

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.1087  
5 February 2008

ENGLISH

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND EIGHTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 5 February 2008, at 10.10 a.m.

President:

Mr. Samir LABIDI

(Tunisia)

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I call to order the 1087th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to our distinguished guest, Mr. Des Browne, Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom. Mr. Des Browne is known as a seasoned political veteran in the British Parliament and Government. He has occupied several important ministerial posts. His presence among us today is a clear testimony of the importance attached by our distinguished guest and the British Government to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and the honour to invite Mr. Browne to take the floor.

Mr. BROWNE (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I know it is rare for a Defence Minister to address a conference on disarmament. That is precisely why I wanted to come here today. I want the fact that the British Secretary of State for Defence is addressing this Conference to send a strong message about the priority we give to our disarmament commitments.

These are commitments, not just theoretical obligations. They are priorities against which we have made real progress since we came to power in 1997. The United Kingdom has a vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and, in partnership with everyone who shares that ambition, we intend to make further progress towards this vision in the coming years.

Over the past 15 years, we have seen some nations expanding their nuclear arsenals, some surreptitiously seeking nuclear weapons under the guise of a civil energy programme and others detonating nuclear test devices in the face of international condemnation.

The proliferation of nuclear material, technology, know-how and weapons represents a grave threat to international security. There remain many thousands of nuclear warheads around the world. We must take action now to ensure such material is properly protected.

We all want to see the world become a much safer place. International security architecture, in the form of treaties and initiatives, exists to help us achieve that objective. The international community has been active in bolstering that architecture. It has not completely stopped proliferation. Nor is it yet strong enough to permit immediate unilateral disarmament by any recognized nuclear-weapon State.

We need to do more.

But nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are not the only concern. We must also maintain a focus on conventional weapons.

Last month, Prime Minister Gordon Brown set out the key challenges facing the international community. He highlighted some of the ways international institutions need to reform to enable us all, collectively, to meet those challenges. He reminded us that one person is killed every minute by a conventional weapon. Kofi Annan famously called them “WMD in slow motion”. These weapons have an enormous effect in terms of lost human lives, in terms of

(Mr. Browne, United Kingdom)

broken communities, environmental impact and damage to economic prosperity and development. I have witnessed their devastating impact on the lives of people in Central Africa, Colombia, Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

Consequently, I am proud to support efforts such as the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the United Kingdom's Arms Trade Treaty initiative. These efforts aim to contribute to a global control architecture which both meets the requirements of the twenty-first century and gives focus and coherence to existing measures. In addition, Gordon Brown and I have made clear our goal of securing an international instrument that bans those cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians. Last year I withdrew from service two types of cluster munitions for exactly this reason, and only last week with my colleagues I met with NGOs and politicians concerned about the impact of cluster munitions to discuss both Oslo and the CCW.

Controlling and reducing the proliferation of conventional arms is important, but I have come here to focus on nuclear disarmament.

As the preamble to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty makes clear, all States party to the Treaty should work towards "the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between States in order to facilitate the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the elimination of all their existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery ...".

This is not some "get-out" clause for the five recognized nuclear-weapon States. Rather, it is recognition that all signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty already have agreed to strive for measures which provide an environment for all nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their holdings. This is a joint commitment, and it is a joint responsibility.

As this Conference knows too well, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not yet entered into force and there is an ongoing stalemate on a fissile material cut-off treaty. This hardly gives the impression that progress is being made.

I commend this Conference for playing a crucial role in moving forward the debate and seeking solutions. And I encourage all experts and representatives engaged in this process to redouble their efforts.

It may be a truism, but global challenges require global solutions. The solutions must take us all towards an increase in the pace of multilateral disarmament as well as a reduction in proliferation.

The international community needs a transparent, sustainable and credible plan for multilateral nuclear disarmament. A plan that also addresses proliferation, so that disarmament and counter-proliferation both move forward together, each supporting the other. Although we all understand that there is no formal conditionality between progress on disarmament and non-proliferation, our goal should be a virtuous circle, where progress on one reinforces the other.

(Mr. Browne, United Kingdom)

Our chances of eliminating nuclear weapons will be enhanced immeasurably if the non-nuclear-weapon States can see forward planning, commitment and action toward multilateral nuclear disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. Without this, we risk generating the perception that the nuclear-weapon States are failing to fulfil their disarmament obligations, and this will be used by some States as an excuse for their nuclear intransigence.

What then should this plan comprise of?

Let me start with the question of reductions to the major nuclear arsenals.

There is little public acknowledgement of the vast cuts so far in United States and Russian warheads, especially since the cold war. Nor, for that matter, the cuts to the much smaller French and United Kingdom stocks.

I welcome the recent news by the United States that, by 2012, their stockpile will be at its lowest for 50 years - less than one quarter of the level at the end of the cold war. We all need to maintain this effort, but we also need to get better at publicizing the fact that we are on this path.

We must also welcome the ongoing bilateral discussions between the United States and Russia for a follow-on arrangement after the current START treaty expires. Success would provide a powerful signal that the post-cold-war disarmament trend towards zero will continue.

States also need to explore whether there is scope to reduce further the number of nuclear weapons they need to maintain an effective deterrent. The United Kingdom set an example by reducing our operationally available warheads by a further 20 per cent when we decided last year to maintain our own minimum nuclear deterrent beyond the life of the current Vanguard-class submarines.

The international climate must become one that gives all nuclear-weapon States the confidence to continue to make similar changes.

I welcome the discussion on how to deal with States who may leave the NPT. Leaving any treaty is always a sovereign decision, but the NPT Review Conference in 2010 should send a message to any States considering withdrawal that such a decision will have consequences.

We must be resolute in tackling proliferation challenges. We must confront States who are looking to breach their obligations and undermine global security by developing WMD. And within the international community we must ensure there is no space for such proliferators.

The United Kingdom is committed to supporting the universal right of access to safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technology. But this cannot be at the risk of further proliferation. It is in this context that we have developed the concept of an "enrichment bond" - whereby assistance is granted in return for demonstrable commitment to non-proliferation.

(Mr. Browne, United Kingdom)

We should also continue to strive for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and progress in its verification system. I warmly welcome the ratification last week by Colombia - real evidence of progress on this key piece of our security architecture. Since 1991, the United Kingdom has not tested a nuclear weapon, and I call on all States to ratify the CTBT as soon as possible, especially those so-called annex 2 States whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force.

I believe a key milestone towards building this climate for disarmament is securing a fissile material cut-off treaty, which, in real ways, will limit the ability of signatory States to expand their nuclear arsenals and which will provide the necessary reassurance to their neighbours and the international community.

Since 1995, the United Kingdom has had a moratorium on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes and permanently placed excess defence material under international safeguards. The United States, France and Russia have announced similar formal arrangements. But we want to see that political commitment transformed into a legal one through a treaty.

In 2007, the international community came very close to starting negotiations, and I commend all those States who were willing to take part. And I call on those three States that did not to do so this year. As United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said last month, we all have legitimate national security concerns, but without any preconditions, let's at least get to negotiations of a treaty, where these security concerns can then be addressed.

Some commentators have raised the idea of taking the fissile material cut-off treaty out of the Conference and negotiating a treaty amongst a smaller group of like-minded nations. Frankly, this misses the very point of the Conference - it is the only body where all nuclear-armed States and non-nuclear-weapon States sit together to discuss security issues of the highest sensitivity.

Safeguarding fissile material is a crucial responsibility of those who possess nuclear weapons. So let us work together within this Conference to make real multilateral progress.

But just as the fissile material cut-off treaty is a high priority for the United Kingdom, I acknowledge other nations have other priorities, such as negotiating a new legal instrument on preventing an arms race in space.

At the United Nations, the United Kingdom consistently has supported the annual resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. But there is no international consensus on the need to start negotiations on a new international legal instrument governing the military use of space. So rather than allowing this stalemate to continue, efforts should instead be focused on areas such as transparency and confidence-building to allow us all to move forward.

So what is the United Kingdom, and more specifically the Ministry of Defence, doing to help move this agenda along, and to help create an environment conducive to multilateral nuclear disarmament?

(Mr. Browne, United Kingdom)

Already we have contributed in the most tangible way through reducing the number of operationally available warheads to fewer than 160. This has now been achieved. And if we are able to reduce further, we will do that.

With a contribution from the United Kingdom Government, the International Institute for Strategic Studies is examining the political and technical requirements for a world free from nuclear weapons. And I look forward to the final report, which will be published later this year.

However, one area on which I would like to focus today is our work on the verification of nuclear disarmament.

Just as Margaret Beckett said last year, I too want the United Kingdom to be seen as a “disarmament laboratory”. By that I mean the United Kingdom becoming a role model and testing ground for measures that we and others can take on key aspects of disarmament. In particular, measures needed to determine the requirements for the verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons.

Any verification regime will have to be robust, effective and mutually trusted and, crucially, one that doesn't give away national security or proliferation-sensitive information.

The more reductions States make, the more confidence they will require that no one is cheating and secretly retaining a “marginal nuclear weapon”. It is therefore of paramount importance that verification techniques are developed which enable us all - nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States - to have confidence that when a State says it has fully and irrevocably dismantled a nuclear warhead, we all can be assured it is telling the truth.

The United Kingdom is ready to lead the way on this. Research into how one technically verifies the dismantlement of a warhead continues at the United Kingdom's Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston.

Developing such techniques will take time but it is very important it is not undertaken in “splendid isolation”. It must be built on the requirements of nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States alike. We need to consider not only what information we are willing to divulge but also what information a non-nuclear-weapon State will want to receive.

With this in mind, over the last year AWE has developed a technical cooperation initiative with several Norwegian defence laboratories. The process of engaging with Norway must avoid breaching our mutual NPT obligations, which in itself serves as useful insight into how future multilateral discussions might proceed.

The difficulty is in developing technologies which strike the right balance between protecting security and proliferation considerations and, at the same time, providing sufficient international access and verification. But this is a challenge we can overcome.

If we are serious about doing our bit to create the conditions for complete nuclear disarmament, we must now also begin to build deeper technical relationships on disarmament between nuclear-weapon States.

(Mr. Browne, United Kingdom)

So I come to this Conference with a proposal.

As a next step, and following on from the AWE research, the United Kingdom is willing to host a technical conference of P-5 nuclear laboratories on the verification of nuclear disarmament before the next NPT Review Conference in 2010. We hope such a conference will enable the five recognized nuclear-weapon States to reinforce a process of mutual confidence-building: working together to solve some of these difficult technical issues.

As part of our global efforts, we also hope to engage with other P-5 States in other confidence-building measures on nuclear disarmament throughout this NPT review cycle. The aim here is to promote greater trust and confidence as a catalyst for further reductions in warheads - but without undermining the credibility of our existing nuclear deterrents.

So to summarize, we face serious threats. But we face them together - that is the nature of today's globalized interdependent world. We need a transparent, sustainable and credible plan for multilateral nuclear disarmament. A plan shared by nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike.

I have suggested some of the elements of that plan. But the United Kingdom certainly does not have a monopoly on good ideas - others have put equally good proposals on the table, and I encourage States to suggest further initiatives.

So, Conference, let us all work together with resolve and ambition to lay the foundations that will allow us to move towards that shared vision of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom for his important and relevant statement, which the Conference will have noted with particular interest. I would also like to thank him for his kind words to the Chair. Allow me to suspend the meeting for a short moment in order to escort the Minister from the chamber.

The meeting was suspended at 10.30 a.m. and resumed at 10.35 a.m.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): We now resume our meeting. At our informal meeting on Monday, 21 January, and subsequently the plenary meeting on Friday, 25 January, I informed you that the informal consultations which I conducted during the intersessional period beginning in October made it clear that we have not yet wholly arrived at a consensus on the programme of work on the basis of the elements under negotiation. I noted during my consultations a number of concerns, but also hopes that the efforts made in the two previous years will enable the Conference to move forward so as to break out of long years of uncertainty. I would like to point out on this occasion the importance of the messages of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who on two occasions - last June and at the opening of the 2008 session - laid stress on the decisive change the Conference must take in order to commence its substantive work on all the priority items.

(The President)

Since it has already become evident that we have not arrived at a consensus either on the establishment of a subsidiary body or on a proposal for a programme of work, we must continue efforts in order to bridge the differences and find a way to foster consensus on the commencement of our substantive work. We have made a good start by adopting the agenda expeditiously. This agenda addresses the concerns of all, since it enables the Conference to address all issues relevant to international security. It constitutes a solid framework for our activities. The lack of consensus on a programme of work should therefore not prevent us from organizing debates aimed at facilitating such consensus.

I have noted that there is no opposition in principle among the delegations to the appointment by the Chair under the Chair's responsibility of coordinators for each of the agenda items, without prejudice to any future decision that the Conference might take on its programme of work. Thus, under the authority of the Presidents of the 2008 session of the Conference, the coordinators will organize and chair debates on the agenda items in a comprehensive manner and without preconditions, taking into account all the relevant past, present and future views and proposals. The Presidents for 2008 will periodically report to the Conference on progress achieved by the coordinators. The coordinators will report on the discussions on the various agenda items to the Presidents for 2008, who, in conjunction with each of the coordinators, will finalize the report on progress made on each item. Following informal consultations with the members of the Conference, the current President will introduce the report in a plenary meeting. The result of the evaluation process will determine the timetable of activities for the subsequent period. Taking into account the level and frequency of the work of the various coordinators, in the light of progress made, the Presidents for the 2008 session will consider the question of the allocation of the posts of coordinators and, as required, will take into account all relevant views and proposals. Following the praiseworthy example of their predecessors and continuing their commendable efforts, the Presidents for the 2008 session will also have made an effort to organize the activities of the Conference in a way that will foster discussions that might bring us closer to consensus on the programme of work. The results of their consultations have enabled them to reach agreement on the possible shape of the debates this year. And they have noted a broad degree of convergence among delegations on the ideas they put forward to generate fresh momentum on the basis of the results of the recent sessions. Under the authority of the Presidents for 2008, the coordinators will organize and chair debates on the agenda items in a comprehensive manner and without preconditions. The debates will essentially be based on the proposals made by member States, including those to be found in the official documents of the Conference and in working papers, as well as on other recommendations and proposals made by States. The coordinators will report to the Presidents for 2008 on the debates devoted to the relevant agenda items. The Presidents for 2008, in conjunction with each of the coordinators, will finalize the reports on the progress achieved on each of the items. They will also periodically report to the Conference on progress achieved by the coordinators. In accordance with the above and without any prejudice to the agenda, I am pleased to announce that the Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament for 2008 appoint the following coordinators under their own responsibility:



(The President)

- Ambassador Juan Martabit of Chile for agenda items 1 (Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament) and 2 (Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters), with a general focus on nuclear disarmament;
- Ambassador Sumio Tarui of Japan for agenda items 1 (Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament) and 2 (Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters), with a general focus on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices;
- Ambassador Marius Grinius of Canada for agenda item 3 (Prevention of an arms race in outer space);
- Ambassador Babacar Carlos Mbaye of Senegal for agenda item 4 (Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons);
- Ambassador Petko Draganov of Bulgaria for agenda item 5 (New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons);
- Ambassador Dayan Jayatilleka of Sri Lanka for agenda item 6 (Comprehensive programme of disarmament);
- Ambassador Puja of Indonesia for agenda item 7 (Transparency in armaments).

Meetings related to agenda items 1 and 2 will be reflected together in the final report of the Conference on Disarmament.

In order to facilitate the organization of the forthcoming meetings, I have requested the secretariat to circulate an organizational framework containing the schedule of the future meetings of the Conference (CONF/WP.549). I would like to add that the detailed timetable of debates on the agenda items will be proposed by the coordinators on the basis of their consultations, taking into account, inter alia, proposals on the structure of the debates and requests by delegations to take the floor.

I wish to thank delegations specially for their relevant and constructive contributions and for the flexibility they have displayed throughout the past period, which have enabled the Conference to develop the organizational framework for our work, including through the appointment of the coordinators. My thanks and esteem naturally go to our colleagues the Ambassadors who have done the Chair the honour and pleasure of accepting the responsibility of coordinating the various agenda items. I am convinced that they will find all the support and backing they need among all delegations in order to perform their task.

This brings me to the statements by delegations. On the list for the plenary meeting today are the representatives of the following countries: Switzerland, Islamic Republic of Iran, Germany, Norway and Sri Lanka.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative and Ambassador of Switzerland.

Mr. STREULI (Switzerland) (spoke in French): Mr. President, I would first like to congratulate you on taking the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you and your colleagues in the P-6 of my delegation's confidence and its full support in your efforts. I would also like to thank the coordinators who have been appointed for having accepted their roles. Switzerland, which was one of the six Presidents in 2007, is fully aware of the challenges you are going to have to face to convince the members of the Conference to take the last few steps on the long road towards the adoption of a programme of work. We were close to the goal last year, we are still very close to reaching it this year. Switzerland welcomes the very clear language used by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his opening statement before this assembly. We endorse his urgent appeal to each and every one of us in this room to finally break the deadlock by adopting a programme of work. My delegation believes that such an agreement is within reach and that the Conference can respond to his appeal. In 2007 the members of the Conference had three documents before them - the draft Presidential decision L.1, the complementary Presidential statement CRP.5 and draft decision CRP.6. My delegation believes that these three documents should constitute the basis of our efforts to adopt a programme of work. They represent our best effort to get out of the deadlock we have been facing for far too long. These three documents are the fruit of long and broad-based consultations and seek to respond to the interests and concerns of all the members of the Conference. Their adoption would allow us to work on the four key issues in a balanced way, whilst leaving the possibility open to tackle others. Consequently Switzerland would like to call upon the P-6 to make full use of these documents in their efforts to secure the adoption of a programme of work. We also call upon the few members of the Conference who had not felt able to subscribe to the consensus formula in 2007 to reconsider their positions. The proposal in L.1 called for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for military purposes. This mandate is of crucial importance, and not just because of the very nature of the treaty. Last year's consultations showed that this issue is a clear priority for many delegations. Furthermore, the progress achieved during these discussions shows that it is on this point that thinking has made the most progress and that it has reached a degree of maturity which will allow the opening of negotiations. We continue to believe that negotiations on the fissile material treaty should be initiated without preconditions. Whilst continuing to work for the adoption of this negotiating mandate, Switzerland believes that the Conference could usefully pursue the intensive and constructive exchange of views in which it engaged last year on this issue during the structured debate. In this domain as in others, we should not start from scratch but build on the substance and experience we have accrued so far. We should take as a basis the reports of last year's coordinators contained in document CD/1827.

The proposal contained in L.1 also provides for substantive discussions on the prevention of an arms race in space. Switzerland fully supports this objective. For a growing number of States, space applications play a crucial role in the provision of essential services. Our common objective must be to ensure secure and permanent access to space. Switzerland believes that much remains to be done in this domain, even in the absence of a work programme. We will therefore welcome any further consultations on proposals to strengthen security in space. We also hope to see a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in space, as well as an open and transparent debate on this issue during future sessions. The related issues of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war also occupy a pre-eminent place in the

(Mr. Strueli, Switzerland)

compromise formula put forward in 2007. One of our major objectives must be to embark on discussions on concrete steps to achieve general nuclear disarmament. Switzerland believes that it should be possible for the Conference to formulate generally acceptable practical solutions. We will therefore call upon all the member States of the Conference to take part in a frank debate on negative security assurances and nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this respect I would like to congratulate Colombia on ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). This is a major step forward which brings Latin America and the Caribbean closer to the status of a region in which all the countries are parties to the CTBT. My delegation expresses the hope that Colombia will soon be followed by other countries which have not yet acceded to the CTBT.

To conclude, I will once again underline the fact that we must build on our recent achievements to make progress. The 2007 compromise formula should constitute the point of departure in our quest for agreement on the Conference's programme of work. We should also seek to make progress on the various subjects I have just referred to, basing ourselves on the reports of last year's coordinators, which are contained in document CD/1827, to which I referred.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Switzerland for his statement and his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. MOAIYERI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, at the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Labidi, on your assumption of the first presidency of the 2008 session of the Conference on Disarmament. I am confident that owing to your diplomatic skills and vast experience, the Conference will be led to a successful outcome. I assure you of the full cooperation and support of my delegation. I also would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Faysal Khabbaz Hamoui of the Syrian Arab Republic, for directing CD activities to a successful conclusion last year.

I also congratulate the distinguished Ambassadors who have been entrusted to you, Mr. President, to serve as the coordinators of the seven agenda items, who will work under the authority of the Presidents.

My delegation supports the statement made by Ambassador Dayan Jayatilleka of Sri Lanka on 29 January 2008 on behalf of the G-21.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the work of the CD as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. This unique role should always be preserved. In that regard we believe that the promotion of multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions should remain as the core principle of any negotiations which might be pursued in the CD.

Nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority of my delegation. It is a matter of regret that against the wish of the international community there is no progress in that regard yet. The members of the Non-Aligned Movement, as the largest group within the international community, have repeatedly expressed their position for the achievement of total nuclear

(Mr. Moaiyeri, Islamic Republic of Iran)

disarmament as the highest priority. The obligations of nuclear-weapon States under article VI of the NPT have not yet been fulfilled. The “13 practical steps” adopted by consensus at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, including the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States, appear to have been put on ice. Today the international community is more than ever concerned by the continued existence of thousands of nuclear warheads in the stockpiles of certain nuclear-weapon States. Given the overall global security environment, the need to accelerate the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments is becoming ever more pressing. We believe that the CD should address the issue as a matter of priority.

We are of the belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee that there will be no use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the non-nuclear-weapon States should be effectively assured by the nuclear-weapon States that there will be no use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and efforts to conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority.

We are also aware of the priorities of other members of the Conference. Therefore, the efforts to resume the work of the CD on one priority should not be done at the cost of the others. The four core issues identified earlier by the CD have equal value and they have to be subject to equal treatment.

Therefore, in our view the programme of work should be responsive to the four core issues recognized by the CD. Any possible programme of work should be balanced, comprehensive and acceptable to all members of the Conference. The views of all members should be taken into account in that process. We need to abide by the rules of procedure of the Conference.

I appreciate your efforts and dedication to bridge the gap in the Conference and create consensus, and hope that your consultations with the members will lead to a mutually acceptable proposal on a programme of work. We have to benefit from our collective wisdom and past experiences in this body. There are different proposals from previous years, any of which are important and can be helpful in our collective endeavours. We believe that through mutual respect, taking the views of all members on board, following the rules of procedure and dedication, we will be able to provide the CD with a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Germany.

Mr. BRASACK (Germany): Mr. President, this is a statement on items 1 and 2. At the outset certainly I would like to reassure you of the support of the German delegation and myself in your endeavours and the endeavours of your colleagues on the P-6 platform. I would not like to fail to acknowledge my gratefulness to my seven colleagues who today were appointed to the important posts of coordinators on the seven CD agenda items allotted to them. I would like to pledge my full support.

(Mr. Brasack, Germany)

The year 2008 has started with a positive signal for nuclear disarmament. I am referring to the “op-ed” article on 15 January 2008 in the Wall Street Journal, “Toward a nuclear-free world”, in which George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn renewed their call for reinforced efforts in nuclear disarmament. Together with the “op-ed” of 4 January 2007, the articles lay out an ambitious but not unrealistic avenue towards, ultimately, the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The authors underline in these articles the importance that non-nuclear-weapon States also take part in the process and that new ideas regarding, for example, international control of the fuel cycle should be part of this package. However, they clearly point out the special responsibility of the nuclear-weapon countries to disarm. They, like all of us, know that our common vision of a future without nuclear weapons cannot be achieved overnight. But we need to take steps in the right direction.

And here I would also acknowledge the importance of the speech we heard just this morning by United Kingdom Defence Minister Browne. I am not going into the statement, but it is certainly very much in line with what we heard last summer from the outgoing Secretary Margaret Beckett at the Monterey Conference in Washington, and it is very much in line with the statement that Prime Minister Gordon Brown made just recently in a speech at the Chamber of Commerce in New Delhi on 20 January, and that encapsulates very much what the British Defence Minister said this morning, so I am going to quote these few sentences. Gordon Brown said in that statement: “The expiry of the remaining US-Russia arms deals, the continued existence of these large arsenals, the stalemates on a fissile material cut-off treaty and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty must all be addressed. And let me say today Britain is prepared to use our expertise to help determine the requirements for the verifiable elimination of nuclear warheads. And I pledge that in the run-up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference in 2010 we will be at the forefront of the international campaign to accelerate disarmament amongst possessor States, to prevent proliferation to new States, and to ultimately achieve a world that is free from nuclear weapons.” As I mentioned, I think this encapsulates very much what was said today at this meeting, and certainly we also welcome this as a very positive signal.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation have been core concerns of German foreign policy for many years. Germany today reiterates its unequivocal commitment to the ultimate goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that as a first step, the role of nuclear weapons must be de-emphasized in security doctrines. We continue to stress the need for an overall reduction in nuclear arsenals to the lowest levels consistent with deterrence requirements in the pursuit of gradual, systematic nuclear disarmament under article VI of the NPT. On the other hand, we acknowledge the nuclear arms reductions which have taken place since the end of the cold war. Leadership is needed from nuclear-weapon States to bolster non-proliferation efforts and to eliminate the nuclear-weapons threat.

In today’s security situation, our key task is to ensure security on the basis of jointly defined global norms and through cooperation rather than isolation and confrontation. Today, more than ever, our maxim must be: security is indivisible.

In 2002, Germany welcomed the ratification of the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT) by the Russian Federation and the United States of America, while at the same time stressing the need for more progress in reducing their arsenals. Germany welcomes

(Mr. Brasack, Germany)

the reductions in deployed nuclear weapons which START and the Moscow Treaty have brought about and stresses the need for more progress in structurally reducing these nuclear arsenals through the appropriate follow-on processes, as both the Moscow Treaty as well as the START treaty will expire in the near future, 2012 and 2009 respectively. We would thus welcome the negotiation of a bilateral follow-on agreement to the expiring START I Treaty.

Germany would also like to renew its call on all States with non-strategic nuclear weapons to include them in their general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination. We continue as well to highlight the need for Russia and the United States to implement the declarations made by their Presidents on unilateral reductions in their stocks of non-strategic nuclear weapons in 1991 and 1992.

Yesterday all delegations, among them the German delegation, received document CD/1833. It contains a letter dated 19 December 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the Conference on Disarmament, addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the joint statement on the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles, issued on 25 October 2007. As you can see from the footnote, this document was originally issued in the General Assembly, and our Foreign Minister on 30 October after the issuance of this statement issued an official statement of the Foreign Ministry, which I am going to read out to you, as I did last year.

Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier issued the following statement in Berlin on Tuesday 30 October on the United States-Russian initiative to multilateralize the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the so-called INF Treaty, and I quote: "The German Government is deeply concerned by the growing spread of missile systems and therefore supports the initiative put forward by Russia and the United States for the global elimination of all ground-launched short- and intermediate-range missiles. Expanding the INF Treaty, which currently only applies to the US and Russia, will, in the view of the German Government, represent a significant step towards overcoming the impasse in the field of nuclear delivery systems. The INF Treaty is one of the main pillars of the global and particularly the European security architecture. The German Government attaches great importance to its preservation and further development. The Non-Proliferation Treaty particularly obliges all contracting parties to vigorously advance the nuclear disarmament process. The successful implementation of the US-Russian proposal would lend nuclear disarmament policy urgently needed impetus and thus increase its credibility. The initiative is therefore fully in line with the German Government's disarmament proposals."

For two reasons, developing and strengthening international instruments on non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control is a key concern of Germany's foreign and security policy. First, these instruments provide the core foundation for cooperative security. Second, these instruments establish the very legitimacy of the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They enable the international community to call to account any State which violates them and to ensure that any action taken against them has the authority of the United Nations Security Council.

(Mr. Brasack, Germany)

The NPT remains the cornerstone of this regime, based on the three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Germany believes that the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT are essential for global peace and security. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is more than a mere instrument for combating proliferation. Rather this Treaty is based on a bargain which must be honoured if it is to survive in the long term: the non-nuclear-weapon States agreed not to possess or acquire nuclear weapons for a promise by the nuclear-weapon States to disarm.

Germany is convinced that these pillars are as important today as they were when first agreed almost 40 years ago. In the face of today's challenges it is of paramount importance to preserve the integrity and authority of the NPT. We need to pursue all the objectives laid down in the Treaty in a structured and balanced manner.

Furthermore, Germany remains dedicated to achieving universal adherence to the NPT. The possession of nuclear weapons by States outside the NPT risks undermining all non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Therefore, Germany continues to call on all those States not yet party to the NPT to accede unconditionally to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States and to place all their nuclear facilities and activities under the provisions of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system and the additional protocol, which we consider an integral part of the safeguards system.

We are seriously concerned by the fact that even some members of the NPT have given reason for doubts as to their commitment to the NPT principle of non-proliferation. We urge these States to comply with the NPT, to fulfil their obligations under United Nations Security Council resolutions and to fully cooperate with IAEA.

Germany regrets that the Review Conference of the NPT in 2005 was unable to agree on a substantive final document to address the most pressing challenges to the Treaty. This should be all the more reason to put all our efforts into a successful review in 2010. We cannot afford another failure in 2010.

The start of the new review cycle last May in Vienna at the first PrepCom has given us reason for only modest optimism. Despite an impressive commitment to the Treaty itself, differing implementation priorities subsist. Nevertheless - and this is important - an agenda for the other PrepComs until 2010 has been set. Germany is looking forward to the second PrepCom in April/May this year here in Geneva. We are committed to contributing actively to a successful outcome of that meeting. We hope that this time we can jump-start into substantial discussions and proposals without any delay. The next NPT review cycle until 2010 will have to produce tangible results that build on all three pillars of the NPT in order to reinforce this regime. In our view, this requires activities by all NPT member States. First, the nuclear-weapon States must be prepared to take steps towards nuclear disarmament. Second, the non-nuclear-weapon States must stand ready with new ideas. In that sense, together with partners, Germany offers to further contribute significantly to the project to multilateralize the nuclear fuel cycle.

(Mr. Brasack, Germany)

Another pivotal pillar of the non-proliferation and disarmament framework is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, for which Germany continues to reaffirm its strongest support. Germany attaches the utmost importance to the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date. We therefore wholeheartedly welcome the recent accession of Malaysia and Colombia to this important instrument. Germany urges all remaining States, particularly annex 2 States, to follow this example and to sign and to ratify the Treaty without delay and without conditions.

We regret that a ban on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes is still not exactly palpable. At present, in the CD, it is obvious that among the nuclear issues, an FMCT is the ripest for negotiations, an opportunity and priority that waits to be seized as the next logical step after the CTBT. Last year's CD presidencies suggested a balanced and realistic approach to both ending the deadlock in the CD as well as starting negotiations of an FMCT. This proposal is still on the table. We urge CD members to remain as committed as we are to this proposal and call on those few remaining member States which have not yet done so to go along with the consensus.

Germany is convinced that an effectively verifiable FMCT would be a major achievement towards the effective implementation of article VI of the NPT and would essentially strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. With fissile materials being the most complicated and expensive part of nuclear weapons to produce, a halt to their production would definitely limit the size of nuclear arsenals. Limited fissile material stockpiles would also increase the value of existing stocks, thereby additionally increasing the importance of safeguarding these stocks and making diversion of the materials even more difficult. Thus, such a treaty would also reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism by curbing the possibilities of an illegal diversion of fissile materials. Pending the entry into force of an FMCT, Germany calls on all States to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the decision of those four States which have decreed such moratoria.

Although we might have differing views on specific issues, in particular on verification and scope, we should be able to agree that these issues are relevant for the negotiation of an FMCT. Starting negotiations on an FMCT and thus getting the Conference on Disarmament back to substantive work would also be a clear signal that the CD is back to fulfilling its function as the single multilateral forum at the disposal of the international community for disarmament negotiations. Such an effective forum is all the more important against the backdrop of the security challenges that we are facing today. Germany is ready to contribute its part to the informal discussions of items 1 and 2 with the aim of promoting the FMCT and starting negotiations as early as possible this year.

Let us look ahead. A decision to start FMCT negotiations in the CD must be our clear goal this year. For us and at this moment in time, this can only be achieved by a consensus on document L.1. We therefore reiterate our call to all members of the CD not to lose the valuable momentum created last year and to allow for a meaningful start of negotiations and substantive work on all four issues.



The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Germany for his statement and his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Norway.

Ms. ANGELL-HANSEN (Norway): Mr. President, as this is my first time to address the Conference on Disarmament, allow me to congratulate you on assuming the post of President of the CD, and to assure you and your P-6 colleagues - as well as the newly appointed coordinators - of the full support of my delegation. Negotiations should commence without further undue delay.

I am looking forward to working closely with my colleagues so that we together can reach our joint objectives of reducing nuclear dangers and promote security.

In this regard, the presentation by the United Kingdom Secretary of Defence, Des Browne, was highly encouraging, also as pertaining to small arms, mines and cluster munitions. The central tenets of his statement mirrors the Norwegian views on how to bring the disarmament agenda forward. We highly appreciate what the United Kingdom is doing in this important area and value our bilateral cooperation.

We commend the United Kingdom for pointing the way. We urge others to follow suit. Indeed, we need more laboratories for disarmament. Norway welcomes the substantial cuts in nuclear arsenals by the United States and Russia, as well as cuts by the United Kingdom and France. We encourage the other nuclear States to inform us about their disarmament efforts and plans.

Reducing nuclear dangers entails responsibilities for all States. If we are to reduce nuclear dangers, we must find common ground on both non-proliferation and disarmament. Last year's discussions in the CD brought hope that common ground can be found.

Presidential proposal L.1 is the closest we have been for years to starting substantive work. We urge those still not on board to reconsider their position. We cannot afford to let this opportunity to start negotiations pass us by. We need progress on disarmament, on negative security assurances, and on preventing an arms race in outer space. Also, we need to start negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

We must put short-term national security considerations aside and embark on a joint mission so that we can turn back the hand of the "Doomsday clock", which keeps ticking towards midnight. We have entered what some scientists call the "second nuclear era", in which the actual use of nuclear weapons is considered more likely than during the cold war. As we spend our time discussing whether measures under consideration belong primarily to the disarmament or the non-proliferation category, the risk of proliferation and actual use of nuclear weapons continues to grow. The danger of nuclear devices and weapons-grade material falling into the hands of people who would not hesitate to use them is real.

(Ms. Angell-Hansen, Norway)

We fully share the sentiment expressed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon - we are also deeply troubled by this impasse over priorities. We must now answer his call, and seize this historic opportunity to rekindle the ambition and sense of common purpose that produced the past accomplishments of the CD.

We have a responsibility to our peoples to make this world a safer place.

It is up to us, the members of the CD, to turn the tide. We need to keep envisioning a world free of nuclear weapons.

“Achieving the Vision of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons” is also the title of an international conference in Oslo later this month. Its aim is to explore how all States - nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike - can contribute to realizing this vision. It goes without saying that a world free of nuclear weapons requires a credible and robust non-proliferation regime where verification and transparency are of the essence. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually supportive in reaching our common aim.

A world free of nuclear weapons is not the utopian vision of idealistic dreamers. At the Oslo conference foreign policy realists like former United States Secretary of State George P. Shultz and former Senator Sam Nunn will share their vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, as outlined in their “op-ed” article in the Wall Street Journal, which was co-authored with William Perry and Henry Kissinger.

We welcome the presence here today of the United Kingdom Secretary of Defence, and we look forward to having the Foreign Minister of Russia addressing us next week. These high-level visits demonstrate the importance attached to the CD.

We - the members of the CD - must now do our part to deliver on the goals of this important conference, and help ensure that the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons becomes reality.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Norway for her statement and her kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Sri Lanka.

Mr. JAYATILLEKA (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, may I once again congratulate you on your chairing, which demonstrates qualities of strength and clarity?

Sri Lanka is inescapably situated in a volatile part of the world, which has two nuclear-weapon States. There are times when we feel like the shack at the foot of the volcano. So we have a vested interest in the success of the themes and ideas of this Conference. But I must say that I listened to the proceedings of the morning with a growing sense of unreality.

There was a funny line attributed variously to Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler, which went: “What’s mine is mine; what’s yours, let’s negotiate”. Now that attitude is not going to ensure progress in this Conference.

(Mr. Jayatileka, Sri Lanka)

We must be realists. Everybody has been invoking the four great realist horsemen of nuclear disarmament. Well, we must be realistic enough to understand that the approach of “one more heave” is not going to do it. If there are States that have not come on board, then it is inaccurate to say that there is international consensus. There is some consensus, but obviously it was not widespread enough, and that is not because we ran out of time. That is because there were very real underlying issues and concerns which have to be addressed. And as I have said before, the idea of a chorus of exhortation or “one more heave” or placing certain States in the moral dock is just not going to work. It is unrealistic to think so.

This is true not only of those States which have second thoughts about document L.1. It is true of some of the other disarmament issues that have been raised today. We cannot expect great progress which builds on some of the more important arms control agreements of the period of détente in a new period in which there are those who seek to rekindle their old dreams of the encirclement of Russia by placing new weapons systems on its periphery.

We cannot expect our great Asian friends to come on board the consensus that is supposed to exist when there is open speculation as to whether or not this is the new enemy and whether, if it exercises its right of sovereignty or the adventurism of a secessionist island, there will be cause for the sole super-Power to defend that breakaway island with all its might, including the use of nuclear weapons.

We will not make progress on the FMCT issue if we continue to demonize one or two States in a volatile arc of crisis, forgetting conveniently that there is at least one State with a long-standing nuclear weapons stockpile - a State which has invaded almost all its neighbours. We cannot make progress on the FMCT so long as there is loud speculation as to unilateral strikes on certain States, including strikes with low-yield tactical nuclear weapons. None of this is going to work, and Sri Lanka, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, certainly does not accept some notion of moral superiority on the part of those who invaded other countries, using as an excuse an outright lie about weapons of mass destruction.

So this moral isolation of some States by hypocritical others I do not think is the path to success. In the view of Sri Lanka - and in the view of the Non-Aligned Movement, though I do not speak at this moment as the Coordinator of the G-21, but as Sri Lanka - in the view of the third world, I believe, what is needed is realism and new thinking, a new paradigm that frankly addresses the concerns of all, that eschews a policy of threats and moral grandstanding. What is needed is a new paradigm and a new purposefulness.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Sri Lanka for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): Mr. President, we want to thank you for the earnest efforts you have made to bring the CD back on the rails. The first part of the CD session is always difficult. With the inaugural statements of the Secretary-General and the Tunisian Foreign Minister, the CD made a good beginning this year. Your consultations were swift and thorough, the outcome

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

encouraging. We also thank Ambassador Faysal Khabbaz Hamoui of Syria for passing the brief to you after successfully and effectively concluding the 2007 session of the CD. We thank the Ambassadors who have taken the responsibility as coordinators today. And we also thank the honourable United Kingdom Secretary of State for his very important statement.

The L.1 did generate momentum within the CD last year. However, it is not the only basis - or the realistic basis - for commencing work on all the four core issues. Had that been the case, we would have started our work in August last year. The proposal, despite the heroic efforts made by the six Presidents last year, has two blind spots: first, it discards the A-5 proposal, which enjoyed near-universal consensus, and the Shannon mandate and report, which had the support of the entire CD; and second, it is presented as gospel by some. The message is: Don't touch it, don't tinker with it, don't add or take away even a word. Just freeze it and endorse it.

This may not be possible when there are alternative views out there. In multilateral diplomacy in open settings, documents are debated, modified, amended until they are accepted by all members. This is the best way to reach consensus. An aversion to changes in L.1 will erode its acceptability.

The United Nations Secretary-General, while addressing the CD, said, and I quote: "The adoption of this decision" - he meant L.1 - "[will] not deprive any member State of the ability to assert its national position in the subsequent phases of the Conference's work." The Secretary-General's advice was well-meaning and sincere.

We must now ask the States concerned pursuing their national security interests about their level of confidence on this point. The way business is conducted in the CD if L.1 is adopted, a non-verifiable FMCT will become received wisdom. Therefore, substantive limitations which have been built into L.1 must be removed.

A recent study conducted by the Stanley Foundation stresses that differences concerning the verifiability and scope of an FMCT have prolonged the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament. L.1 raised hopes last year throughout the 2007 session. We said that we had serious and substantive concerns. In order to make L.1 a consensus text, four elements must be woven into it: first, the Conference should set itself the task to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material treaty; second, a fissile material treaty negotiation mandate should distinctly recognize the possibility of taking up the questions of the scope of the treaty as well as the existing stocks of fissile material; third, equal and balanced treatment be given to all the four core issues in terms of negotiations; fourth, ad hoc committees, as provided for in the CD rules of procedure, should conduct negotiations.

We will welcome consultations on these elements, as we stand ready to present our own proposals for a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

Finally, the United Nations Secretary-General also asked us to find common cause and to rekindle the ambition and sense of common purpose. His appeal and strictures apply to all. The Secretary-General very wisely told us that top-level political leadership and cooperation can

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

forge consensus on future projects. In setting priorities, he said, the CD members are under no constraints as to how to conduct our substantive work other than to proceed on the basis of consensus. A continuous demonstration of good faith and genuine transparency will positively influence our work in the CD this year and beyond.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan for his statement and his kind words addressed to the Chair. I have no more speakers on my list. I give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference.

Mr. ORDZHONIKIDZE (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): We have all heard the statements that have been made today. I am under the impression that something happened between, let us say, last year and this year, because there have been assertions and claims that L.1 did generate momentum last year, and I was wondering what happened between last year and this year.

As far as I have heard the statements so far at the Conference on Disarmament, there was a very clear wish of the majority of the member States of the Conference on Disarmament to keep L.1 as it is, but of course, there was no consensus. There were some delegations saying that we need to renegotiate, we need to take something else, we need to modify and so on and so forth.

The practice and the tradition at the United Nations is that when you are listening to views, arguments, of all delegations, you do not say that somebody is trying to impose something on you. They would rather express their views, and the idea of the democratic governance at the United Nations is that you have to hear all the views and take decisions on the basis of the overwhelming majority of the delegations. Otherwise, it is difficult to come to conclusions, to finalize documents, procedures, etc.

Of course, we do have consensus, in our rules of procedure, but on the other hand, let us see that the majority of delegations are perfectly content and they are perfectly willing to adopt the decision on the basis of the will of States.

I think it is worthwhile taking into account that we have to agree with the overwhelming majority of the views, because consensus is good, but consensus is not an end in itself. Our final global challenge is to give impetus to strategic disarmament. To do so, we have to start with agreeing on our programme of work.

There were conferences, important conferences, like in the European region, where one country was against when everybody else had agreed, and this regional organization used consensus as a rule. So eventually, of course, the overwhelming majority of countries persuaded this country not to object.

So when exchanging our views on this or another issue, let us take into account arguments, whether they sound very, very convincing or not very convincing, but as well, let us take into account that we represent all continents, and those member States that represent all continents,

(Mr. Ordzhonikidze, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

they express the view of the regional groups, of the continents, of themselves, and this group, this view, should be respected, should not be attacked in any case, and I believe it should have a right to be adopted, since it is a view again of the overwhelming majority of the member States.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): Thank you, Secretary-General, for your statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Pakistan.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): Mr. President, we have heard the remarks made by the Secretary-General. We have another point of view. I would not like to express it because that would make the Secretary-General part of the CD negotiations.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the Ambassador of Pakistan. I have no further speakers on my list. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor now? It seems not. I would now like to invite the Conference to take a decision on an additional request for participation in our work from a State which is not a member of the Conference. The request is contained in document CD/WP.547/Add.3. It was made by Denmark. May I take it that the Conference decides to invite Denmark to take part in our work in accordance with the rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): That concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 7 February, at 11 a.m. I would like to remind you that at that meeting Mr. Thomas D'Agostino, the Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Agency of the United States of America, will address the Conference. An exchange of views with Mr. D'Agostino will then take place in informal session. I give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. KHELIF (Algeria) (spoke in French): I would like to know whether the Conference meeting in plenary session will also be able to hear statements from other Permanent Representatives who wish to make statements in their national capacity, because Algeria is planning to make a statement on that day.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I wish to inform the representative of Algeria that after the informal meeting I will reopen the formal plenary and will give him the floor.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.