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# Conference on Disarmament

15 May 2012

English

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## Final record of the one thousand two hundred and fifty-seventh plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 15 May 2012, at 10.05 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Minelik Alemu Getahun.....(Ethiopia)

**The President:** Good morning. I declare open the 1257th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to his Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I have the pleasure and honour to invite our distinguished guest to take the floor.

**Mr. Al-Nasser** (President of the United Nations General Assembly): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to address the Conference on Disarmament today in this historic chamber, which has witnessed the negotiation of major multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

Before I came here, I have learned about the difficulties witnessed during this year's session so far, but rather than reconsider my visit to address the Conference, I chose to remain confident that the leadership of Ambassador Alemu Getahun and your individual and collective sense of responsibility will eventually bring the work of this session of the Conference on Disarmament to a successful conclusion. In this regard, I commend the recent calls by Mr. Tokayev urging the Conference on Disarmament to continue to pursue a programme of work as its first priority, and to consider, as appropriate, the issue of procedural reform as means to build further trust and momentum in the work of the Conference.

Over its history, the Conference on Disarmament has produced landmark disarmament instruments including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Since its establishment as a result of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, the Conference on Disarmament remains the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.

In the final document of the first special session, the General Assembly confirmed its awareness of the continuing requirement for a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. That awareness of the General Assembly obviously remains unchanged.

In its resolutions 65/93 in 2010 and 66/66 in 2011, on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations, the General Assembly recognized that the political will to advance the disarmament agenda has been strengthened in recent years. Yet it has expressed grave concern about the current status of the disarmament machinery, including the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament, and stressed the need for greater efforts to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations. Indeed, the failure of the Conference in making substantive progress for well over a decade has undoubtedly put the credibility of this crucially important body at high risk. There is a need to exert more efforts and flexibility from all involved parties, to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations.

In the last two years, we have all witnessed important progress on bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. One good example is represented in the fact that the Russian Federation and the United States negotiated and concluded a new treaty on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms.

The States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) had a successful review conference in 2010, and concrete and promising steps have been taken on the question of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, an item on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly for a decade. These developments demonstrate progress and make a positive impact on the global security

environment. But it seems that this progress has been achieved in disconnect from the work done in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference has an unquestioned responsibility in the advancement of the international disarmament agenda, or in efforts to contribute to a nuclear-weapon-free world. The Conference on Disarmament must do its part to advance the international agenda through its invaluable work.

At last October's First Committee session, intensive discussions among delegations clearly revealed that revitalizing the disarmament machinery, including in particular the Conference on Disarmament, was an emerging and ever more pressing priority. Many of you were part of these discussions. The underlying message was clear: the continuation of the current deadlock has — and could very well continue to have — worrying implications for the role, function and even the very future of the Conference. The only way to avoid this is for the Conference to promptly take up its responsibility at this session through collective action. The future of the Conference on Disarmament is in its member States' hands.

The agreement on a programme of work is the least member States can agree on, it is not a miracle. The Conference already adopted a programme of work by consensus in 2009, represented in document CD/1864. I invite delegations to use the programme agreed in 2009 as a lowest common denominator for negotiations aimed at adopting a 2012 programme of work without delay. A number of very constructive proposals have been put forward and delegations should allow the President of the Conference to lead this effort in serious and inclusive consultations over a draft programme that is consensual, realistic and not necessarily ideal. The perfect has been the enemy of the good for too long.

Overcoming this obstacle will represent a very positive sign in putting the disarmament machinery back on track and bringing nuclear disarmament back on the agenda. I remain totally confident in the ability of the Conference as an institution to produce substantive outcomes. While I am equally confident that such ability requires collective action from all of you.

Before concluding, let me reiterate my full support to your work, and my preparedness to provide any help possible to revive the Conference and enable it once again to fulfil the function for which it was established. Disarmament remains a high priority on the General Assembly's agenda and with your work you can substantially contribute not only to the advancement of this agenda but also to the advancement of international peace and security through negotiating a new instrument that contributes to a safer world.

**The President:** I thank the President of the General Assembly for his statement and for his kind words to the President. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the State of Qatar for the successful convening of UNCTAD-XIII and for the hospitality, and would duly note your confidence in the Conference on Disarmament and your support to the Conference. Allow me now to suspend the meeting for a short moment in order to escort His Excellency from the chamber.

*The meeting was suspended at 10.20 a.m. and resumed at 10.25 a.m.*

**The President:** Before giving the floor to the speakers from the list, I just want to explain and say a few words on ambassadors departing and new arrivals, and I would give the floor to people who have inscribed to speak, but if colleagues would want to make comments on the draft working paper containing the draft schedule of activities, then I would introduce those after a couple of colleagues who have registered to speak as a general comment, namely Bulgaria and India. I understand that Egypt would want to wait until after we introduce.

So I would like to extend my best wishes to Ambassador Gancho Ganev from Bulgaria who has left us to assume new duties. I would like to ask his delegation to pass our

appreciation for his many valuable contributions to the work of the Conference during his tenure, and our sincere wishes for his success and satisfaction in his new assignments. I would also like to warmly welcome three new colleagues, Ambassador Ivan Piperkov from Bulgaria, Ambassador Cosimo Risi from Italy and Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto from Finland. I can assure them of our cooperation in the exercise of their duties.

I would like to turn to the list of speakers. The first in the list is Ambassador Ivan Piperkov of Bulgaria. You have the floor.

**Mr. Piperkov (Bulgaria):** Thank you very much Mr. President. May I start by extending my warmest congratulations to you for the dedication and commitment with which you have been presiding the Conference on Disarmament over the last two months. I assure you of the full support of my delegation in the accomplishment of the important and challenging task. I also express deep appreciation to your fellow colleagues from the P6 — Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France and Germany — for their professionalism and devotion.

I would like to extend my greetings to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, to whom I presented my credentials on 23 April.

It is an honour and privilege to represent Bulgaria in the Conference on Disarmament. I am assuming my duty with a clear understanding of the crucial juncture at which this body stands. I look forward to successfully working with all of you colleagues.

I had the privilege to follow the proceedings of this august body in the mid-90s when the last significant multilateral treaty was agreed by the Conference member States. Unfortunately, more than 15 years later I see the Conference in a deep crisis, unable to reach consensus on a simple programme of work. Despite this wave of pessimism, I have been informed that Ambassador Hisham Badr of Egypt, second President in 2012, made a brave effort to help overcome the long-standing impasse. I use this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Badr and his team. I would like to encourage the next presidents to continue with similar efforts.

Bulgaria supported document CD/1933/Rev.1 not only because we have always sought to play a constructive role in this body and have supported every major initiative designed to overcome the deadlock in the Conference. The merit of the draft decision itself is the other reason for our support. Our delegation finds it a well-balanced compromise that reflects efforts from previous years to narrow down the differences on a programme of work. To our view, this document had the capacity to prompt consensus among member States and provided a well-balanced basis for the Conference to resume its substantial work.

Given the current international situation deemed favourable to progress in the field of nuclear disarmament, we think that the Conference should take this chance to prove able to live up to the expectations of the outside world. Committed to the ultimate goal of a safer world free of nuclear weapons, Bulgaria shares the view that it is in the interest of all countries to overcome their differences and engage in this endeavour.

Bulgaria will continue to firmly support the enlargement of the Conference with new members, will continue to play a constructive role in these efforts and will continue to support the appointment of a special coordinator on the expansion of the Conference membership. We believe that its membership should become relevant to the twenty-first century realities. Bulgaria firmly believes that the way of cooperation and sharing of similar ideas and views on global security and stability is the prerequisite for solving the bilateral and regional issues. History made us learn that the inclusive approach is far more effective and productive than the exclusive one.

Over the last more than 60 years the United Nations community clearly has shown that only through cooperation and mutual support we can bring peace, security, economic growth and prosperity to our societies. We all have learned our lessons of the twentieth century and now, already in the new century, we should build on these lessons and make further steps to enhance cooperation, mutual trust and confidence-building.

The time for accusing the international situation of being guilty for the Conference's impasse has expired. Now, it is time for all of us to assume our political responsibility in this chamber, because it is time for action.

**The President:** I thank the Ambassador of Bulgaria for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to Ambassador Sujata Mehta of India.

**Ms. Mehta (India):** Thank you Mr. President.

This is the first time I take the floor under your presidency, and I would like to say how pleased we are to see you preside over our work. I assure you of the full cooperation and support of my delegation in the discharge of your duties. I would also like to thank preceding presidents, Ambassador Badr and Ambassador Gallegos, for their diligent work on behalf of the members of the Conference.

India attaches importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. We share the disappointment that it has so far been unable to undertake its primary task of negotiating multilateral treaties. For India's part, we will not stand in the way if consensus emerges on a programme of work picking up from where we were in terms of the consensus decision CD/1864, if such a decision facilitates the early commencement of substantive work of the Conference, including negotiation of an FMCT. While efforts towards an agreed programme of work that can be implemented should continue, we do not believe it is helpful to reopen the long-standing consensus in the international community on the basic goal and mandate of an FMCT, which has been reaffirmed by consensus on several occasions.

India attaches the highest priority to nuclear disarmament. India remains committed to the objective of the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988 and the realization of its vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world and non-violent world order. This Action Plan includes a road map for achieving nuclear disarmament in a time-bound, universal, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable manner. India supports efforts for raising public awareness for generating the necessary momentum for the cherished goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

We welcome the entry into force and ongoing implementation of the new Russia-United States agreement to reduce their nuclear arsenals. States with substantial nuclear arsenals should take meaningful steps towards nuclear disarmament. The goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. Measures to reduce nuclear dangers arising from accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons and de-alerting of nuclear weapons are essential steps. There is also need for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. India's working paper on nuclear disarmament (CD/1816) of February 2007 contains specific proposals to that end for consideration of the international community. I would like to draw the attention of the Conference to India's resolutions — 66/57 on a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and 66/48 on reducing nuclear danger — adopted with substantial support by the United Nations General Assembly.

India is committed to working with the international community to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We subscribe to a policy of credible minimum nuclear deterrent. We do not subscribe to any arms race, including a nuclear arms race. India has espoused a policy of no-first-use and non-use against non-nuclear-weapon States and is prepared to convert these undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements. India has also supported universalization of the policy of no-first-use in a global no-first-use treaty. While we believe that the best assurance against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination, we support negotiations with a view to reaching agreement on effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.

India has had a consistent position on the FMCT. We were one of the original co-sponsors of resolution 48/75L on FMCT, adopted in 1993, as it envisaged the treaty as a significant contribution to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, India is committed to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty to ban the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The future treaty would have to meet India's national security interests. India is a nuclear-weapon State and a responsible member of the world community, and would approach the negotiations as such. In accordance with the mandate contained in CD/1299, we believe that the Conference is the appropriate forum for negotiating the FMCT as it brings together all the essential stakeholders.

The importance of addressing the issue of prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference has been underscored by ongoing developments which may impact on space security. India is against the weaponization of outer space. We believe that it is essential to preserve and promote the benefits flowing from advances in space technology by ensuring access to and use of space. This would require a step-by-step approach wherein legal measures are complemented with transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) that are non-discriminatory and evolved through an inclusive process with the participation of all spacefaring nations.

Mr. President, as we begin the second part of this year's session, my delegation reaffirms the priority we should attach to commencing substantive work. We support your efforts to keep the Conference focused on its substantive work. It is our conviction that the Conference on Disarmament continues to have the mandate, the membership and the rules of procedure to discharge its responsibility. It is up to us, member States, to make it work by negotiating multilateral treaties on disarmament and international security which can be signed, ratified and implemented universally. The rules of procedure provide the necessary assurances to member States that their security interests are fully protected. We hope that our efforts will reaffirm the critical role of the Conference as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and build a positive momentum for resumption of substantive work, including negotiations.

Before I conclude, I would like to inform the Conference of the sad news of the passing of Ambassador Aravind Vellodi of India earlier this year. He was a distinguished disarmament diplomat and international civil servant, who served as Secretary of the First Committee in New York and as acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee. He had the rare distinction of presiding over two successive sessions of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, including the one immediately following the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978. He will be remembered for his contribution to the Final Document of the first special session, which remains the only consensus disarmament document adopted with universal support. His passing leaves a deep void.

**The President:** Thank you for your statement and for the kind words addressed to the President and please accept our condolences on the passing of Ambassador Aravind Vellodi of India.

I have two indications for the floor, Mexico and the United States. The United States you have the floor.

**Ms. Kennedy** (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President. I hope you can convey our thanks to the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Al-Nasser for his address to us today. In listening to him I found that he, like many of his predecessors, voiced the frustration — broadly shared I think by the international community, including I dare say most of us in this room — with the Conference's inability to perform its mandate of conducting disarmament negotiations. Our Secretary-General in New York has also repeatedly urged the Conference to fulfil its core responsibilities as of course has our own Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament. Sadly, we've heard this lament now for 15 years, and despite our best efforts we appear no closer now to meeting this responsibility than we were 3 years ago, when we finally reached consensus on a finely balanced programme of work in CD/1864 thanks to the able efforts of our Algerian President. We have been flexible working with others, including recently our Egyptian President who energetically and skilfully put forward CD/1933 in an effort to further a compromise, and one which we decided we could support. Now as the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Al-Nasser, in his own words urged us, we supported an approach which was designed to, in his words, be consensual and realistic although not necessarily perfect and yet we remain stuck. We are all evaluating options, for our part we are working with partners to galvanize the Conference in an effort to find a way forward. We cannot lose sight of the international community's long-term goal to begin FMCT negotiations. We know others are looking at other options including perhaps within a General Assembly framework. For our part it is essential that any option for FMCT be predicated on a consensus working basis and include key stakeholders, such as those with the capacity to produce fissile material, in order to meet the objectives of the treaty. Now we are not dedicated to preserving the Conference simply to preserve the Conference. Nor do we think the General Assembly will have all the answers. It would not be productive for the General Assembly for example to simply plough ground long covered here in Geneva. Let me reiterate that we are open to substantive discussions on the agreed core issues, but the international community has long been ready to negotiate an FMCT. Indeed as long ago as the first special session, 34 years ago, and the foundation of the Conference, it has been an international priority, and in other forums such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty. States parties also highlighted this immediate disarmament priority at the 2010 Review Conference and again in the last two weeks of the First Preparatory Committee in Vienna, so ably presided over by our colleague here Ambassador Woolcott. We hope, perhaps against the odds, that the Conference in the time remaining for this session will allow work to proceed on FMCT. Our Governments after all did not send us here to endlessly discuss procedure and negotiate phantom programmes of work. They, or certainly my Government, sent us here to negotiate substance beginning with this next step for nuclear disarmament. Failure to take this next step will not move us closer to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. If we cannot take this next step, all those who share the goal of a world without nuclear weapons will have to find other means to accomplish it.

Thank you again to the President of the General Assembly for sharing his perspectives as the President and we certainly look forward to working with him in the fall. Let me also extend a very warm welcome to our new colleagues from Bulgaria, Italy and Finland and I hope that our Bulgarian colleague will convey our best wishes to our departing colleague and good friend.

**The President:** I thank the Ambassador of the United States for her statement.

I would like to introduce a working paper on the draft schedule of activities as contained in document CD/WP.571. This draft schedule of activities is presented with the agreement of the six presidents of the Conference for the 2012 session. While presenting this draft for consideration of the Conference, I would like to state the following. While the draft schedule of activities provides for the possibility of holding substantive discussions on items listed, the priority for all presidents this year, and in subsequent years, remains conducting consultations and discussions to arrive at a comprehensive programme of work for the Conference.

Two, the Conference on Disarmament has been facing difficulties in its effort to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme of work. The schedule of activities is not meant to hide this glaring fact. It is intended to provide the opportunity for holding substantive discussions that could enable future compromises, while the presidents continue pursuing in parallel their efforts towards a comprehensive programme of work. The schedule provides sensible and predictable advance notice to members of the Conference and the order of items for substantive discussions, and for the presidents of the Conference to organize time efficiently and with the necessary flexibility taking into account the number of countries intending to take the floor on items in this schedule.

Three, the intention was to ask the Conference to concur with the draft schedule of activities; however, given the fact that delegations were only able to see the text during late hours of yesterday, formal consideration will be done on 22 May 2012. The draft schedule as presented would maintain its balance only if we start substantive discussions next Tuesday. For this reason I would like to encourage countries wishing to speak on the first item to prepare themselves for discussions and indicate their intentions to the secretariat. In fact I would like to appeal to all members of the Conference to indicate their intentions to speak and their choice of time and items to the secretariat well in advance for efficient use of time.

This is the introduction for presenting you the draft schedule of activities. I would ask again for concurrence by next Tuesday.

I will now go to the list of speakers, and the first in my list is Egypt. You have the floor.

**Mr. El-Atawy (Egypt):** Mr. President, Ambassador Hisham Badr had to rush to another meeting and he conveys his apologies, and he asked me to read the following statement.

Mr. President, let me start by expressing our appreciation for the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser for coming to address this Conference and for his thoughtful remarks and we ask you Mr. President to convey our good luck wishes for all his endeavours. We would also like to extend a warm welcome to the newly arrived ambassadors and wish them well in their tenure in this august body. We also would like to convey our condolences to the Indian delegation on the passing away of Ambassador Aravind Vellodi. His presence will be greatly missed.

Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your efforts that you have exerted since assuming the presidency. Your diligent work and effort in conducting consultations on both a programme of work and starting substantive discussions on the agenda items are quite apparent. We stand ready to support you in all your efforts, in any way possible.

Many delegations in this august chamber just came back from Vienna after attending the First Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review and let me take this opportunity to thank my friend Ambassador Peter Woolcott, Ambassador of Australia, for his dedication and leadership in the process.



In launching the new cycle of the NPT review process in 2015, progress made in 2010 was recognized, cemented and built on. Of course the speed of implementation of particular elements of the 2010 action plan varied, however the process of progressing what we agreed upon and furthering the course of disarmament is the lesson we should take. We hope that we can also achieve progress in the Conference on the agenda items we have been agreeing to for many years now. During the Egyptian presidency we have tried to formulate a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that would allow us to start substantive work without any prejudice to the national interest of any of the member States. We still believe that CD/1933/Rev.1 remains the most realistic basis for a balanced and comprehensive programme of work, and we applaud your efforts in this regard. We are further encouraged that incoming presidents have also indicated that they seek to continue efforts to seek a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

Mr. President, this year 2012 is seminal to the disarmament agenda, both global and regional, and regarding nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. We are eager that the Conference would also witness in this year momentum that would further the issues on this agenda, especially on nuclear disarmament, which remains the top priority as stipulated in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We are confident in your ability to assist this Conference to get together on that path.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and his kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

**Ms. Jáquez Huacuja** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, since this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to you, a representative of a country that Mexico holds in esteem and with which it has a number of very important historical and political ties. Through you, allow me to thank the President of the General Assembly for his visit and to welcome the ambassadors who are starting their work in the Conference on Disarmament today. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey my delegation's condolences to the delegation of India for the loss of Ambassador Vellodi.

We welcome the draft schedule of activities contained in document CD/WP.571 and we also appreciate, commend the efforts that you have made to present a balanced schedule of activities, to try to save time and focus on the discussion to be held in the Conference in the coming days. We also acknowledge and note with great satisfaction that this discussion will be held in plenary meetings. We believe that this format is important for the Conference debates because, in this way, representatives of civil society can be present, with the accountability that entails for members of the Conference.

We also appreciate and welcome the willingness of the six presidents to ensure the continuity of the schedule of activities and to hold the discussions in question throughout the 2012 session. Mexico will play a constructive role in the discussions. However, while we will not stand in the way of implementing the schedule, we would once again like to draw the attention of the Conference to the fact that these activities are being carried out instead of implementing a programme of work, as we are all aware.

Mexico has repeatedly expressed its concern about keeping the Conference busy being considered as tantamount to a substantive programme of work. In this connection, we request that such activities should not be reflected in the final annual report of the Conference as substantive work. Our basic concern is that as long as the Conference fails to approve and implement a balanced programme of work on all agenda items leading to multilateral negotiations on disarmament, particularly on nuclear disarmament, a matter to which we attach top priority, and discussions in this Conference and this chamber are confined to agenda items, we are ultimately undermining the disarmament machinery: we

are assuming the functions of the Disarmament Commission (UNDC), and we are implicitly approving the fact that UNDC is not going to negotiate.

We request that this comment should be duly reflected in the record of the meeting, in the final report. We consider, as you said, that this is not the core work that we should be doing, and to this end, we are confident that you and other presidents of the 2012 session will pursue your efforts to achieve a programme of work that can be implemented and will ensure that the mandate of the Conference is fulfilled.

Thank you Mr. President.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Mexico for her statement and her kind words. I should tell her that one of the best-known squares in Addis Ababa is called Mexico Square, testimony to our relation.

The Ambassador of Germany has the floor.

**Mr. Hoffmann** (Germany): Thank you Mr. President. Let me also first extend a very warm welcome to our new colleagues from Bulgaria, Finland and Italy.

Mr. President, I would start by conveying, through you, our gratitude to the President of the United Nations General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, for his address to the Conference today. My delegation highly values the personal commitment demonstrated by the President of the General Assembly to build on the strong support voiced by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by United Nations Member States for the urgent need to revitalize the work of multilateral disarmament bodies and to advance multilateral disarmament negotiation.

Germany has been an active participant in the revitalization debate from its inception. The General Assembly is watching the Conference's inability to fulfil its mandate, which is to negotiate legal instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, with ever-growing impatience and concern. In the First Committee last year in October, engaged discussions were held not only on one, but indeed on four draft resolutions which dealt in various ways with the stalemate in the Conference. These discussions clearly demonstrated a growing determination to consider "options" should this stalemate continue to last.

The visit of the President of the General Assembly is indeed timely. Resolution 66/66 on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations, which was adopted without a vote, recognized "the need to take stock, during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, of all relevant efforts to take forward multilateral disarmament negotiations".

We are now halfway through the 2012 session. Unfortunately, despite all efforts by successive Conference presidents, we have so far once again failed to respond to the General Assembly's call to adopt and implement a programme of work and to resume substantive work on our agenda. An ever growing frustration has started to pervade this chamber.

My delegation has repeatedly stated that we see the start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material, for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices as the next logical step on the multilateral disarmament agenda. Based on General Assembly resolution 66/44, which encourages efforts in support of the commencement of such negotiations, we are therefore organizing a scientific experts' meeting on 29 and 30 May in Geneva. We are convinced that an informed exchange about the complex technical issues related to that subject will deepen our knowledge and understanding and help build confidence, without prejudice to national positions regarding and during future negotiations. We look forward to United Nations Member States' active participation in this

meeting, which we consider a modest contribution to our shared objective of advancing multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation.

At the same time, Germany remains committed to taking forward disarmament negotiations as a whole and will contribute constructively to further efforts to revitalize the work of the disarmament machinery.

Mr. President, I also wish to express my delegation's full support for your invitation to the Conference to structure the remainder of our 2012 session in accordance with the circulated schedule of activities. As you have pointed out, this proposal was discussed amongst the P6; in fact it represents a concrete example of practical P6 coordination, which is in itself a desirable goal in terms of ensuring continuity.

Of course, as long as there is no agreement on a programme of work, the presidents of the Conference and — not to forget — all member States of the Conference continue to be called upon to seek and make possible such an agreement on a programme of work. In its absence we believe it is incumbent on all of us to make use of our plenary meetings in the most sensible way. For that purpose the schedule of activities which you have suggested strikes my delegation as a practical and useful tool to ensure that our meetings are as focused and productive as possible. In that sense I very much hope that we can indeed start as foreseen in our next plenary with the schedule. Finally, I would wish to assure the delegation of Mexico that we continue to be fully aware that these are discussions and that the actual task which we have is to negotiate and hopefully conclude new instruments in the field of disarmament and arms control and this fact I expect will be in one way or the other duly reflected in the report which we will have to make for the General Assembly.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Hoffmann for his statement and for specific elaborations that he added in introducing the draft schedule of activities.

I see no other delegation wishing to speak. I would conclude today's meeting on this note and again recall, or invite colleagues to be prepared to speak on the first item of this schedule of activities on nuclear disarmament next Tuesday. We will start with the President again inviting you to work on the basis of the schedule that we have laid before you. Please also indicate your intentions well in advance to the secretariat for the presidents to allocate the time efficiently and in a flexible manner. I take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Woolcott, Peter Woolcott, who just left I think. He is much renowned for successful meetings and subsequent presidents of the Conference would get his ideas for the remaining period to continue to work to get a comprehensive programme of work.

The meeting will resume at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 22 May.

*The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.*