
Conference on Disarmament

13 July 2010

English

Final record of the one thousand one hundred and ninetieth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 13 July 2010, at 11.10 a.m.

President: Mr. Gancho Ganev(Bulgaria)

The President: I declare open the 1190th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

It is with great honour that Bulgaria assumes the presidency of the Conference. We are aware of the great responsibility that is attached to this task, especially at this critical moment for the Conference. We are, however, committed to continuing to explore various options for seeking a solution acceptable to all member States that will enable this Conference to get back to its substantive work.

Allow me now to extend a very warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, His Excellency Mr. Nikolay Mladenov. I am particularly proud and pleased that he could attend the Conference on Disarmament at the moment when Bulgaria assumes the presidency.

It is now my great pleasure to give Minister Mladenov the floor.

Mr. Mladenov (Bulgaria): Mr. President, I have the pleasure of being here today, not just as the first Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs to address this esteemed Conference, but as the Minister of a country that is deeply and profoundly committed to multilateralism and particularly to achieving, through multilateralism, our global agenda of a world free of nuclear weapons, a world that is disarmed, a world that has a strengthened non-proliferation regime.

The global challenges that we all face today require that each and every State be very active in working together with its partners to address the challenges of global security and insecurity. This means that concessions and compromises become key in any discussion that we have today, especially when the discussion concerns issues such as nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. I do not believe that nuclear weapons discriminate in their effect, in their lethal and deadly effect, between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

We gather here in Geneva at each annual session to reconfirm our commitment to the core purpose of the Conference on Disarmament, namely, to serve as a forum for negotiations on multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament. But, most of all, we come together here to seek to fulfil our mission: to work towards a world free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. I firmly believe that this mission is above politics and above diplomacy. It is above national ambitions and personal egos.

That is why I come here today: to represent a country that, as I said earlier, is fully committed to the objectives of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation. I come to reaffirm our belief that multilateralism is the most reliable mechanism to achieve solutions for the national security concerns of each and every country on our planet and to emphasize that the Conference on Disarmament must play a primary role in this regard. I therefore feel it is my duty to add my voice, on behalf of Bulgaria and its Government, in calling for action in the Conference on Disarmament. The protracted stalemate in the Conference and its continuing failure to adopt a programme of work severely undermine the confidence of the international community in the ability of this Conference to comprehensively address matters related to disarmament and to non-proliferation.

Nothing — no fear, no suspicion, no perception of a single country or group of States — should prevent us from undertaking, in the most effective way possible, the steps necessary to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Bulgaria's non-proliferation and arms control policy is built on the understanding that a reinforced non-proliferation regime is an important prerequisite in order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Nuclear disarmament can be achieved only if appropriate commitments are undertaken to reduce the risk of the proliferation of vulnerable fissile materials. There are hundreds of tons of weapons-usable fissile material which could be a potential target for sabotage, misuse or diversion and which are not tightly protected.

Commencing negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) here in the Conference on Disarmament is therefore a steady and logical step towards advancing nuclear disarmament and preventing proliferation. This is one of the reasons why an early start of negotiations on an FMCT can no longer be postponed.

Let me now speak very briefly on other subjects.

The early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another pressing matter whose solution will be a critical step on the road to nuclear disarmament. Our Government welcomes the decisions of United States President Obama to seek the ratification of the Treaty, and we hope that this will send another important signal to those countries that have not yet done so.

Bulgaria's commitment to general disarmament and non-proliferation is also based on the understanding that disarmament should serve as a vehicle for the promotion of the principles and the practices of international humanitarian law. We therefore welcome the entry into force on 1 August 2010 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and hope that all States which are still not party to the Convention will join us at the earliest opportunity.

Bulgaria also shares the view that this successful example may inspire the Conference to look for new approaches to reach consensus.

The time at which my country has assumed the presidency of the Conference is particularly rich in developments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. It seems that the world outside is at odds with what is happening in the Conference.

Allow me to say a few words about that.

I recognize and welcome the positive momentum in the area of disarmament that has been generated by the United States Administration's announcement last year of a renewed effort to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, which was followed by similar initiatives in a number of other nuclear States. This important demonstration of good faith was echoed by a majority of States, which reaffirmed their belief that it was finally time to push disarmament forward. Even this chamber looked less sombre when the Conference on Disarmament adopted its 2009 programme of work after 11 years of deliberations. The understanding that ensuring nuclear material safety is the priority in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation was one of the reasons for the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 64/29. This resolution urged the Conference on Disarmament to agree early in 2010 on a programme of work that includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. This initiative was supported by Security Council resolution 1887, which was adopted at a historic meeting in September 2009. At that meeting, the Security Council pledged its backing for broad progress on long-stalled efforts to staunch the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensure the reduction of existing weapons stockpiles. This understanding was reaffirmed again by the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, D.C. in April of this year.

The cause of nuclear disarmament received a major boost when Russia and the United States signed the new START treaty, thereby taking an important step in the right direction towards reducing and, hopefully, totally eliminating nuclear weapons. The satisfactory conclusion of the new START treaty is a clear example of how good intentions and political will can be translated into reality.

The same holds true for the 2010 NPT Review Conference in New York, which managed to reach agreement; that in itself somewhat restored the faith of the international community in the non-proliferation regime. Coming after a decade of decline in multilateralism, and on the heels of recent achievements in bilateral arms control and nuclear security initiatives, the outcome of that NPT Review Conference has shown that multilateral consensus in nuclear disarmament is possible. Among other important agreements reached at the NPT Review Conference was the decision to call upon the Conference on Disarmament to begin its substantive work without further delay on the basis of an agreed, comprehensive and, of course, balanced programme of work.

Over the last year, we have seen expressions of political will to advance disarmament and non-proliferation. Recent positive developments reveal a critical awareness on the part of the majority of States of the need to reach a common understanding on nuclear disarmament and to overcome differences and fears.

In spite of all of these positive developments, the Conference continues to be blocked by extreme precautions and mistrust that translate into procedural impediments to its work.

The last time that the Conference produced a substantial result was some 12 years ago with the successful negotiation of the CTBT. The world and our understanding of security have changed immensely in the last 12 years. The Conference, however, has not changed. Its agenda has remained the same for the last 12 years.

We should rethink the mechanisms of the Conference, what it offers to its member States, and how to go about dealing effectively with the pertinent disarmament and non-proliferation issues that we must address. The question needs to be asked, and answers need to be sought. Is the Conference that was established in 1979 still capable of creating and maintaining the necessary trust to make delegations sit down together and negotiate? Why, at a time when there is clear international will to move forward on disarmament and non-proliferation, is the Conference unable to turn this support into specific agreements? I am certain that similar questions have been asked by many of you sitting in this room. I hope that once these questions are not just asked, but answers are uttered, it will not be too late.

Despite the difficulties which have been associated with the work of the Conference on Disarmament over the last decade, Bulgaria continues to attach great importance to the work of this body and will always do so. It is our firm belief that successful disarmament instruments can only be based on the principle of inclusiveness, as they impose obligations upon all member States. The Conference on Disarmament has an essential role to play in this regard, since it is the sole disarmament negotiating forum of its kind. It is a clear expression of multilateralism as a tool for promoting a rules-based international system.

I therefore strongly encourage all delegations to exhibit the necessary spirit of compromise and flexibility without which multilateralism is unthinkable and to adopt a programme of work which will allow the Conference to address, in a steady and logical way, the priority issues laid down in the agenda.

The recent draft decision presented in CD/1889 as submitted by the presidency of Brazil is a balanced and flexible updated version of the compromise reached in this body last year. It reflects the most recent developments in the Conference, and it offers a possibility for the concerns of all States to be accommodated in a transparent and inclusive manner.

Negotiations on an FMCT in this Conference should be a key practical step in addressing both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Bulgaria believes that negotiations on an FMCT, conducted in good faith and without prejudice to the outcome, should aim at achieving a comprehensive, non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty.

Prevention of an open arms race in outer space is also of key significance for the future work of the Conference.

Reaching consensus on a programme of work in the time that remains to us before the end of this annual session would send a clear message that multilateralism in the Conference is possible. Such a message is all the more important in the light of the upcoming high-level meeting on multilateral disarmament negotiations to be held in September of this year in New York. At the point where we stand today, a clear and comprehensive vision regarding multilateral machinery is needed more than ever. That is why expectations that the high-level meeting will help to make a change in disarmament are high. The Conference should be the primary beneficiary of the high-level meeting.

I would like, in closing, to state my full support for the efforts of the Bulgarian presidency to ensure the continuity and carry forward the work done by its predecessors, the delegations of Brazil, Belgium, Belarus and Bangladesh, to which I wish to express my deep appreciation for their excellent work so far.

I also wish to stress the fact that this body is at a crucial juncture with regard to future efforts towards global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We will either seize the opportunity to reverse the spread of nuclear weapons and build the momentum for their ultimate elimination, or we will prolong the period of indecision, after which we will have to tackle the results of our very own inability to act as one in accordance with the decisions and commitments that we have made. We will be responsible for what happens from this point forward.

I thank you very much, and I wish the Conference the best of luck in its work.

The President: I thank the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria.

I will now suspend our meeting in order to escort the Minister from the chamber. We will resume our work in a few minutes.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 11.35 a.m.

The President: This plenary meeting is resumed.

As our second speaker of today, I have the pleasure to give the floor to Mr. Frank Rose, United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Defence Policy and Verification Operations, who will brief the Conference on the new national space policy of the United States.

Mr. Rose (United States of America): Mr. President, I am pleased to be able to join you here today to discuss the new United States national space policy. This policy, which was released just two weeks ago, is a statement of President Obama's highest priorities for space and reflects the principles and goals to be used in shaping United States space programmes and activities. This new policy not only provides a foundation for going forward in our exploration and utilization of space, but also is a commitment by the United States to work cooperatively with the international community to preserve space for the benefit of all nations.

In the four years since the issuance of the previous United States national space policy in 2006, a number of developments have changed the opportunities, challenges and threats facing the international space community. This new policy both accounts for those changes and reflects the fact that space has become an even more important component of our collective economic and international security.

President Obama's national space policy places more emphasis on expanding international cooperation and collaboration; encouraging responsible action in space;

increasing the use of commercial space goods and services; strengthening and energizing the United States space industrial base; enhancing openness, as well as pursuing new transparency and confidence-building measures; and protecting critical space capabilities.

Today I will highlight a number of aspects of the new policy. First, I will discuss our expanded focus on international cooperation. Second, I will discuss how the transformation of the space environment has led to a greater number of challenges, as well as to a greater need for increased stability in space. Third, I will explain how cooperation can contribute to strengthening stability in space. Fourth, I will explain the implications of our new policy for positions adopted by the United States in the Conference on Disarmament. Finally, I will share our views on how all countries can contribute to preserving the space environment for future generations.

A key element of the national space policy is that the United States will engage in expanded international cooperation in space activities. The United States will work with our allies, friends and partners around the world within a framework of enhanced cooperation in space science as well as in human and robotic space exploration. We also will pursue enhanced cooperative programmes in the use of Earth observation satellites to support weather forecasting, environmental monitoring and sustainable development worldwide.

In regard to space exploration, the United States will continue to operate the International Space Station in cooperation with our international partners, in all likelihood to 2020 or beyond, and to expand our efforts to utilize its benefits. The United States will also implement a new space technology development and test programme, working with international partners and others to build and test several key technologies that can increase capabilities, decrease costs and expand the opportunities for future space activities.

An additional international initiative includes encouraging interoperability between the United States' and other nations' space capabilities, including continued efforts to ensure the compatibility and interoperability of global navigation satellite systems. Finally, we will work to extend the benefits of space to all humanity by enhancing collaborative efforts to collect and share space-derived information.

The new space policy recognizes the transformation of the space environment as well as the evolution of our utilization of space. When the space age began, opportunities to use space were available to only a few nations, and there were limited consequences for irresponsible or unintentional behaviour. Now, we find ourselves in a world where the benefits of space permeate almost every facet of our lives. The growth and evolution of the global economy has seen an ever-increasing number of nations and organizations using space.

Space capabilities are being used to create wealth and prosperity, to monitor the Earth's environment and its natural resources, and to explore the unknowns of our solar system and beyond. Of equal significance, more nations are using satellites in ways that help to maintain international peace and security. These include contributing to increased transparency and stability among nations and providing a vital communications path that can help to avert potential conflicts. Furthermore, these space systems allow people and Governments around the world to see with clarity, communicate with certainty, navigate with accuracy and operate with assurance.

The transformation of the space environment also presents challenges. The interconnected nature of space capabilities and the world's growing dependence on them mean that irresponsible acts in space can have damaging consequences for all of us. Furthermore, decades of space activity have littered the Earth's orbit with debris. As nations and commercial enterprises continue to increase their activities in space, the possibility of another collision increases correspondingly.

These emerging challenges have increased the need for greater stability in space. Our new national space policy recognizes that such strengthened stability can most effectively be achieved through international cooperation. Increasing stability in space activities begins, first, with ensuring the long-term sustainability of the space environment through expanded international measures for orbital debris mitigation. Secondly, it depends on improving our shared situational awareness and understanding of who is using the space environment and for what purposes. Thirdly, strengthening stability in space can be accomplished through improved information-sharing for space object collision avoidance. And, fourthly, it can be achieved through the development of transparency and confidence-building measures to promote safe and responsible operations in space. I would like to address these four topics next.

Orbital debris mitigation is essential in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of space activities. As Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in her 28 June 2010 statement on the national space policy: “The United States plans to expand its engagement within the United Nations and with other Governments and non-governmental organizations to address the growing problem of orbital debris and to promote ‘best practices’ for its sustainable use.”

In addition, the United States will continue to lead the way in furthering the development and adoption of international standards to minimize debris, building upon the foundation of the United Nations Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines. In collaboration with other space-faring nations, the United States also will pursue research and development of technologies and techniques to mitigate and remove on-orbit debris, reduce hazards and increase our understanding of the current and future debris environment.

The new national space policy also emphasizes the importance of space situational awareness. It instructs United States Government departments and agencies to maintain and to integrate space surveillance — that is, the observation of space and of activities occurring in space — with space weather and other information to develop accurate and timely space situational awareness.

The new policy also directs United States Government departments and agencies to collaborate with other nations, commercial entities and intergovernmental organizations to improve our shared ability to rapidly detect, warn of, characterize and attribute natural and man-made disturbances to space systems. Such improvements illustrate the ongoing commitment of the United States to promoting the safety of flight for all space-faring nations.

In order to improve information sharing and help avoid collisions between space objects, the national space policy commits the United States to collaborate with industry and foreign nations to improve space object databases. It also encourages cooperation in pursuing common international data standards and data integrity measures.

Additionally, the policy calls for collaboration on the dissemination of orbital tracking information, including predictions of potentially hazardous conjunctions between orbiting objects. This is particularly important given recent collisions, such as the February 2009 collision between a privately operated Iridium communications satellite and an inactive Russian military satellite, as well as a plethora of near-collisions.

As part of an effort to prevent future collisions, the United States has improved its capacity to analyse objects in space, as well as our ability to predict potential hazards to spacecraft. I am pleased to report that, since December 2009, the Joint Space Operations Center at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California routinely screens all active satellites against every object in the satellite catalogue to identify close approaches. The United States also provides notification to other Government and commercial satellite operators

when United States space analysts assess that an operator's satellite is predicted to pass within a close distance of another spacecraft or space debris.

Finally, the policy states that the United States will pursue pragmatic transparency and confidence-building measures — or TCBMs — to strengthen stability in space and to mitigate the risk of mishaps, misperceptions and mistrust. The United States will seek to ensure that any potential TCBM enhances the security of the United States, its allies and friends.

In a departure from the 2006 policy, the new national space policy also states that the United States will consider space-related arms control concepts and proposals which meet the criteria of equitability and effective verifiability and which enhance the national security of the United States and its allies. This approach is consistent with both the long-standing and bipartisan United States space policy and the verification standards that the United States has applied to other arms control agreements.

Regarding a matter of particular interest to this body, allow me to reaffirm that the United States continues to support the inclusion of a non-negotiating, or discussion, mandate in any programme of work for the Conference under the agenda item, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", known as PAROS. This was the basis of a compromise reached in the Conference in May 2009.

As a leading space-faring nation, the United States remains committed to addressing the challenges that have emerged as a result of the transformation of the space environment. This, however, cannot be the responsibility of the United States alone. As the first principle of our national space policy affirms, "It is the shared interest of all nations to act responsibly in space to help prevent mishaps, misperceptions, and mistrust." The United States calls on all Governments around the world to work together to adopt approaches for responsible activity in space in order to preserve this right for the benefit of future generations. Furthermore, we urge all nations to conduct these space activities in ways that emphasize openness and transparency.

The United States also calls on countries to recognize and adhere to the principle that all nations have the right to explore and use space for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all humanity in accordance with international law. This principle of "peaceful purposes" allows space to be used for national and homeland security activities. In this regard, the United States considers the space systems of all nations to have the rights of passage through, and conduct of operations in, space without interference. Consequently, we will continue to view the purposeful interference with space systems, including supporting infrastructure, as an infringement of a nation's rights, and act accordingly.

From the outset of humanity's ascent into space, the United States has declared its commitment to enhancing the welfare of humankind by cooperating with others to maintain the freedom to use and explore space. President Obama's new national space policy renews America's pledge of cooperation in the belief that, with reinvigorated United States leadership and strengthened international collaboration, all nations and peoples — space-faring and space-benefiting — will find their horizons broadened, their knowledge enhanced and their lives greatly improved.

It has been a pleasure to address all of you today about a policy of which I am very proud. As President Obama has stated, this policy is a commitment by the United States to scientific discovery and technological innovation and manifests America's unyielding faith in the future — even during difficult times. Our new policy emphasizes our expanded focus on increased international cooperation, which will contribute to a more stable space environment, but it also calls on all nations to act responsibly to ensure the long-term sustainability of our space activities. The United States looks forward to our future work

with all responsible space actors to create a more secure, stable and safe space environment for the benefit of all nations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The President: I thank Mr. Rose for the extremely interesting presentation. I think it is always useful for this Conference to be informed about the space policies of one of the leading space-faring nations.

Now the floor is open for comments or questions addressed to Mr. Rose. I recognize the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the Russian delegation, I should also like to thank Mr. Frank Rose for his detailed briefing on the new outer space policy of the United States of America. We certainly welcome the change in the approach taken by the United States Administration to the question of outer space. And we certainly understand that a series of practical developments has had an impact on this review. In particular, as was noted, the collision of two satellites — one American and one Russian — in February 2009 has made the need for cooperation in preventing such incidents very clear. Similarly, cooperation in the context of the International Space Station shows the benefits that can be derived from mankind's joint exploration of outer space.

With regard to the work of this forum — the Conference on Disarmament — it goes without saying that we are chiefly interested in those problems of outer space that have to do with international security. And in this connection, it goes without saying, we are taking note of those activities under the new space policy that have to do in particular with measures to guarantee transparency and security in space.

Last year in the First Committee of the General Assembly we reached consensus for the first time on the traditional resolution submitted by Russia and China on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. At that time the delegation of the United States of America did not break the consensus in anticipation of a review of its space policy. And we hope that at the next session this “non-breaking” of a consensus will turn into even more active support for such transparency and confidence-building measures, the elaboration of which is proposed under the aforementioned resolution.

In the light of the briefing that we heard today, I should like to ask Mr. Rose a question. Does the issuing of a new space policy by the United States of America mean that the legal instruments dealing with security in space now in force are insufficient, and is the United States of America prepared to join in the elaboration of instruments that might close the gaps in international law and allow us to strengthen security in outer space even further?

Thank you.

The President: If you would like, you may answer every question separately or you may group questions together. It is up to you, Mr. Rose. You have the floor.

Mr. Rose (United States of America): I thank my Russian colleague for those very, very insightful comments.

Let me take his last question first. I think that, with regard to the negotiation of a new space arms control agreement, the view of the United States is that we have not yet seen a space arms control proposal that meets the criteria that I outlined on equitability and effective verifiability.

With that said, the new policy is very clear about the fact that we will work with all space-faring nations in developing transparency and confidence-building measures.

At this point, however, the United States has not seen a space arms control proposal that meets the criteria that I have laid out: equitability and effective verifiability. But again,

we are interested in working with our colleagues from Russia and other nations around the world on effective near-term transparency and confidence-building measures that will increase long-term sustainability in space for all generations.

The President: Thank you, Mr. Rose. I now recognize the distinguished representative of Algeria, Ambassador Jazaïry.

Mr. Jazaïry (Algeria): Mr. President, since this is the first time that I am taking the floor under your presidency, allow me to address to you my warm congratulations and to say how grateful I also am for the very constructive role played by your predecessor, the Ambassador of Brazil. I am sure you will carry the flame forward and that we will be able to achieve progress.

It was interesting to note that, as stated in the two presentations made this morning, there seems to be, and there is in fact in the outside world, a great deal of positive movement in the field of disarmament. The problem is that the Conference is not moving apace. This has been emphasized, in particular, by the distinguished Foreign Minister of Bulgaria. The evolution of United States policy in this regard as described by the distinguished Deputy Assistant Secretary of State of the United States is also interesting. I would also like to mention, in particular, that this is a happy day for Algeria because, in addition to such a development, today we have just launched, in cooperation with India, a new satellite in the context of South-South cooperation.

My question to Ambassador Rose relates to his reference to the mandate of the Conference under the agenda item known as "PAROS". He kindly referred to the proposal that my country made last year, in May 2009, which was further elaborated by my eminent successors, resulting in the latest version, which was presented by the Ambassador of Brazil. His reference to this mandate differs somewhat from what is effectively in the mandate, however. Ambassador Rose refers to the inclusion of a non-negotiating or discussion mandate in the Conference's programme of work under the agenda item called "PAROS". Now, if you look at document CD/1889, operative paragraph 1 (c), on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, you will see that the mandate is "to discuss substantively, without limitation, not excluding the possibility of multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on all issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

So, should we interpret this formulation, as expressed by Ambassador Rose, as expressing dissent with the formulation as put forward in paragraph (c) of operative paragraph 1? I would be grateful for a response.

The President: Thank you, Ambassador Jazaïry. Mr. Rose, you have the floor.

Mr. Rose (United States of America): No, we support this formulation. Mr. President, the United States does indeed support the formulation.

The President: Thank you. I think Ambassador Jazaïry is satisfied with that answer.

Mr. Rose (United States of America): Mr. President, I would thank the Ambassador of Algeria for my promotion to the rank of ambassador.

The President: Thank you. Is there any other delegation which would like to take the floor? I recognize the distinguished representative of Brazil, Ambassador Soares Macedo.

Mr. Soares Macedo (Brazil): Mr. President, you know that you can count on the full support of my delegation. I remain committed to working with you with full confidence and friendship.

I cannot refrain from celebrating the answer just given to Ambassador Jazaïry. I think it is progress and, in fact, I would say, although perhaps something more could be said about the criteria of equitability and effective verifiability, that a negotiation is possible while meeting these criteria. The effective verifiability that we have been discussing informally in this Conference recently and in previous years is attainable with the means at the disposal of not only one country but of many. A number of countries have means available to them, so it is possible to have an agreement in the international community that would meet these criteria.

The criterion of equitability is not so clear to me. If I understand well, given the fact that one country is far ahead of others, not only in terms of the level of technology but also in terms of the extent of utilization of outer space, then any commitment would be an equitable burden for that country.

I find this to be an interesting concept because there is, in almost every field, a clear imbalance between countries: an imbalance in the economic area, in the science and technology area, and in many other areas. So if this principle is applied, leading countries would never be able to negotiate or to be party to an agreement. Then this is not the case, fortunately. I say this without the intention of opening a debate, but simply to express the difficulty I find in grasping the exact sense and the boundaries of this criterion of equitability as applied to the possible negotiations concerning not only outer space but other multilateral negotiations as well.

But I would like to say that I think, being an Ambassador, that it is indeed proper to extend to Mr. Rose the title given to him by Ambassador Jazaïry. He is accepted, at the least, as an honorary member of this club. His statement was very clear, and I would like to express my appreciation to him.

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I do not see any. So, thank you very much, Mr. Rose, once again for the presentation and also for your readiness to engage with the membership.

I recognize the distinguished representative of Canada, Ambassador Grinius.

Mr. Grinius (Canada): Mr. President, I would like to refer to a different issue but, in actual fact, there is a direct link between it and the previous discussions with respect to outer space.

First of all, allow me to welcome Bulgaria to the presidency of the Conference and confirm Canada's commitment to work constructively with you over the course of your tenure. Perhaps miracles will happen and we will actually have a programme of work. I certainly hope so, under your guidance.

I would like to thank Foreign Minister Mladenov for his address this morning, and I look forward to Bulgaria's leadership. I think that what he said and what Ambassador Jazaïry underlined is very, very important: that there is a great deal of progress being made, both psychologically and in substance, in the area of arms control and disarmament everywhere except in this Conference on Disarmament, it would appear.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to thank Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Rose — now promoted to Ambassador Rose — for being with us here this morning to elaborate on the new United States space policy. The contributions of the United States are integral to the Conference's consideration of the PAROS agenda item, and we certainly appreciate your Government's contained engagement on the issue, particularly as reflected by your visit here.

I take the floor on the subject of the Space Security Conference held here in Geneva by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on 29–30 March

2010. The title of this year's conference, which was "From Foundations to Negotiations", appears to have been a very apt one, considering the exchange that we have just had. The conference was organized by UNIDIR with significant financial and material support from the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, as well as the Secure World Foundation and The Simons Foundation.

UNIDIR has compiled a report on the seminar, copies of which are available from UNIDIR. I have submitted this report to the Conference's Secretary-General, Mr. Ordzhonikidze, along with a request that this report be issued as an official document of the Conference and distributed to all member and observer States. I would request the Secretariat, as per our practice in recent years, to ensure that this document is duly referenced in the appropriate place in the report which the Conference will submit to the General Assembly this year. As in the case of previous UNIDIR reports, I think that this report makes a substantive contribution in enriching our understanding and, quite frankly, educating all of us about the issues that I hope we will continue to discuss in depth under the PAROS agenda.

The President: I thank the distinguished representative of Canada, Ambassador Grinius, for his statement and for the very interesting information that he has shared with us concerning the report of the 2010 UNIDIR Conference. I also, of course, thank you for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

Would any other delegation like to take the floor? If not, then this concludes our business for today.

The next plenary meeting will take place on Thursday, 15 July, at 10 a.m. in this chamber.

The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.