

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.957  
27 May 2004

ENGLISH

---

## FINAL RECORD OF THE NINE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 27 May 2004, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. Khasbazaryn BEKHBAT (Mongolia)

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): The 957th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

I have on the list of speakers for today the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Pablo Macedo, and the representative of Romania, Ambassador Doru Costea. However, before I give them the floor I would like to make a few introductory statements as my country, Mongolia, takes the Chair of the Conference.

At the outset I should like to express my sincere thanks to you for kindly placing in me the trust which is so vital in discharging my responsibility of presiding over our deliberations for these four weeks. It is an honour and a great privilege for my country, which has constantly striven for peace, disarmament and international security. Sitting in this prestigious seat, I cannot help but recall the time, exactly three years ago, when from this same rostrum my Minister of Foreign Affairs addressed this august assembly and outlined to it the main trends in my country's policy on arms control and disarmament. The aim was to place on record the importance we have attached to this distinguished multilateral institution from the very beginning, and to emphasize the urgent need "to break the ongoing deadlock that has gripped the Conference on Disarmament over the last few years, through a display of the necessary political will and redoubling of our joint efforts to reinvigorate the work of this unique forum".

I think if the Minister were to take the floor today, he would change very little of what he said. The Conference on Disarmament is still unable to get down to substantive work for lack of a consensus on its programme of work. We share the feelings of disappointment and even frustration that many delegations in this body are experiencing. However, these feelings of disappointment have of course in no way diluted our confidence in the vocation and central role of the Conference as the most appropriate multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament. We remain convinced that collective wisdom will enable this body to recover, to live up to expectations once again, so as to be able to tackle the challenges facing this world - a world in search of peace and security.

It is in this spirit that my delegation embarks on the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the period entrusted to us, and it is with this hope and with humility that I, as President, will try to build on the rich and extensive legacy built up during previous periods. In this connection I should like to pay tribute to all my predecessors, and particularly Ms. Amina Mohamed, Ambassador of Kenya, Ms. Rajmah Hussain, the Ambassador of Malaysia, who spared no efforts to get the work of the Conference back on track. I would pay particular tribute to the wisdom of the outgoing President, Ambassador Pablo Macedo of Mexico, who worked hard to give new momentum to our work by deciding to hold informal plenaries devoted to discussion of particular items on our agenda. I know that if I am to discharge my responsibilities, I can count fully on the support and efficient cooperation of the secretariat, and I should like to thank in advance the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Serguei Ordzhonikidze, and his deputy, Enrique Roman-Morey, as well as their close colleagues and all the devoted and competent staff. I will continue - I have already begun - my bilateral and multilateral consultations with a view to contributing to the emergence of consensus on a programme of work. It goes without saying that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, I will also be convening formal and informal plenary sessions.

(The President)

On informal meetings, let me remind you that as the current President, I intend to keep to the timetable proposed by my predecessor, which we have all accepted, convinced as I am that our informal discussions can indeed help us to move closer to our primary objective.

In conclusion, I wish to call on all delegations to use the time remaining to us before the summer break as efficiently as possible in order to find a way out of the stalemate that we have been in for eight years now. I am looking forward to cooperating with you in a sincere and constructive manner. I will have a ready ear for anyone who might wish to share his or her ideas, suggestions and proposals with me, and through me with all the delegations here. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Pablo Macedo.

Mr. MACEDO (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, first of all allow me to express my pleasure at seeing you take the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament. You can count on my full support and cooperation, as well as that of my delegation, in the discharge of your responsibilities, a task we are sure you will accomplish with skill. I would also like to express very warm thanks for your kind words concerning my term of office as President of the Conference.

As I announced last week during the final plenary chaired by Mexico, I shall now be presenting at this formal session my own assessment of the discussions which took place in the informal plenaries held with respect to the first two topics on our agenda, which constitute two aspects of a single broad question, that of nuclear disarmament.

The extensive participation in the informal plenaries reveals once again the importance which the international community attaches to nuclear disarmament, a matter of the utmost priority and one which continues to prompt keen interest.

I will not seek in this statement to summarize the positions expressed in the meetings which we held. That would be hazardous and there would be a risk of overlooking some of them. Similarly, it is not my intention to describe our discussions in an exhaustive manner. The purpose I am pursuing is to seek to identify a number of the main features in the debate which could guide our efforts to secure the adoption of a programme of work - an objective which we must not lose sight of.

In this connection, the first consideration which I would like to share with you is my conviction that the proposal by the five ambassadors, the initiative which we all know as the A-5 proposal, remains the formula which comes closest to consensus for our programme of work. I would invite members to continue their efforts to smooth out the remaining difficulties which this approach still raises for a number of delegations - difficulties which, incidentally, we would like to have fully clarified in order to be able to resolve them.

Although, as I said, I am not seeking to summarize in this statement what was said in the debate, I cannot fail to note, although briefly, a number of the substantive issues which were emphasized by delegations. Clear importance is attached to nuclear disarmament and to the unequivocal undertaking given by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their arsenals. In this

(Mr. Macedo, Mexico)

respect, the need for the speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the last legal instrument negotiated by our Conference, was reiterated, and it was emphasized that the next logical step towards nuclear disarmament is the conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the production of fissile material, bearing in mind that the Shannon mandate provides us with a compromise formula on the basis of which work can be resumed.

It was also emphasized that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of a single coin, and that efforts to attain these objectives are complementary and mutually reinforcing. The recent Security Council resolution 1540 and the initiative by the European Union and the G-8 were cited as examples of efforts to combat horizontal proliferation. I am convinced that international security would be still further strengthened if nuclear disarmament was addressed with the same determination.

We also heard with pleasure the nuclear-weapon States outlining the steps they have taken to scale down their arsenals gradually with a view to the ultimate objective of total elimination of such weapons. I might also mention the challenges which we face in the present security environment, such as terrorism and the possibility that non-State actors will gain access to materials for the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

After this very brief summary, I would like to highlight just two proposals which were made during these plenaries, and which in my view could encourage further activity in the Conference. The first relates to an assessment of nuclear disarmament measures which have already been carried out, what has been done, what remains to be done, what steps have been taken to combat the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and what further measures could be adopted by the Conference on Disarmament. To conduct such an exercise, a significant level of transparency is required. This is a tendency which happily has been displayed by a number of nuclear-weapon States. In addition it was argued that it would also be helpful if the Conference were to hold a series of sessions in which it would analyse the role currently played by nuclear weapons in security doctrines.

The second proposal is for the establishment of an expert group to address technical issues related to a treaty for the prohibition of the production of fissile material. We should recall that several decades ago the Conference did something similar with respect to the prohibition of nuclear tests, and that the mechanism established at that time worked effectively to identify delicate issues related to verification. A similar approach would furnish valuable elements which would lead to better understanding of what is involved in a ban on fissile material.

In my view, these two practical proposals merit further study. We could begin to work on that basis, once we have concluded our consideration of the agenda items in informal plenaries, if we have not managed by then to reach agreement on the programme of work, or else in parallel with our informal debates. However, as I have said, it is important to ensure that these exercises do not distract attention from our main concern, the adoption of a programme of work.

(Mr. Macedo, Mexico)

Lastly, I would like to mention that I did not hear any delegation suggest a change in the mandate contained in the A-5 initiative with respect to the consideration of nuclear disarmament, even though a number of delegations find that it is not as ambitious as they might have wished. Similarly, there were no explicit objections in this regard. This leads me to conclude that, like the proposal on fissile material, this mandate is ripe for action and can form part of our programme of work. In this context, I once again urge members to embark on a period of reflection which will enable us to treat each item on our agenda on its own merits, avoiding the linkages which we have established between them.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my deep appreciation for the support I have received and for the active participation in the informal plenaries. I would wish you, Sir, the greatest success in the continuation of an exercise which will encourage the resumption of a dialogue that should never have been interrupted, and will foster the restoration of an atmosphere of trust that should never have been lost in the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Macedo, for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Romania, Ambassador Costea.

Mr. COSTEA (Romania) (translated from French): Mr. President, I should like to begin my very brief statement by congratulating you on taking the Chair. I wish you a productive term of office and assure you that my delegation will continue to engage in any initiative you may decide to launch to ensure that our Conference begins its work.

(continues in English)

In keeping with the tradition of informing the members of the Conference on recent national events and developments in implementing the international documents that Romania is a party to, I am pleased to let you know that the third meeting of the national authorities of the Eastern European States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was held in Bucharest from 17 to 19 May.

The meeting was organized jointly by the Romanian Chemical Weapons Convention National Authority, the National Agency for Export Controls (ANCEX) and OPCW, and was attended by the representatives of 25 national authorities belonging to all regions, as well as international organizations, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the European Council of Chemical Industry Associations (CEFIC).

Participants discussed the practical measures needed to fulfil the objectives of the OPCW article VII action plan on enhancing the effectiveness of the CWC's national implementation measures. In the course of the meeting, the status of the Convention's implementation in Eastern Europe was reviewed, focusing on the CWC's requirements for legislative and administrative provisions to monitor and declare transfers of scheduled chemicals. Participants shared their experience in this topical area, further strengthening the cooperative network established to provide implementation support to individual States parties.

(Mr. Costea, Romania)

The United States of America and Romania launched, in this context, an assistance programme for the implementation of the Convention. The end result of this initiative is software that is going to be distributed to all national authorities in need of legal and practical support in the process of applying the provisions of the CWC.

In his opening remarks, OPCW's Director-General Rogelio Pfirter explained that following the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540, all countries in the world, including States that have not yet joined the CWC, are now obliged under law to implement the CWC's non-proliferation provisions. He also emphasized that the Eastern European nations have unanimously renounced weapons of mass destruction and fully support the legal instruments aimed at their elimination. He noted that the Eastern European States parties are making steady progress in the implementation of the CWC, being able to complete in most cases all implementation-related requirements.

On the occasion of his visit to Romania, the Director-General of OPCW held talks with high Romanian officials, who underscored the need to effectively address the international community's growing concerns about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors, including the proliferation of chemical weapons.

In concluding my brief statement, I would like to express the assessment of the organizers of the event that this third regional meeting of CWC national authorities develops the results of the previous meetings - hosted by Slovakia in 2002 and the Czech Republic in 2003 - and will contribute to bolstering the regional network and the international efforts to ensure the CWC's sustainable and effective implementation.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Costea for his statement and the kind words he addressed to the Chair. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? It seems not. That concludes our work for today. As you are well aware, immediately after this plenary meeting, we will hold an informal plenary meeting on the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This informal meeting will be open only to delegations of States which are members of the Conference and those of observer States.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 3 June at 10 a.m. in this same conference room, and will be followed by an informal plenary meeting on the question of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We will resume in an informal meeting in 10 minutes' time.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.