

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.1043  
14 September 2006

ENGLISH

---

## FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND FORTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 14 September 2006, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. Anton PINTER (Slovakia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1043rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

On behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, I would like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Yohei Kono, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Japan.

Mr. Kono has had a distinguished career within his country's Government, and he will be our first speaker for today. I now invite the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Japan, Mr. Yohei Kono, to address the Conference.

Mr. KONO (Japan): At the outset, let me offer my heartfelt thanks to all of you for allowing me to speak on this auspicious day, the last formal plenary session for 2006. As the Speaker of the House of Representatives I cannot go abroad while the Diet is still in session. On this occasion, while the Diet is out of session, I have seized the opportunity to visit Geneva before attending the "G-8 Parliamentary Speakers' Meeting" in St. Petersburg. I have been actively engaged in disarmament issues, in particular nuclear disarmament, for many years, and I currently chair the Association for the Promotion of International Disarmament of Japanese parliamentarians, which was established 25 years ago. Therefore, these are not empty words when I say what an incredible honour it is to be addressing you today, delegates to the Conference on Disarmament.

In terms of transforming the lives of people and changing the appearance of cities and rural communities alike, the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the greatest turning point in the history of the human race. Nevertheless, when we speak of impact on human survival, the development of nuclear weapons in the mid-twentieth century was no less profound than the industrial revolution.

This inhumane weapon of enormous destructive power, which continues to cause suffering to its survivors through radiation sickness long after the blast, was unfortunately used directly on two cities of my homeland - Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The atomic bombings killed 214,000 people within four months, and even now many must endure the horrible after-effects. Furthermore, the offspring of survivors must also live in constant fear of potential after-effects. Despite this, governments to date have been unsuccessful at overcoming and containing the existence of nuclear weapons, a threat to human survival.

With the prospects of eliminating nuclear weapons clearly a difficult task to achieve in one step, the international community opted for the second best policy of constructing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty regime, which entered into force 36 years ago in 1970. As the main pillar of the international non-proliferation regime, the NPT has contributed greatly to the maintenance of peace and security. This has been achieved through this regime, in which the nuclear-weapon States (NWS) undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith on nuclear disarmament, while the non-nuclear-weapon States (NNWS) agree to forgo the development of nuclear weapons and are guaranteed the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under international inspections.

(Mr. Kono, Japan)

And yet, in recent years the NPT regime has regrettably been seriously shaken. What has been the cause of this? One such cause is that not only are the results of nuclear disarmament efforts by the nuclear-weapon States insufficient, but it would appear there is movement towards forcing opponents into submission through threats aided by nuclear weapons. In order to increase confidence in the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the undertaking agreed to by the nuclear-weapon States to pursue disarmament efforts and by the non-nuclear-weapon States not to develop nuclear weapons must be strictly upheld.

I understand there is deep-rooted disagreement in some States for this regime, which recognizes some countries as nuclear-weapon States while the others are not. Even in Japan there was strong opposition from so-called "hawks" to the ratification of the NPT, and if we focus solely on the notion of sovereign equality, then there will be a case for this.

However, for the Japanese, this brings to mind the Pacific naval disarmament issue of the early twentieth century. At the time public opinion in the young emerging nation of Japan was on the boil as to why Japanese naval tonnage was set considerably less than that of the United States and Britain. This was one factor contributing to Japan's withdrawal from the international cooperative system and eventually to its path to war. As a consequence, this war caused tremendous damage and suffering in neighbouring countries and also in our country - millions of deaths including the nuclear destruction of two beautiful historic cities.

The sentiment behind the countries who strongly appeal to sovereign equality is not beyond our comprehension. Nonetheless, the mere pursuit of power is never a prudent path to travel. Rather, I believe that the non-nuclear-weapon States should embark on a path to strongly urge the nuclear-weapon States to implement their undertakings towards nuclear disarmament while strictly complying with the NPT regime.

The people of Japan, through direct confrontation of the reality of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, know what kind of hardship the people must endure under a nuclear attack. However, the passage of 60 years has brought about a generational change in the leaders of countries, including nuclear-weapon States, and an increasing number of people are unaware of the terrible devastation generated by nuclear weapons.

We must be determined to pass down by all means this tragic reality of atomic bombings to the next generation in the world. I have been informed that many diplomats responsible for disarmament negotiations here have already visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki, including through participation in the Disarmament Fellowship Programme. I hope that you have come away from this experience with a recognition that disarmament issues are not merely about manipulating numbers, but about the existence of humanity, or about whether to cause or avert incredible pain and anguish to people.

The international community has long been concerned about the paralysis of the Conference on Disarmament. However, this year, under the P-6 initiative, it has come to our attention that the CD has held substantive discussions on many varied issues, including a fissile

(Mr. Kono, Japan)

material cut-off treaty. The results of focused debates have given us a certain amount of optimism. While welcoming this mood, I strongly desire that this will lead to further action. I hope that you will overcome the past, backward-looking situation of preventing progress through linkages and clear the way for a future circle of positive growth in which each agenda item is advanced according to its ripeness.

In particular, we believe that the proposal put forward by the United States on an FMCT has constructive significance. This is a treaty that was agreed to in the “Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament” at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, which I attended as the Foreign Minister of Japan, as a multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation measure to follow the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. The international community has earnestly craved for the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT, and those feelings are intensifying.

Of course, countries have differing views concerning the draft treaty itself in its current state, but these differences should be resolved in negotiations through an exchange of ideas and thoughts. In order to seize the momentum given birth to during this year’s session and start actual negotiations in the new session next year, I hope that each country makes their utmost efforts to build consensus, even after the end of this year’s formal session.

Yesterday, I had a chance to visit the Museum of Art and History in Geneva, where many artillery shells, pistols and swords are displayed in locked glass cases. I am hopeful that all the nuclear weapons in the entire world will be similarly stored in locked glass cases at the earliest possible date.

When I first became a politician, I read a book about hand-clapping. There is no need for clapping in the CD. Before clapping, it is important to engage in substantive negotiations.

Finally, I would like to conclude by saying that the world is watching and anticipates momentous results next year from the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: After listening to the address of the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Japan, I would like to welcome a new colleague to the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Christina Rocca of the United States of America.

Ambassador Rocca has already had a distinguished career, and I am sure that her experience and professional insight will be a major catalyst for the work of this body. I wish to assure her of our entire cooperation.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Rocca.

Ms. ROCCA (United States of America): It is an honour to be here, and I am delighted to be amongst you. I am here out of a sense of personal conviction and national dedication to the revival of this institution.

(Ms. Rocca, United States)

As you know, this commitment was clearly demonstrated when our Assistant Secretary Rademaker came to Geneva to table an FMCT last May. He expressed the hope that we could complete negotiation by the end of this session. Clearly, that has not materialized. However, the CD work this year has built the foundation from which we can all move forward. We have made a lot of progress this year through the P-6 process, and we are moving towards our common goal of getting down to serious negotiation. The United States will continue to work with you in a constructive manner for the swift adoption, by consensus, of the final report to the United Nations, and I look forward to working with all of you to keep the CD relevant and to continue to build on the momentum begun this year.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you for your brief remarks, and I now recognize the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. ALI (Syrian Arab Republic) (translated from Arabic): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to join you in welcoming Her Excellency the Ambassador of the United States of America to the Conference on Disarmament and to wish her every success in her work.

Some delegations, including my own, have spoken at previous sessions about the use of cluster bombs and phosphorus shells by the army of Israel against Lebanese civilians. With each passing day, we are learning many very grave facts. I am not going to enumerate them now, but will simply read some excerpts from an article written by the Israeli journalist Meron Rappaport in the Haaretz newspaper on 12 September 2006. The journalist wrote:

(continued in English)

“‘What we did was insane and monstrous. We covered entire towns in cluster bombs.’ The head of the so-called IDF rocket unit in Lebanon said, regarding the use of cluster bombs and phosphorus shells during the war, quoting his battalion commander, that ‘the Israeli army fired around 800 cluster bombs containing over 1.2 million cluster bomblets’. In addition, soldiers in the Israeli army artillery units certified that the army used phosphorus shells during the war, widely forbidden by international law. According to their claim, the vast majority of said explosive ordnance was fired in the final 10 days of the war. The rocket unit commander stated that multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) platforms were heavily used in spite of the fact that they were known to be highly inaccurate. MLRS is a track or tyre-carried mobile rocket-launching platform capable of firing a very high volume of mostly unguided munitions. The basic rocket fired by the platform is unguided and imprecise, with a range of about 32 kilometres. The rockets are designed to burst into submunitions at a planned altitude in order to blanket enemy army and personnel on the ground with smaller explosive rounds. The use of such weaponry is controversial, mainly due to its inaccuracy and ability to wreak great havoc against undetermined targets over large areas of territory, with a margin of error as much as 1,200 metres from the intended target to the area hit.”

(Mr. Ali, Syrian Arab Republic)

(continued in Arabic)

The Israeli journalist adds, in his article:

(continued in English)

“The cluster bombs which do not detonate on impact - believed by the United Nations to be around 40 per cent of those fired by the Israeli army in Lebanon - remain on the ground as unexploded munitions, effectively littering the landscape with thousands of landmines which will continue to claim victims long after the war. Because of their high level of failure to detonate, it is believed that there are around 500,000 - I repeat, 500,000 - unexploded munitions on the ground in Lebanon.”

(continued in Arabic)

The Israeli journalist added:

(continued in English)

“The commander had admitted to seeing trucks loaded with phosphorus rounds on their way to artillery groups in the north of Israel. A direct hit from a phosphorus shell typically causes severe burns and a slow, painful death. International law forbids the use of weapons that cause excessive injury and unnecessary suffering, and many experts are of the opinion that phosphorus rounds fall directly in that category. The International Red Cross has determined that international law forbids the use of phosphorus and other types of flammable rounds against personnel posts, civilian and military.”

(continued in Arabic)

Thus ends the quote from the article in the Israeli Haaretz newspaper.

Given the importance of this subject, the Chargé d’Affaires of the Syrian Mission here in Geneva has sent you a letter through the Conference secretariat requesting that the issue be discussed under item 7 of our agenda, entitled “Transparency in armaments”. Our delegation requests that this letter be circulated as an official document of the Conference. Naturally, this document should therefore be included in the Conference’s report for 2006.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished delegate of Syria for his statement.

There are no more requests for the floor. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? That does not seem to be the case.

(The President)

This concludes our plenary meeting. As announced yesterday, this meeting will be followed in 10 minutes' time by an informal plenary meeting during which we will continue the consideration of the Conference's draft report.

This plenary meeting is adjourned, but I would like to provide you with a piece of information, which I hope all of you are waiting for. The secretariat will now distribute the compilation of the paragraphs which are still outstanding and which we will start to discuss during the informal plenary meeting. So please wait in your seat for the text so that you can familiarize yourself with the outstanding texts of the paragraphs.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.