

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.1059
14 March 2007

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND FIFTY-NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 14 March 2007, at 3.20 p.m.

President: Mr. Juan Antonio MARCH (Spain)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1059th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Today we will continue a series of plenary meetings during which the Conference will welcome the distinguished guests who responded to our invitation to address the Conference, namely, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Her Excellency Professor Joy Ogwu, and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Mr. Cho Jung-pyo. I also have on my list of speakers for today His Excellency Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki of Morocco and Ms. Tehmina Janjua, who will make a statement on behalf of members of the Group of 21.

I would now like to extend a warm welcome to the first speaker for today, Her Excellency Professor Joy Ogwu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria. Professor Ogwu has contributed significantly to the cause of disarmament and proliferation. In recognition of her achievements in this field, she has served in the Chair of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. I now give her the floor.

Ms. OGWU (Nigeria): I believe that for me this is a homecoming. Last year in June we were here in this hall to hear the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, address the CD, I think for the first time in a very long time. So I am pleased to be here again.

Mr. President, I am particularly pleased to see you preside over our deliberations of the CD as the President of the Conference on Disarmament. On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I congratulate you on your election. We are meeting here at a time of considerable despondency - arising from a decade-long paralysis that has all but drained the life out of this very important forum. However dismal the situation may seem, Nigeria, like many more in this gathering, have great hope and the expectation that with the right blend of political will and commitment, there is a real chance of some measure of progress in advancing the mandate of the Conference.

Nigeria attaches great importance to the CD, and believes that it is a vital forum for the international community to address a range of multifaceted security challenges in an increasingly insecure and dangerous world. This position is borne out of the conviction that international security is indivisible and, therefore, best tackled multilaterally. As the world's sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, the CD is uniquely placed to play a lead role in efforts to create a stable, peaceful and sustainable global security order that would benefit all of mankind, the strong and the weak alike.

Disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are issues of paramount importance to Nigeria. They are central to conflict prevention. As a developing country, Nigeria recognizes the causal relationship between disarmament and arms control and the attainment of sustainable development, including the Millennium Development Goals.

(Ms. Ogwu, Nigeria)

Against the background of Nigeria's interest and role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives across the globe, the continuing impasse in the CD remains a source of great concern, which must be addressed. Within the framework of the CD, Nigeria will continue to align itself with ideas and proposals that will enable the CD to reach a consensus on a programme of work and commence substantive negotiations on the critical issues before it.

It is imperative that the CD develops a programme of work that is comprehensive, balanced and fair, and that takes into consideration the security concerns of all groups and countries. Since a major objective of the CD is to create a stable security order in an international environment, it is important that we agree on a work programme that seeks to promote a comprehensive collective security umbrella for everybody. As we all know, a security order is best when it is constructed through compromise, rather than a zero-sum approach in which the winner takes all.

Today, deliberations in the CD are deadlocked principally because of the absence of strong political will on the part of some member States. There is also a palpable lack of appreciation of the security concerns of different groups and nations. The process of reconciling competing national policy priorities does not at all mean that the CD should settle for the production of a least common denominator; neither would it require that some members surrender their efforts, while others revel in total celebratory victory. Rather, this process must involve accommodation; it must involve mutual understanding and particularly, a willingness to adjust national policy positions in the interests of the collective good. In our view, the collective good is for the CD to erect the building blocks for a global security architecture that guarantees and reinforces the security and safety of all humanity, including that of future generations. It is for this reason that Nigeria would like to encourage distinguished delegations to consider themselves not merely as representatives of national Governments, but crucially and significantly as partners in global security-building efforts.

Nigeria believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons offers one of the most effective and credible guarantees against the use or threat of use of these weapons. We recognize the difficulty in achieving this objective, at least in the short term. But while the world waits anxiously for the day nuclear weapons will be eliminated, we applaud all unilateral and bilateral endeavours geared toward this end and call on the nuclear-weapon States to do much more to lower the threshold of the possible use of these weapons. Early entry into force of the CTBT is a necessary first step in tackling both vertical and horizontal proliferation. We call on all countries listed in annex 2 to ratify the treaty and enable it to enter into force. Pending this development, the existing moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests or explosions of any other nuclear devices should be maintained.

Nigeria reiterates its support for the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones which were established on the basis of arrangements freely negotiated by States in the regions concerned. As a demonstration of our commitment to the denuclearization of Africa, Nigeria initiated a proposal both at the level of the African Union and

(Ms. Ogwu, Nigeria)

at the United Nations General Assembly requiring States that have not signed or ratified the Treaty of Pelindaba on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone or its protocols to do so to enable the Treaty to enter into force. We urge the affected States to implement, or comply as applicable with, the decisions of both the Council and the General Assembly.

Nigeria fully accepts that the first logical and sensible step in addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). However, we believe that negotiating an FMCT that excludes existing stocks is defective and unhelpful, as it merely legitimizes the status quo, without addressing the fundamental fears of many. It is our view that a comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach to an FMCT, which takes on board the issue of existing stocks and due verification, strengthens both the disarmament and the non-proliferation regimes.

Countries that have given up the nuclear option and accepted to implement effectively the non-proliferation regime deserve a reward in the form of negative security assurances. Effective NSAs are both sensible and pragmatic, since nuclear non-proliferation can be sustained only when the non-nuclear-weapon States are assured through a legally binding instrument that their independence, their territorial integrity, their security and values are fully and effectively safeguarded against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

To deny NSA to States is to encourage proliferation through the back door. Indeed, countries like mine that have given up the nuclear weapons option, signed and ratified all nuclear-related treaties and subjected peaceful nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards and monitoring view the continuing reluctance of some States to accept even the concept of an NSA as a betrayal. Experience has shown that when we fail to focus on what others perceive as a threat or danger, we not only create division and mistrust, but also create conditions that encourage the quest for alternative options for self-preservation.

I now wish to speak to the issue of small arms and light weapons, the use of which is wreaking havoc in most parts of our world, especially in the conflict areas of Africa and particularly in the West African subregion. In the West African subregion, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons has fuelled conflicts and compromised our assiduous efforts to create a basis for durable peace, security and stability. In their efforts to address this challenge, the member States of ECOWAS established a moratorium on the importation and exportation of these arms. This moratorium has now, as you all know, been transformed into a landmark Convention. Adopted in June last year, the Convention places a ban on arms transfers into, from or through the West African subregion. It imposes a ban on the transfer of these small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. Indeed, ECOWAS member States are entitled to these weapons only for the purposes of legitimate national defence and internal security or participation in peacekeeping efforts.

We therefore call on the international community, including manufacturers of small arms and light weapons, as well as brokering firms, to respect the ECOWAS Convention. We invite other regional organizations and United Nations Member States to emulate the ECOWAS example in confronting the menace of illicit small arms trafficking.

(Ms. Ogwu, Nigeria)

You will recall that in his address to the General Assembly on 25 September 2006, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, called for a comprehensive and legally binding global arms trade treaty. Such a treaty has become necessary as a means of establishing a common international standard on arms transfers, and for regulating the international arms trade to ensure their non-diversion to unauthorized end-users. We are, of course, pleased with the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 61/89 of 6 December 2006 for the establishment of such a treaty. But we do not regard resolution 61/89 as an end in itself. Rather, we must, as stakeholders in the international community, resolve to set in motion the necessary processes and administrative mechanisms that would facilitate the negotiation of the proposed treaty. In this spirit, I would like to affirm that Nigeria is prepared to work assiduously with other like-minded members of this forum to ensure the speedy negotiation of a legally binding global arms trade treaty.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Minister, in the name of the Conference on Disarmament. I would like to thank you for the important statement and also for the words that you have addressed to this forum to produce new results to go into discussions and negotiations on new subjects and also for considering the importance of this forum and paying us a visit. It is extremely well appreciated by all of us.

I will now suspend the meeting for three minutes in order to allow the Secretary-General of the Conference and myself to escort the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria out of the Council chamber.

The meeting was suspended at 3.40 p.m. and resumed at 3.45 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I resume the 1059th plenary meeting of the Conference.

I would now like to extend, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, a very warm welcome to the next speaker, His Excellency Mr. Cho Jung-pyo, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. CHO (Republic of Korea): It is a great honour and pleasure for me to address today the Conference on Disarmament, the central forum of multilateral negotiations to achieve peace through disarmament. Landmark treaties such as the NPT, the BWC, the CWC and the CTBT have all been produced in this historic chamber, where devotion, perseverance and a spirit of conciliation are all united for one noble cause - to ensure the common security of humankind.

As an ardent supporter of multilateral efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation, and as one of the six Presidents of 2006 which took the joint initiative to revitalize the CD, the Republic of Korea is pleased to see that the spirit and the platform of 2006 are being carried forward this year. It is indeed our earnest wish that the CD make meaningful progress through the joint endeavours of all member States represented here.

(Mr. Cho, Republic of Korea)

Since the failure of the Seventh NPT Review Conference and the World Summit in 2005, there has been increased criticism that the multilateral disarmament process is in disarray. The CD has often been viewed as a forum which cannot deliver, mired in arguments and lost in translation.

Despite such failures, in Geneva last year we witnessed meaningful progress at both the Third Review Conference of the CCW and the Sixth Review Conference of the BWC. The continuation of the structured and focused debates that were started last year in the CD is likewise encouraging. We should exert our full efforts to sustain this momentum. I am eager to see the CD go back to work to carry out its unique mission.

As the new NPT review cycle is starting this year, we are paying close attention to the process with cautious expectation. I hope and expect that the NPT PrepCom will make a fresh start, and our activities in the CD provide new impetus for the coming NPT PrepCom in Vienna and the entire review process.

Turning to the core issues of the CD, my Government strongly supports the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). I believe that the FMCT is ripe for negotiation. An FMCT can be a building block for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation given the delayed entry into force of the CTBT. Moreover, FMCT negotiations would reinforce mutual trust and reaffirm our commitment to multilateral disarmament. In this regard, we welcome the United States proposal on the FMCT tabled last year and we hope that it will provide a good basis for starting negotiations.

On nuclear disarmament, the structured debates have revealed that transparency, irreversibility and verifiability should be the guiding principles of nuclear disarmament. While pursuing a pragmatic, realistic and step-by-step approach, we need to discuss a range of issues such as nuclear doctrine and policy, operational status, reduction and verification. My Government supports the concept of negative security assurances as a practical means of reducing the sense of insecurity of the non-nuclear-weapon States. I believe that nuclear-weapon States should provide credible security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States that faithfully meet their NPT and safeguards obligations.

The Republic of Korea, as one of the countries which is actively pursuing a peaceful space programme, views space security, including the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and the intentional targeting of space objects, as an important issue of great relevance for the CD. We are hopeful that intensive consultations under this agenda item, at both the formal and the informal meetings, will contribute to deeper understanding and further elaboration of the various aspects of the issue.

While we need to consider all of the issues of concern to the members, it is imperative that we seize upon those items that have matured to the point where substantive work will soon be possible. In a spirit of cooperation, we should all summon our political will and exercise flexibility to enable the CD to do its work.

(Mr. Cho, Republic of Korea)

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the current developments and the future outlook of the DPRK nuclear issue. The joint statement of the six-party talks in September 2005 and the initial actions for its implementation agreed on last month are major steps in the direction of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The six-party talks have now moved from the phase of “word for word” to the phase of “action for action”. The current agreement has a number of merits. First, its multilateral character lends greater formality and binding power. Second, by translating Pyongyang’s pledge of nuclear abandonment into substantive action, the 13 February agreement lays the foundation for halting additional production of nuclear materials by the DPRK. And third, by incorporating a performance-based approach and a timetable for implementation, the denuclearization process of the DPRK can be expedited.

What we now need is a comprehensive and multilayered process that encompasses politics, security and economics to induce the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and programmes. Towards this end, we plan to manage inter-Korean relations strategically so as to allow for the efforts aimed at the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue to reinforce inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation, and vice versa.

Allow me to elaborate on the desirable outcome to be expected from the success of the six-party talks. Firstly, we can prevent nuclear proliferation in north-east Asia and thereby enhance peace and security in the region. Secondly, the talks will have a direct positive effect on the establishment of a peaceful regime on the Korean peninsula and could evolve into a new form of multilateral security cooperation in north-east Asia. And thirdly, we believe that the approach of cooperation and dialogue used in the talks can “proliferate” to other regions and reinforce the global non-proliferation regime, which is currently facing serious challenges.

Ultimately, when the six-party talks achieve denuclearization and succeed in developing a solid cooperative framework, the mechanism of the six-party talks will serve as a good basis for a future multilateral security regime in north-east Asia. Furthermore, the experience of having resolved the greatest security issue in north-east Asia through cooperation and coordination will prove to be a major asset in responding to new security challenges.

Some might describe the past 10 years of the CD as the “10 lost years”, the years of fruitless debates and stalemate. I do not agree. The learning process may be long, but time is never lost as long as we are committed to our common goal of achieving peace and security through disarmament. Sincere efforts to negotiate, based on mutual trust, will always pay off in the long term. It is useful to recall United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s message to this Conference that “this Conference possesses both the breadth of expertise and the depth of knowledge to address disarmament concerns”.

Finally, I would like to cite the words of wisdom that “Peace will not come out of a clash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds”. The political will to live and do justice starts here and now, in this very chamber and from within our hearts.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea for his important address, and I would also like to thank him particularly for his words calling for substantial work, for flexibility and for producing new results in this very important forum.

I will now suspend this meeting for two minutes in order to allow the Secretary-General of the Conference and myself to escort the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea out of the Council chamber.

The meeting was suspended at 3.55 p.m. and resumed at 4 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I resume the 1059th plenary meeting of the Conference.

The Conference will now continue its general debate. I give the floor to the representative of Morocco, Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki.

Mr. LOULICHKI (Morocco) (spoke in Spanish): Mr. President, I am very happy to express my greetings to the Ambassador of a neighbouring country, a friendly country, which has a special partnership with Morocco. Since I am taking the floor for the first time during your term in office, allow me to congratulate you and to extend to you the support of my delegation.

(spoke in French)

The Kingdom of Morocco has always considered that the Conference on Disarmament should be open to the international arena, and supported the need to readapt it to the complexities of a world which is ever more globalized, even in its security needs and imperatives. It is this context of the need to take into account the seriously disturbing realities of the current situation which serves as a background to my statement today, which I will devote to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, for which my country has chaired the Conference of States Parties since June 2006, thus illustrating Morocco's unflagging commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation in accordance with the strategic choices adopted under the authority of His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation is the first multilateral instrument to combat the proliferation of ballistic missiles. This instrument includes a general commitment to show restraint in the development, testing and deployment of ballistic missiles, including through the reduction of national holdings, and to refrain from contributing to proliferation. The Code also contains a strong political commitment to the establishment of and compliance with transparency measures in the form of an annual declaration on ballistic and space programmes and pre-launch notification of missile and space launch vehicle launches.

Lastly, while asserting that space programmes must not be used to conceal ballistic missile programmes, it also recognizes that States should not be excluded from utilizing space for peaceful purposes.

Hence, the Code has the great advantage of laying down flexible and non-prescriptive rules of conduct on an issue of paramount importance in the current international context.

(Mr. Loulichki, Morocco)

The undertaking by the States parties to the Code to ratify, accede to or comply in any other way with the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects and the 1974 Convention on the Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space also contributes to the efforts of the international community aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

As the current Chair of the Conference of States Parties to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, my country has carried out many consultations both with States parties and with States that are non-parties, here in Geneva as well as in New York, Vienna and Washington. The next presentation of the Code is scheduled from the 25 to 27 April in Rabat, during an international workshop on the use of space technology for sustainable development organized jointly by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, the European Space Agency and the Moroccan Royal Centre for Remote Sensing from Space.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in Spanish): Thank you very much, Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki. I am very grateful to you for your important words, and allow me also in a spirit of friendship and frankness to congratulate you on your excellent mastery of the Spanish language, which again is a reflection of the great dimension of friendship you have for my country and all Spanish-speaking countries.

I would now like to continue with the scheduled list of speakers by giving the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ms. Tehmina Janjua, who will speak on behalf of the members of the G-21.

Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan) I have the honour to deliver the following statement on nuclear disarmament on behalf of members of the G-21: Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the DPR Congo, the DPRK, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tunisia, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe, and observer States of the G-21: Costa Rica, Ghana, Guatemala, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Madagascar, Oman, the Philippines, Thailand, Uruguay, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore.

At the outset, allow me as the Coordinator of the Group of 21 to express the Group's deep appreciation for the excellent work that you, Sir, and the P-6 have done so far. We would also like to assure you and all the P-6 of our support and cooperation in their endeavours to bring the CD back to its substantive work.

The Group considers that the continued existence of nuclear weapons poses a great threat to mankind. We believe that it is now more urgent than ever for the international community to strive for international peace and security and redouble our efforts and live up to our commitments to the goal of creating a nuclear-weapon-free world. We wish to reiterate the need to refrain from any act that may lead to a new nuclear arms race, including the development of nuclear weapons, new types or modernization of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.

(Ms. Janjua, Pakistan)

The Group recognizes that there is a genuine need to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.

The Group, therefore, considers that progress in nuclear disarmament is essential to strengthening international peace and security. The Group calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament.

We would like to recall the advisory opinion of the ICJ of 8 July 1996 which unanimously stated that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control”.

The Group stresses that the fundamental principles of transparency, verification and irreversibility be applied to all nuclear disarmament measures.

The G-21 considers that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the possibility of their proliferation will remain. We reaffirm that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are substantively interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Therefore, there is a genuine need to achieve complete and irreversible nuclear disarmament, and to prevent and halt nuclear proliferation in all its aspects.

The G-21 emphasizes that nuclear disarmament remains of the highest priority for the CD. The Group recalls that specific proposals in this connection, including those of the G-21, as reflected in CD/1570 and CD/1571, have been made in the past.

The Group is deeply concerned that the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has been unable to agree on a programme of work and to commence negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

The Group notes that, in the past, various proposals have been presented by Conference members, collectively and individually, including the A-5 proposal contained in CD/1693/Rev.1, with a view to reaching agreement on the CD's balanced and comprehensive programme of work reflecting the priorities of the international community.

The initiatives of the six Presidents of the Conference in 2006 and 2007 are aimed at breaking the CD's decade-long impasse and commencing negotiations on issues. The Group reiterates its readiness to be flexible and constructive in dealing with any initiative aimed at reaching agreement on a programme of work.

The Group remains concerned about the lack of progress on: (a) relevant decisions and resolution of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference; (b) the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapons States made during the 2000 NPT Review Conference to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament; (c) the 13 practical

(Ms. Janjua, Pakistan)

steps set out in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The Group, while expressing its deep disappointment at the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, hopes that the first session of the Preparatory Committee in 2007 will facilitate the successful outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We call upon all States parties to the treaties whose aim is to eliminate or prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects to fully comply with their respective commitments regarding nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in order to strengthen these treaties and promote international stability.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan, Ms. Janjua, who read the statement in the name of members of the G-21, for the kind words addressed to the Chair and to the Conference.

Before concluding the meeting, I would like to present to you a timetable of meetings for the rest of the week. As you are aware, yesterday the coordinator for item 4, Ambassador da Rocha Paranhos of Brazil, concluded the second round of his informal meetings and therefore today's informal plenary meeting has been cancelled. Also the coordinator for item 5, Ambassador Petko Draganov of Bulgaria, has decided to hold only one informal plenary meeting, on Friday, 16 March. Furthermore, as the Under-Secretary for Human Rights and Multilateral Affairs of Mexico decided to make his address to the Conference on Friday morning, the plenary meeting on Thursday has consequently been cancelled. As a result, the Conference will meet only on Friday morning, and I would encourage all of you, as we have managed to concentrate all the activities on Friday morning, to assure a very high presence at the Conference.

So the schedule for Friday morning is as follows. At 10 a.m. Ambassador Draganov will open an informal plenary meeting on agenda item 5. This meeting will be adjourned at 11.25. Then at 11.30, I will convene the 1060th plenary meeting, during which the Under-Secretary for Human Rights and Multilateral Affairs of Mexico, Mr. Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, will address the Conference. Then at 12 o'clock, the Conference will hear the address by Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain.

Since the meeting on Friday morning will be last plenary meeting of the high-level segment, I would like to appeal to you for a very broad participation of delegations in this event.

This plenary meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.