it will become clear, perhaps even in the present session, that the meeting should cover more than just these two subjects.

The President: I thank Ambassador Danon of France for his statement.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze.

Mr. Ordzhonikidze (Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): Mr. President, it is my pleasure to inform you that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has decided to convene a high-level meeting of Member States of the United Nations on Friday, 24 September, during the high-level segment of the General Assembly.

As you know, the Secretary-General has consistently emphasized disarmament as one of his key priorities. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss how to promote multilateral disarmament, in general, and the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament, in particular.

An invitation from the Secretary-General will be forthcoming. It is planned that the meeting will not exceed half a day in length. The Secretary-General will open with a short statement, after which Member States are invited to express their views on these issues. As the time will be limited, statements should be brief and concise. At the meeting's conclusion, the Secretary-General will present his own summary of the discussions.

This event will follow on from and be in line with recent positive developments in relation to disarmament in both bilateral and multilateral contexts. The Secretary-General hopes that this high-level meeting will give further political impetus to the multilateral disarmament process.

I fully concur with what the President of the Conference, the Ambassador of Brazil, said when he observed that if, by that time, the Conference on Disarmament has adopted an agenda, it will help enormously to project a better image of the Conference and will enable us to bring something substantive and, I hope, very positive to that discussion.

It is certainly true that there are two paragraphs in the document issued by the NPT Review Conference in which the Secretary-General is requested to do what I have just announced. As we know, however, not all Member States of the United Nations are members of the NPT, unfortunately. Of course, in our invitation letter, we will allude to the request that the Secretary-General convene such a meeting, but not in a way that will harm the political position of the non-member States of the NPT. We want all Member States of the United Nations — and I would like to emphasize *all* Member States of the United Nations — to participate in this important meeting.

At the same time, that does not mean that the Secretary-General or his representative condones the fact that not all Member States are members of the NPT. You may be assured that we will try to do our best to make the meeting a success, in line with previous ones, starting with the high-level meeting of the Security Council on disarmament. There has also been the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, D.C., as well as the NPT Review Conference. We have also seen bilateral achievements in this regard. We believe that this political momentum should not be lost, but rather that it should be enhanced. We have to gain political momentum in order to draw the attention of the high-level officials of our countries to the important problems of multilateral disarmament and, in particular, the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference for his statement and for the information he has provided. We are looking forward to receiving the invitation to this high-level meeting and to ascertaining the extent of the discussions that are to take place in New York on 24 September.

The question raised by the Ambassador of France has thus been answered, at least in part. As I have been saying to colleagues these last two weeks, in the view of this presidency, the high-level meeting in September in New York is a welcome opportunity because, whatever the extent of the discussions, it is indeed, as has been announced and as we will see in the invitation, a meeting in support of the Conference on Disarmament. This

is why, in my view as President, it is important for the Conference to have already adopted its programme of work and for that programme of work to be in implementation by the time that the high-level meeting is convened. This will reinforce the deliberations and will give more impetus, more support, to the Conference so that it may continue, during the next session, with the work that is, I hope, to be started this year.

To accomplish that, as you know, I have been consulting the delegations. So far, I have met with 60 delegations individually to exchange views about the possibility of adopting a programme of work, which is the duty of every presidency, according to the rules of procedure. In the course of those consultations, I have informally made suggestions that could, I hope, open the way for an agreement on a programme of work. The presidency is, of course, always open to other suggestions from any delegation. This is the usual diplomatic approach to arriving at consensus.

We are proceeding with these consultations in the sense that we are receiving reactions, responses, from delegations. I will have the opportunity tomorrow to meet with the different regional groups and to hear their opinions and views on this endeavour to reach an agreement. But I have to say that I have heard from every delegation, without exception, that it is important for the Conference on Disarmament to resume its work on its real mandate, work which has been stopped for a long time now by the lack of a duly adopted programme of work.

If there is no other comment or intervention, I will conclude our business for today. The next formal meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 6 July, at 10 a.m. in this chamber.

This meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.