

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND FORTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 15 September 2006, at 12.20 p.m.

President: Mr. Anton PINTER (Slovakia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1045th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At this time I should like to invite you to formalize the provisional agreement reached at the informal plenary meeting yesterday on the draft annual report as contained in document CD/WP.543 that is, I hope, now in front of you.

Document CD/WP.543 that we are considering contains all the oral changes we made yesterday. I would like to ask those delegations that have made suggestions for change in paragraphs 14, 15, 18, 24, 27 and 29 whether the text in front of them corresponds to the suggestions.

That seems to be the case. Italy, you have the floor.

Mr. BENEDICTIS (Italy): In paragraph 17 there is a mention of a document which was presented by the Netherlands, but there is no mention of the document which was presented by Italy on 6 September.

The PRESIDENT: In response to the distinguished delegate of Italy, I would like to recall that the paragraph was not contested yesterday, and it has been provisionally adopted.

The delegation of Morocco, you have the floor.

Mr. BENJABER (Morocco): I think there is just a typing mistake in paragraph 14 (a). I think it should be "with general focus". We do not need the "the" there.

The PRESIDENT: Can you repeat that suggestion once again please?

Mr. BENJABER (Morocco): Yes, in paragraph 14 (a), in the last part of the sentence, "with general focus". The "the" is not needed. We do not have it in 14 (b), for example. Just a typing mistake, I think.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. Italy, you have the floor.

Mr. BENEDICTIS (Italy): I must say I am sorry to take the floor again, but I reminded the secretariat informally that that document should be considered as a document, since we requested it officially to be circulated as an official document of the CD. I do not think that it is a terrible issue to reprint this page and to add the Italian document. Thank you, and I am sorry for this.

The PRESIDENT: Well, no one questions that it is not a document. It is a document which is registered under the symbol CD/1796, but this was not contested yesterday. You did not ask that this document be included in the text of the draft report.

I now give the floor to the delegation of Bulgaria.

Mr. DONTCHEV (Bulgaria): Just a technical observation. In paragraph 29, on the third line from the bottom, I would imagine we can delete the “the” before “documents”, giving “including those submitted as documents to the Conference on Disarmament”.

The PRESIDENT: Belarus, you have the floor.

Mr. GRINEVICH (Belarus) (translated from Russian): I have a proposal relating to a technical mistake, possibly a misprint. On page 2 in the list of contents, part III, the page number referring to the substantive work of the Conference, obviously we have to say that that section is on pages 8 and 9, not just 8, as indicated in the draft report.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you for the reminder of the omission or the mistake made. May I once again appeal to the delegation of Italy to know whether it is ready to resolve its proposal?

Mr. BENEDICTIS (Italy): I know that we are at a very difficult moment, but I am not in a position to accept the fact that the document on which we have been working for three months, as one of the Friends of the Presidents, which are not recognized in the text, is not listed in this paragraph.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. If there are no reservations in the room with regard to the Italian proposal, this proposal will be reflected in the final version of the text. Iran, you have the floor.

Mr. ESLAMIZAD (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am not going to make things difficult either to have it or not, but the document was submitted on 6 September; I do not recall what the exact title and content are. If we could at least have some briefing on it, then perhaps it might be easier for everybody, either to go along with the proposal or not. Otherwise we are talking about a document whose content my delegation frankly does not know.

The PRESIDENT: Is the Italian delegation ready to provide information on the content of the document? You have the floor.

Mr. BENEDICTIS (Italy): Yes, even if I must say that I do not have the document with me, I will try. The idea was to make a study on the evolution of the agenda of the CD. As you will remember, it was one of the items on which Ambassador Trezza was working as one of the Friends of the President. We studied all the previous reports on the issue of the agenda and made a report on this issue without also using the part on the consultation that we made on this issue. As you recall, during the Russian presidency, a part of this document was used, on which we also had the commitment to present a further document and on which we decided to present it on a national basis to give a further scenario of our perception of the issue of the agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the delegation of Iran.

Mr. ESLAMIZAD (Islamic Republic of Iran): If I may, I would like to thank through you, Mr. President, our Italian colleagues for providing the briefing. If this document has been submitted in the national capacity of the Italian representative and not as a Friend of the President, my delegation would not have any difficulty with it.

The PRESIDENT: I can confirm that it has been submitted in the national capacity. I now give the floor to the delegation of Algeria.

Mr. KHELIF (Algeria) (translated from Arabic): Allow me to go back a bit. I have a question, I need a clarification. It seems to me that all delegations submitted working papers under the various items and parts of the report. Why should we mention just one or two documents in the report and relegate all the other working papers submitted by delegations to the annex? I just want clarification of this point.

The PRESIDENT: In response, I would like to stress that yesterday the delegations were informed that all documents submitted to the Conference will be recorded in appendix I. This will be part of the report. But yesterday not a single delegation questioned or contested the fact that there was only one document referred to in this report. We went through all the paragraphs. Delegations had a chance and possibility to raise this issue, so I do not see any reason why we should return to this discussion once again.

You have the floor, Algeria.

Mr. KHELIF (Algeria) (translated from French): I am sorry to take the floor again, but since the report has not yet been adopted, we have the right to raise questions. It was just a question. I am not disputing the placing of document CD/2006/CRP.1 in paragraph 17, I just wanted to know why.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of the Netherlands.

Mr. LANDMAN (Netherlands): I regret very much this discussion, and I have pointed out to my Italian colleague that it was only pointed out to me this morning that this reference to a Dutch paper was there and that the only result of his insistence under the circumstances in taking into account the negotiating history of this document would be that this reference would also disappear. If that is required now, of course it should be done. We should not waste time on it. It had its historic significance in the sense that at the crucial time at the beginning I tried to help all delegations to visualize how we could organize this year with these focused discussions. It was, I hope, a useful instrument. It was basically an organigram, and of course, I am appreciative that it is mentioned, but it should not indeed be a cause for further discussions and wasting time on this report. I must say that I regret very much this unnecessary discussion, with a very predictable result for a professional negotiator. But, Mr. President, to facilitate your task and satisfy my Italian colleague, you can of course take this paragraph out.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you for your reflection and flexibility. I now give the floor to the delegation of France.

Mr. RIVASSEAU (France) (translated from French): We should stick to what we agreed on yesterday. I would like to echo the comment made by my Iranian colleague but I would draw maybe the opposite conclusions. If the document submitted by Italy was (which it was not) a document of the Friends of the Chair, then perhaps we could wonder about whether or not it should be included, because it is a point which we didn't expressly settle yesterday. But the Italian delegation has just told us that it was a document submitted in its national capacity, and we have agreement that, except for document CRP.1, all those documents have to be in the appendix. I'm not in the mood to reopen yesterday's agreement, so I call on our Italian colleague to be flexible.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the delegation of Italy.

Mr. BENEDICTIS (Italy): I must say that it is even more embarrassing to go again on this issue, but for the moment I am not in a position to give clearance to this. I do not see why it cannot be possible to reproduce page 7 with the inclusion of the national document. I must say that I have reminded the secretariat that these documents also, since it is a national document, should have been included. I am sorry.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the delegation of Canada.

Mr. MEYER (Canada): I really feel this is regrettable. Our Dutch colleague had pointed out the nature of the paper cited, which is not a document in the usual sense. It was a visual aid that simply put in chart form the dates and items that had already been distributed by the presidency. So with all respect to our Italian colleague, it means "of a different order", and it is not a document of substance, as was the Italian document, and therefore I suggest the easiest way is to proceed with your understanding that all the substantive documents are listed in an annex. But, this conference paper/visual aid is of a different order. But Johannes Landman was gracious enough as well to offer it up. So let's not complicate our things overly here.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the delegation of Finland.

Mr. KAHILUOTO (Finland): Mr. President, I think all of us have had experience in working under instructions, and I think it might be convenient and conducive if you perhaps called a three-minute suspension for the possibility of having some discussions on this issue.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you for the suggestion. I suspend the meeting not for three, but for five minutes. The meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 12.45 p.m. and resumed at 12.50 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: We resume our formal plenary meeting. I would like to share some information with you. There is an understanding between the Dutch and Italian delegations that if the Dutch document is dropped, the Italian delegation will not insist on having their document listed in paragraph 17. The Netherlands, you have the floor.

Mr. LANDMAN (Netherlands): Mr. President, I have to correct you. There is no understanding whatsoever. I offered to withdraw this. I did not even put it there, but I accept that you take it out. No understanding. Surely not.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. With this, I would like to ask delegations whether there are any reservations to deleting paragraph 17. That doesn't seem to be the case. Paragraph 17 is deleted.

With regard to the suggestion of the delegation of Bulgaria, I would like to refer you to paragraph 29. The definite article in front of the word "document" will be deleted as well.

And with regard to the observation of the delegation of Belarus, there will be changes with regard to the pages in part III. As far as the pages are concerned, there will be pages 8 and 9 mentioned.

These are the changes in the text of the draft report which have been made, and I see no reservations from the floor.

I would proceed further and inform you that all the blanks in the draft report, such as those related to the number of meetings, will be filled in by the secretariat.

Furthermore, all documents that have been submitted to the secretariat before the adoption of the report will be added to appendix I.

May I take it that the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament in its entirety, as contained in document CD/WP.543, is adopted?

Iran, you have the floor.

Mr. ESLAMIZAD (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, my delegation does not have any difficulties with the report as it is, but because of all the bitter discussions we had during the previous formal meeting of the CD, we were informed that certain delegations are going to submit documents to be circulated as official documents. We have not seen these documents yet. We hope that the contents of such documents will not be such that might drag my country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, into the quarrel. At the same time, should it be the case, I would like to reserve the right to submit a document duly addressing any references to my country.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you for your statement, and I now recognize the delegation of Syria.

Mr. ALI (Syrian Arab Republic) (translated from Arabic): We have sent two letters to you today, Mr. President, through the secretariat, for circulation as official documents of the CD. Our final approval of the report is conditional upon acceptance of these two letters as official documents and their inclusion in the annex to the report.

The PRESIDENT: I can confirm that the secretariat has received the documents you mentioned.

May I take it that the annual report, in its entirety, as contained in document CD/WP.543, is adopted?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The secretariat will issue the report as an official document of the Conference in all the official languages.

I will now move to the list of speakers for this plenary meeting. As customary, I will also make some concluding remarks before the conclusion of the 2006 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Finland, Mr. Kari Kahiluoto, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. KAHILUOTO (Finland): Mr. President, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries, Bulgaria and Romania, align themselves with this statement.

I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President -

The PRESIDENT: The Ambassador of the Netherlands.

Mr. LANDMAN (Netherlands): Mr. President, about your procedure. I am sorry. It is 1 p.m. There are engagements for lunch. Are you intending to go on until 2 p.m.? Why not reconvene at 3 p.m.?

The PRESIDENT: May I ask the delegations whether there are other lunch duties or commitments, or is this the only request for the suspension of the formal plenary meeting? Morocco, you have the floor.

Mr. BENJABER (Morocco) (translated from Arabic): We have other commitments, Mr. President. We support the Ambassador of the Netherlands.

The PRESIDENT: Dear colleagues, the flexibility of your Chair knows no limits. Therefore, the meeting is adjourned until 3 p.m. We will start at 3 p.m. sharp this afternoon.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.