
Conference on Disarmament

17 September 2009

English

Final record of the one thousand one hundred and sixty-second meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 17 September 2009, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. Christian Strohal(Austria)

The President: I declare open the 1162nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. We are getting close. I have on my list of speakers for today the Ambassador of Japan. Of course, afterwards we will move to deal with the annual report, and as customary, I will allow for further statements after the adoption of the report and proceed to some concluding remarks myself.

So I will now simply give the floor to the Ambassador of Japan.

Mr. Suda (Japan): Mr. President, I asked for the floor briefly to draw the members' attention to the document prepared by the International Panel on Fissile Materials, entitled "A treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, with article-by-article explanations", dated 2 September 2009, which the delegations of Canada, Japan and the Netherlands jointly submitted yesterday to the Conference secretariat for its circulation as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The purpose of circulating this document is to provide the member States of the Conference with useful reference material in the prospective negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. I would like to add that the document does not in any way represent the official positions of the States submitting it. Although I have been told that this submission cannot be reflected in the draft report in front of us, due to time constraints, I hope that it will be reflected in the list of documents submitted to the Conference recorded under paragraph 37 of the final report of the Conference.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Japan, and as usual, the document will be circulated by the Secretariat. If there is no other speaker, I will now move on to the last item on our agenda, which is the adoption of the annual report, and would like to invite you to consider the draft report and formalize the understanding we reached at yesterday's consultations regarding the draft as contained in document CD/WP.554/Rev.1 as amended by Rev.1/Amend.2, which was circulated to all of you after yesterday's consultations. I would like to use this opportunity already to thank everybody for their engagement and their flexibility shown in these consultations.

I understand that I can take it that the Conference now wishes to adopt the report as contained in Rev.1 as amended in Amend.2.

It was so decided.

I thank you once again for your spirit of cooperation and compromise, which has allowed for a very successful negotiation and adoption of our report.

I now have the pleasure to move to the list of speakers for declarations after the adoption of the report. I welcome Ambassador Gábor Iklódy, State Secretary and Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary.

Mr. Iklódy (Hungary): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to congratulate you and the previous P-6 Presidents on the adoption by consensus of the 2009 annual report of the Conference on Disarmament. Hungary highly appreciates your able leadership and continuous efforts, which have led us to this very moment.

2009 has been a special year in the Council chamber. We were informed in Budapest on 29 May that the Conference on Disarmament had successfully adopted by consensus its long-awaited programme of work for the 2009 session under the Algerian presidency. We would like to thank Ambassador Idriss Jazaïry of Algeria for his excellent and indeed skilful work.

In the following weeks, the Republic of Hungary stood ready to adopt the Presidential decision on the implementation of the programme of work. The fact that after a long discussion the Conference on Disarmament had not been able to adopt by consensus

this decision caused some confusion as to why it had not been possible. However, the annual report which has been adopted by consensus just now will inform the General Assembly and the outside world that the Conference on Disarmament has woken up from its decade-long sleep.

The positive momentum created by this adoption has at least two very important effects. Firstly, it demonstrates that this unique body is able and wishes to start substantive negotiations after a long stalemate. Secondly, in each capital the decision makers get an early warning: from 2010 we can expect that the Conference on Disarmament will start its substantive negotiations, which require more staff, more experts and much more time dedicated to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. In these days when decision makers bear a special responsibility over limited financial resources, these signals are extremely important.

We would appeal to all delegations to maintain this positive momentum in the following months and find a possibility of the early commencement of substantive work next January.

I would like to assure you, Mr. President, and the incoming President that our delegation will stand ready to engage actively in next year's work as well and, hopefully, in the negotiations on those core issues which have been identified in the programme of work for 2009.

The President: I thank the State Secretary of Hungary for his statement and his nice words, and I give the floor to the next speaker on the list, the Ambassador of China.

Mr. Wang Qun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank the President for his efforts to move forward with the implementation of document CD/1864. We would also like to thank you for your relentless efforts and enormous contribution in encouraging all sides to reach a consensus on the report of the Conference. At the same time, we thank all those involved for their flexibility and hard work in completing the report. We hope that they will be able, on the basis of the work done this year, to continue to work together to launch the Conference's substantive work on all items on its agenda as soon as possible next year. China stands ready to make its own effort towards the achievement of that goal.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of China, and I give the floor to the Ambassador of Sweden.

Mr. Hellgren (Sweden): Mr. President, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

I take the floor to congratulate you, and the entire P-6 team, on the adoption by consensus of the Conference on Disarmament's annual report to the United Nations General Assembly. The European Union commends you on the skilful way you have steered this process.

The collective and successful work this year by the P-6 gives us reason to reiterate that the European Union strongly values the system of work of the P-6 presidencies over the last four years. This system has considerably contributed to the progress in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The European Union welcomes the fact that this model of close and continuous coordination among the Presidents of the annual sessions is a common *acquis* by now.

The European Union also reiterates its desire to see the Conference on Disarmament enlarged, in particular to include those of its member States which are not yet members of the Conference.

The 2009 session of the Conference on Disarmament will be remembered as the year the Conference finally mustered the political will to overcome 12 years of stalemate. The European Union joined leaders from all regions of the world in welcoming the adoption of the comprehensive and balanced programme of work on 29 May, under the Algerian presidency. The adoption by consensus of CD/1864 signalled that the Conference on Disarmament was again ready to fulfil its role as the single permanent multilateral forum available to the international community for disarmament negotiations.

The European Union was ready to seize this opportunity. Hence, the subsequent inability of the Conference on Disarmament to even begin implementing its agreed programme of work has been profoundly disappointing.

But now is the time to look forward. The annual report just adopted sets the stage for the early commencement of substantive work when we meet again to start the 2010 session of the Conference.

The 2009 session of the Conference on Disarmament has been a breakthrough, despite the continued procedural difficulties. In its 2010 session the Conference on Disarmament must swiftly begin real substantive negotiations and work, based on the political consensus achieved in 2009, to which the European Union remains committed. We expect a similar commitment from all Conference on Disarmament members who adopted the programme of work by consensus only a few months ago. The time for procedural haggling should be over. We must finally give ourselves the opportunity to start promoting our national security interests in the course of real substantive work.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Sweden for his statement on behalf of the European Union, and I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Khokher (Pakistan): Mr. President, the Conference on Disarmament will conclude its 2009 session tomorrow, 18 September 2009. Today we have formally adopted the annual report of the Conference to the United Nations General Assembly by consensus. The first draft of the report presented by you provided us with a good basis to start our work briskly. Our proposals presented during this process were well-meaning and constructive. We demonstrated flexibility like other members in the Conference on Disarmament family to reach a consensus. The final shape of the report is the result of the collective efforts of all Conference on Disarmament members to make it objective, balanced and factual. You, as Chair, provided the right framework and atmosphere to realize this objective. Bilateral consultations were complementary and as such were useful. We commend you for steering this process in an effective and efficient manner. We also acknowledge the contribution of your talented delegation, which was reinforced by our old friend Mr. Markus Rieterer, who came here from Washington. We appreciate the role and support of the Secretariat as well as the assistance provided by the interpreters.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the following guiding principles which ought to underpin consensus on the programme of work of the Conference during the 2010 session.

First, any decision on a programme of work must be taken by the Conference. The Presidents, individually and collectively, like any member of the Conference, can make a proposal to the Conference for its consideration. The Conference will adopt it by consensus after negotiations in an open and transparent manner taking into account the security interests and concerns of all its members.

Secondly, any decision on a programme of work should be for the session and without any prejudice to any past, present or future position, proposal, document or priority of any delegation, or any commitment undertaken in any other multilateral forums related to disarmament.

Thirdly, the Conference on Disarmament, being the sole and single negotiating forum for arms control and disarmament treaties, should not preclude any outcome under any agenda item, thus upholding the nature of this forum.

Fourthly, a proposed programme of work, together with a schedule of activities to be elaborated after the adoption of the programme of work, should be for the duration of the yearly session of the Conference. Therefore, it should not prejudice any future decision the Conference might take on its programme of work.

Fifthly, all work, including by subsidiary bodies, should be carried out in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference.

The Conference on Disarmament, in order to make a substantial contribution, must adopt a comprehensive and balanced programme of work for the 2010 session. The programme of work must envisage substantive outcomes on the four core issues, i.e. nuclear disarmament, prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and a fissile material treaty. The last three agenda items of the Conference on Disarmament are also important. The Conference, as part of a programme of work, can propose substantive discussions on agenda items 5, 6 and 7.

We assure you, as well as the incoming President, Bangladesh, of our support and cooperation in this regard.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement. We have been informed that the mother of Ambassador Akram has passed away, so on my behalf and I am sure, on behalf of the whole Conference, would you please convey our sincerest condolences to Ambassador Akram?

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Ávila Camacho (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, in the light of the sad news that you have just given us, please allow me to begin by conveying my delegation's sincerest condolences to Ambassador Akram on the death of his mother.

Mr. President, our delegation would like to acknowledge your professionalism and dedication and to thank you for all the efforts you and your delegation have made throughout your presidency to achieve important advances in the Conference on Disarmament, including the adoption of the final report with the support of all the Presidents. I want to take this opportunity to recognize once again the leadership and determination of Ambassador Caroline Millar and her team for their substantial efforts throughout your presidency to launch negotiations in this illustrious forum. We cannot overlook the tireless efforts of the Presidents of the 2009 session to achieve objectives that had not been accomplished for over 10 years. My delegation believes that the members of this forum have achieved significant results this year that may provide a solid basis for next year's work. We saw on 29 May that it was possible to focus political will in order to adopt a programme of work.

We hope that next year we will once again be able to bring the stars into proper alignment so that we can begin our long-awaited negotiations on the various items, which are of great interest to us all. We only hope that this will happen as soon as possible so that we can take advantage of the time available to us in the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me to reiterate to the delegation of Bangladesh, which will assume the presidency in 2010, that it can rely on the full cooperation and support of the Colombian delegation.

I want to take this opportunity to mention the Second Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Cartagena summit, which is to be held in the beautiful city of Cartagena de Indias from 29 November to 4 December this year. In exactly 72 days we will meet in Cartagena with a view to reaffirming, at the highest political level,

our strong commitment to eliminating anti-personnel mines and supporting all the victims who suffer daily from the terrible consequences of those devices, including survivors, families and communities. As the Cartagena summit draws closer, I am pleased to report that the Governments of Colombia and Norway, in collaboration with the International Peace Institute, have organized an event to promote the Cartagena summit and its main objectives that will take place at the Institute's headquarters in New York on Tuesday, 22 September, at 7 p.m. The Deputy Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Colombia, H.E. Ms. Adriana Mejías Hernández, the Secretary of State for International Development of Norway, H.E. Mr. Håkon Gulbrandsen, and the President-designate of the Second Review Conference, Ambassador Susan Eckey, will all be in attendance.

Invitations have been sent to all States Members of the United Nations, international and non-governmental organizations in New York. We hope that you, your Governments, and representatives of international organizations and non-government organizations will all attend this important event that will prepare us further for our meeting in Cartagena de Indias. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President: I thank the representative of Colombia, and also for drawing our attention to this important event, which the Cartagena summit will be.

I now give the floor to the next speaker on my list, Ambassador Jazaïry of Algeria.

Mr. Jazaïry (Algeria): Mr. President, I wish to express to you in the name of the Algerian Government our appreciation for the very competent professional way in which you have directed our deliberations. I must say that this has continued a tradition that I really enjoyed this year: strong cooperation work among the members of the P-6. I think, as the distinguished Ambassador of Sweden just mentioned, in a context where rotation of Presidents is so rapid as might lead to some discontinuity in the pursuit of a common objective, the establishment of the P-6 as an informal mechanism to ensure dynamism and continuity has been a godsend, and that is why in May I paid a tribute to the initiator of this approach to the governance of the Conference on Disarmament, the Ambassador of Poland. I hope and I am sure that, based on the experience of this year, the P-6 of next year will continue this tradition of cooperative and converging engagement in the pursuit of shared objectives.

So I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to the distinguished State Minister of Hungary and my colleagues who have referred to Algeria's contribution to CD/1864, and to repeat that this would not have been possible had it not been for the cooperative spirit of the P-6 and for the support and understanding of every single member of this Conference.

The assessment of this year's performance could be seen as a glass that is half-full or a glass that is half-empty. My delegation would consider that it was a glass that was indeed half-full. Perhaps we were over-optimistic on 29 May when we thought that we were really going to get down to business after the adoption of CD/1864.

It was like climbing a mountain. You think you are getting to the top of the mountain, but when you get to that point you see that the mountain is still higher, and you have to exert further effort. If we assess this situation, we could say that CD/1864 really came pretty late in 2009, and it would have been a very fortunate situation if we had started, but I can understand that there were still some issues that were sensitive in terms of procedure, and perhaps we were not sufficiently aware of these issues that cropped up afterwards.

The difficulty of the work of this Conference is related to this rapid cycle of rotation I referred to, the Presidents changing so rapidly — six times a year — and also to the fact the programme of work has, as was emphasized by the distinguished representative of

Pakistan, quite rightly, a one-year span, whilst the subjects of this one-year programme of work are multiannual by nature. So the problem is to try to reconcile these two parameters, which do not really logically fit in very well with one another.

I think we spent a lot of time in the second part of this year trying to reconcile this contradiction in a way by establishing principles of how the system should work. If you do that, of course, you hit a snag. By definition there is a contradiction there. So I think that what I would suggest as a preferable course for next year is that we do not discuss policies and abstractions — how we rotate, we roll over, we do not roll over, what we do in terms of a programme of work — we just get on with the job of agreeing on a programme of work. I do not think anybody in this hall would think we have to go on a *tabula rasa* basis, but that every year we would — in order to achieve a programme of work — we could only achieve one every 10 or 12 years. So it is a question of common sense. But I think the best thing is not to discuss it in the abstract, but to get on with the job, and to realize in addition to the programme of work the component of the distribution of office bearers for those seven items, including the four core items, is something that should be looked at now that we have had this experience. We should look at all these elements simultaneously and start doing that now, Mr. President, between you and the incoming President from Bangladesh — already try to establish some thinking and some approach — informal contacts — as to how we could really get the process started as soon as possible.

I mean the P-6 does not exist institutionally, nor do the regional groups exist institutionally. They are all informal, but they are pretty useful, so I am sure that contacts with the groups of the Conference would be helpful to try and look at all these issues and not wait first to adopt the programme of work next year, then once we have done that, take a breather and move into a second stage to look at the distribution of office bearers, etc. Perhaps if we could get this process started simultaneously now, perhaps we could start next year at an earlier rung in the day.

We have to do that keeping in mind the preoccupation that we all share, but sometimes find difficulty in articulating, that the concern of preserving the legitimate security interests of all parties concerned — nuclear and non-nuclear, developed and developing — we know that whatever we put in the programme of work, if we do not have substantive work and create a general feeling that yes, we are going to move on all these issues in a balanced manner in order to take into account the interests of all the parties I have mentioned, the system is going to break down again.

So, adopting a programme of work next year should not mean or should not be suspected by anybody of meaning that somebody is going to take one of the core issues and run away with the ball, as it were, and leave the other parties standing. It is obvious that we all have some preferences, we all have some priorities, but the beauty of this Conference is that we try to reconcile this, at least knowing that by virtue of the rule of consensus, we can only achieve our priorities if we take into account the priorities of others.

I would like, before I conclude my remarks, to express to the distinguished Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, and to the very able staff of the secretariat our appreciation for a job well done, and I would also like to say to all the members of the Conference on Disarmament how much my delegation has appreciated working with all of you. We have different and sometimes contradictory preoccupations, but there is a spirit of partnership, a very congenial spirit of partnership, which is an additional reason on top of what we have achieved this year. There are achievements. As I said, I was feeling a bit pessimistic in the second half of the year, but now what has been achieved today was not easy, but it is the second big victory for this year, after 29 May, and I am sure that with the energy that we have accumulated, with this cooperative spirit, we can all be proud, and I wish that some other forums in Geneva could take a leaf out of our book in terms of cooperative spirit and joint effort for the good of humanity.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Algeria for his statement and for his forward-looking suggestions, and I give the floor to the Ambassador of Mexico.

Ms. Gómez Oliver (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me first of all to congratulate you on the outstanding way in which you have guided the work of this Conference. I commend your prominent diplomatic skills and your personal qualities that have helped us to successfully overcome the difficulties we have had to face in the last stage of this session of the Conference so that we could finally adopt the report that you will submit to the General Assembly.

I extend my delegation's thanks to the rest of the P-6, the Ambassadors of Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe, whose dedicated individual and joint efforts contributed significantly to the successful leadership of Ambassador Jazaïry of Algeria, under which we reached the consensus that made possible the adoption of the programme of work for the 2009 session, contained in document CD/1864.

Independently of the work that the Conference on Disarmament has accomplished during 2009, international events continue to follow their course. At the international, regional and bilateral levels, we have seen increasing numbers of disarmament proposals and initiatives from leaders, Governments, prominent figures, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations and the academic community, all of whom are aware of the new conditions obtaining in the world and seek to use them to make significant strides on the long road to a world free from nuclear weapons.

On 29 May 2009, a historical event of great political significance took place when the Conference made its contribution to this general mobilization in favour of disarmament and non-proliferation, thus helping to raise the international community's expectations of progress in that area.

We are all aware of the regrettable story that followed the major international event that was the adoption of the programme of work. Not only we but outsiders as well, people far beyond Geneva, had hoped right up to the last minute that we would be able to implement our programme of work even during the last few weeks of this session.

Today, frustrated at being unable to begin our substantive work, my delegation is reaching the end of the session of the Conference with many questions as to how we should approach our work in this forum in 2010. It seems most unfortunate that we should continue to allow this Conference, whose mandate ought to make it one of the central actors in the sphere of international action for disarmament and non-proliferation, not only to remain on the sidelines but to be the obstacle to discussions and negotiation processes that, with political will, ought to lead us to commitments that are reflected in concrete agreements, given the window of opportunity that we all recognize now exists.

Our responsibility as members of the Conference is to ensure by every means that this forum and its work move forward and have an impact on the discussions taking place in other parts of the world on the items that make up our agenda. If this forum is incapable of responding to the realities that we face, 2010 will have to be a time for decisions: decisions about the future of this Conference, about its relevance in today's world, its methods of work and its operating procedure; in short, it will be the time to decide whether we are really capable of making a difference here in Geneva, in this forum, to disarmament and to strengthening the non-proliferation regime.

Mexico has been one of the leading promoters of the work of this Conference, ensuring that it fulfils its mandate and its responsibility within the international community. Its existence is closely linked to the evolution of Mexico's multilateral policy and is even one of the reasons that our Ambassador Emeritus, Alfonso García Robles, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

For all these reasons, and because of the responsibility that we have as members of this Conference, my delegation remains hopeful that 2010 will be the year in which we can re-establish the credibility of the Conference and its *raison d'être*, taking decisions that go beyond the adoption of our programme of work and beginning our substantive work as soon as possible. Making a significant contribution to international peace and security, securing a future free from nuclear weapons, preserving the future for humanity: this should be what drives our decision-making, and the Conference must be equal to this responsibility. If it is not, now is the time to reconsider how to give it what it needs to meet such a responsibility, and whether it is even possible to do so. Let us use this opportunity and ensure that the consensus reached by this Conference on 29 May is not diluted while in other parts of the world the will, commitment and interest in working for disarmament are being demonstrated. And, with reference to what the distinguished Ambassador Jazaïry just said, we hope that from now on we will all start working to ensure that in 2010 we can fill the glass that is currently half full all the way up.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Mexico for her statement, and I give the floor to the Ambassador of Bangladesh.

Mr. Hannan (Bangladesh): Let me begin by expressing our sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your leadership, perseverance and commitment which were instrumental in adopting this year's report by consensus.

We would like to thank all the other 2009 Presidents for their hard work and dedication in making significant progress in the work of the Conference in 2009. In particular, we would like to express our profound appreciation to Ambassador Idriss Jazaïry of Algeria for his and his country's role in achieving consensus on the 2009 programme of work, as contained in document CD/1864. This breakthrough ended years of impasse in the Conference on Disarmament and created the opportunity of holding substantive work in the Conference this year. However, consensus on the implementation of CD/1864 has eluded us this year.

As the next President of the Conference, we are therefore acutely aware of the need for the Conference to begin substantive work early next year in order to maintain the positive momentum created in the Conference on Disarmament in 2009. Both within the Conference and beyond, we note that there is great expectation that the Conference will be able to resume at an early date its mandated role as the single multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations.

In the report just adopted, the Conference has tasked the current President and the incoming President to conduct consultations during the intersessional period, and, if possible, make recommendations. We take this responsibility very seriously. We are prepared to work closely with the Austrian presidency, as requested by the members of the Conference.

We shall count on the support of all members and, in particular, the other Presidents of 2010, as well as the secretariat, in getting the job done. And I thank the delegations who have expressed their support for our efforts.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Bangladesh, as my colleague and future President, and am certainly looking forward to our cooperation and eventual handover. The next speaker on the list is the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Domingo (Philippines): Mr. President, on behalf of like-minded observer States, both candidates for membership and those requesting participation only, in the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to you and your fellow Presidents of the P-6 for a job well done in steering us to the passage of a historic programme of work and the annual report, and, to cite a distinguished delegate, for

laying the foundation for the magnificent tall skyscraper which will constitute the actual work of the Conference in its coming sessions.

I also wish to convey our condolences to Ambassador Akram on the passing of his mother, and I would also like to recognize those colleagues who will be leaving us: Camilo of Chile, Diego of Venezuela and Tofigh of Iran – and their meaningful contributions to the work of the Conference on Disarmament and for their friendship. Godspeed to you and au revoir, but not adieu. We expect you to continue to champion our cause in your respective capitals.

We too are eager to sustain the momentum that has been achieved in this august chamber with the adoption of CD/1864, and look forward to the resolution of the issues raised in the past weeks, so that we may all begin our work in earnest next year.

As we felt, obviously, the priority of the Conference on Disarmament last May of this year was and is to provide for a framework of implementation for the programme of work, we decided to wait until this moment — the conclusion of our 2009 session — to raise once again an issue of utmost importance to us: the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament has noted, there are 25 States which have formally petitioned for full membership since 1982, and there are more States which have requested the status of observer in this and previous sessions.

May I also take this opportunity to reiterate a proposal which our delegation and a number of other States made last week, in that we should take advantage of the next few months and educate ourselves more thoroughly in the issues, substance and procedures of the Conference on Disarmament. We would like to call again on the Secretariat, UNIDIR and the NGO disarmament community, as well as the experts among the membership, to organize a series of orientation and training seminars to this end in the coming weeks before the start of the 2010 Conference on Disarmament session.

We thank the delegations which have supported our cause, and we appeal to the membership as a whole to include the matter of expansion in its work next year. Would it not only enrich the Conference on Disarmament and make it a truly more universal body if it were to favourably consider our petitions for membership? If we are indeed laying the foundation for the building of the future work of the Conference on Disarmament, would it not only further strengthen the building if more bricks and pillars were to be added to reinforce our structure?

The President: I thank the representative of the Philippines for his statement and for drawing the attention of the Conference to the issue of its enlargement. I give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Al Nuqari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Thank you, Mr. President. Allow me also to begin my statement by conveying my condolences to His Excellency the Ambassador of Pakistan on the death of his mother. I would then also like to express our deep appreciation for the challenging and special task that you have undertaken. This was not an easy report, but your diplomatic competence, your concern to take all differences as well as particularities into account and your ability to find ground on which all can meet have facilitated the adoption of the Conference's report.

I should also like to thank the six Presidents of the Conference. Overall, we can say that it has been a remarkable and highly encouraging year. Today is one of the few days on which the Secretariat has let us see daylight. We hope that the conclusion of this session is indicative and that it will continue to be so during the coming year, which will perhaps also bring with it the same causes for optimism and hope.

The efforts of the P-6 this year have, of course, been commendable. It is their efforts that have given rise to such optimism and have led us to adopt the programme of work, which is the full part of the cup, to use the words of His Excellency the Ambassador of Algeria. The efforts of the P-6 were crowned during the Algerian presidency by the special effort made, naturally, by the Algerian presidency. This was highly appreciated by everyone, including by my delegation. However, there can also be no doubt that optimism cannot be sustained unless it is brought to ground and made tangible. No wish is attained without work.

Let me dwell briefly on 2007. In 2007, it was proposed that we should give the impression that we were on the brink, or even closer, of adopting a programme of work and bringing the impasse in the Conference to an end. But there was something missing and the Conference was unable to address that gap. In 2008 it took a step forward, and in 2009 I believe that it took more than a step forward. The conclusion we can draw is that something is still missing, and the sooner we remedy this deficiency, the sooner we will be able to turn our wishes into realities.

We believe that there is a place for implementing the consensus rule in a forum such as the Conference on Disarmament, in particular with regard to issues relating to disarmament and international peace and security. This question is particularly important as the consensus rule governs relations between States. Basically, many instruments that govern relations between States — and sometimes relations between individuals, such as human rights instruments, but here we are talking about relations between States — are also reciprocal, and reciprocal in a particular way, in that they involve reciprocity not between two but between all parties. Consequently, we believe that the consensus rule and, therefore, perhaps the logic of the consensus rule are of significance for the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

This is a most important question, of course, as we believe that in order to move forward we must recognize this point. We must also stop and ask ourselves frankly why we have not been able to formulate and implement a programme of work. Therefore, as I have said, in order to achieve what we want, wishes are not enough: we must be realistic. The hope that today has brought us perhaps also requires a different approach and a different vision that would enable us to adopt and implement a programme of work in the coming year.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement, and I give the floor to the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Baeidi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, in fact I feel obliged to express the appreciation of my delegation for your strong leadership in guiding the discussions on the 2009 annual draft report, which is adopted today by consensus. You have shown professionalism and have done hard work in formal and extensive informal meetings, and also we appreciate the spirit of compromise and cooperation of all delegations, which has led us to adopt the report today. Our thanks also go to the secretariat, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze and his very able team.

We all know how much the adoption of the annual report was sensitive after the failure of the Conference to implement its programme of work. Although this annual report may not be an outstanding achievement for the Conference on Disarmament, it is the manifestation of the will of members of the Conference to achieve consensus and forward the work of the Conference. We hope that this report will provide a good spirit for our fresh efforts in adopting the programme of work of the Conference for 2010.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement and give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Larson (United States of America): Mr. President, I would like to join others in extending our thanks and congratulations for the extensive and successful efforts by you and your team in achieving consensus on the annual report to the General Assembly. I would also like to extend special thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Caroline Millar of Australia, for her dedicated and tireless efforts to move the process forward. She has our deep appreciation.

As has been noted by previous speakers and which, as always, Ambassador Jazairy has articulated so astutely, we consider it to be of utmost importance to use the next few months to prepare the ground for early agreement on a programme of work in 2010 and immediate commencement of substantive work thereafter.

It is clear that members will continue to harbour specific interests and concerns about elements of next year's work. I would therefore take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the United States delegation to work closely with the P-6 and all parties over the next few weeks to ensure that in 2010 the Conference on Disarmament will continue along the path of progress re-embarked upon this year. We hope and trust that we will share this commitment with a collective determination by all to continue to move the Conference on Disarmament forward.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States of America, and I give the floor to the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Im Han-taek (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, first of all let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on the successful adoption of the annual report. This was only possible thanks to your distinguished leadership, as well as to the spirit of compromise and flexibility shown by member States. My gratitude goes to the other P-6 members for their tireless efforts to bring the Conference out of its decade-long hibernation and to create conditions for the history-making adoption of the programme of work, CD/1864.

Although we are not able to embark on substantive work this year to implement CD/1864, which is truly regrettable, we do believe we have laid out the foundations for our future work by dispelling the chronic atmosphere of inertia.

Like many other delegations, my delegation was hoping for a more forward-looking annual report, containing an encouraging message to the international community on the continuity of our work, based on CD/1864. However, at the same time, given the limit to what we can achieve at the level of the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation believes it is no less important to carry forward the amicable atmosphere which has led to the adoption of CD/1864. So in this regard we welcome the report we have just adopted by consensus and would like to commend the accommodating manner in which Conference on Disarmament member States have conducted the consultations on the annual report.

Clearly this is no small achievement, which we all collectively can be proud of. However, we believe we should not be complacent about where we stand at the moment, as I expect most of us would agree.

Expectations for progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the international community are higher than ever amid various international disarmament events leading up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference. It is paramount that the Conference on Disarmament create the opportunity to benefit from this fertile environment. Needless to say, the success of the 2010 Conference on Disarmament will hinge on how promptly and how smoothly we can reach a consensus on the 2010 programme of work when the Conference resumes its work next January, as well articulated by some delegates.

To this end, I believe that throughout the intersessional period, including the First Committee in New York, uninterrupted efforts should be exerted to reinvigorate the positive spirit we shared when the Conference adopted CD/1864 on 29 May. These efforts,

individual or collective, should be made at every level, not only between our outgoing and incoming Presidents but also among the member States.

My delegation will do its part in our joint endeavour to realize the earliest commencement of the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament next year.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea. The last speaker on my list is the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation): I should like to commend you, Mr. President, and through you all six Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament for the current session. I should also like to associate myself with the condolences offered earlier to Ambassador Akram on the loss of his mother.

Ambassador Jazaïry has described today's meeting as another victory. We have a saying in Russia: "Victory has many fathers, but defeat is always an orphan." In this sense, we are all victory's children, as each and every one of us sitting in this room has contributed to the success that we have now achieved, and we consider it very important that the decision — a historic decision — on the programme of work was adopted by consensus.

Not wishing to single anyone out, I must admit at the same time that the P-6, who worked as a united team, were a key to the success of our victory. And, of course, Ambassador Jazaïry of Algeria, who raised our work to an entirely new level and drew the attention of the highest circles to progress on the programme of work.

Without a doubt, my delegation, like many others, regrets that we did not manage to implement the programme of work set out in document CD/1864 this year. Furthermore, we hope that the nature of our recent discussions and the report adopted today will open the way for prompt substantive work in 2010. I should like to take this opportunity to assure the new P-6 that they can count on the help and assistance of the Russian delegation in their work.

In conclusion, I should also like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Conference and his team for the contribution that they have made to our work and, it goes without saying, to our interpreters, whose work next year, I hope, will have a new and greater responsibility in store: explaining to us what is meant by fissile material and how it is produced and what spacecraft and weapons systems comprise.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation.

If no other delegation wishes to take the floor, then this brings us towards the end of our session. Let me thank you for all these very nice and kind words to the presidency. There is a former Prime Minister of Austria, Bruno Kreisky, who once said: "You do not know how much praise I can stand." I differ. I would rather pass this on to the P-6 colleagues and to my own collaborators. It is really very much a collective effort.

Looking at this year's session, certainly I think what comes to mind is quite a level of emotion, which is somewhat unusual in a body which has not entered substantive negotiations for over a decade, but we have experienced that in quite a range of emotions: cautious hope, optimism, high excitement about the adoption of CD/1864, the question of how long optimism can last, disappointment, frustration, the question of what it means that the Conference is unable to adopt a whole range of documents – 1866, 1867, 1866/Rev.1, 1870, 1870/Rev.1, 1870/Rev.2. Quite a lot. The sheer number of these texts I think illustrates, first of all, everybody's engagement and commitment, but also the effort undertaken by the P-6 throughout the year. So even if we did not spare any effort in searching for a consensus to allow the implementation of our work and in engaging in very

intensive consultations and dialogue throughout the year, it has been said that implementation continued to elude us.

So in my delegation we had quite a discussion on how to characterize this whole situation in two words. Should we talk about continuity and change, or should we talk about stagnation and progress? I think that we have not really come to a decision on this. But let me address our moment of change first: the adoption of the programme of work. I think that really is due to the inspired and inspiring leadership of Ambassador Jazairy in helping us to overcome an obstacle that had so long seemed insurmountable, and we certainly cannot thank Ambassador Jazairy enough for his achievement. I also think we cannot overemphasize the importance and significance of this decision. While the rules of procedure clearly oblige us to pass this hurdle again next year, I think it should no longer be a hurdle. We should be able to build on the success and progress that we have achieved by consensus this year when we resume our 2010 session.

Another element that more recently when we were discussing and negotiating our report with all of you – one thing we heard over and over again was: “Let us go back to last year’s language, last year’s text.” That preference, I think, one can find throughout the report. But I think we also have to be clear: 2009 is not 2008. This goes particularly also as we move beyond this Council chamber. There was wide progress, a new willingness on the part of many to address nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a comprehensive, ambitious, proactive manner, and we, as the Conference on Disarmament, cannot ignore these developments. We need to reflect them in our deliberations, if we want to live up to the very *raison d’être* of our Conference on Disarmament, and that is the negotiation of disarmament treaties.

In this regard, I think I would also like to comment on one experience which certainly should help us to move forward next year, and that is the P-6 cooperation. I think we all agree that this year has shown the strong value of this instrument. We have had Presidents from five different continents, who excelled in their commitment and determination and used all channels available to bring about consensus. We in our coordination ensured continuity over the whole session, and also I think we were able to contribute to widening a cross-regional sense of ownership for the Conference as a whole. In preparing for this year we certainly benefited from the advice and assistance of last year’s P-6, and we are certainly looking forward to our handover to the next P-6 and wish them well.

Another element of change we have seen to a certain degree is in the character of our consultations. I think they have become more interactive, an approach which has allowed all delegations most interested to address partners directly, an approach which has enhanced transparency, which has built confidence and fostered dialogue. So in this regard I think optimism is certainly a justified sentiment.

I think I can come to a conclusion by expressing our gratitude to all of you. First of all to our P-6 colleagues. It has really been a great group. Also, to the seven Coordinators, whose substantive contributions have provided valuable input, not only for this year’s session, but certainly beyond. I would also like to thank those colleagues who were ready to serve as Chairmen of Working Groups and Special Coordinators, if our programme of work had only been implemented. They were willing to sacrifice some of their summer vacations, and I think I can speak on behalf of all us to thank you for this readiness, which certainly cannot be taken for granted.

I think this year has also been enriched by important contributions from civil society to the deliberations of the Conference, and so I wish to thank the representatives of the NGOs for their continued interest and commitment to our work, and certainly express our

hope that they will keep coming back to this Conference and that we will be able to profit even more from the interaction with you in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank our Secretary-General, Mr. Ordzhonikidze, and the whole secretariat for their very important and valuable help. Also, great thanks to the conference room officers, the interpreters and, last but not least, to my own team: Stephi and Cornelia and Markus, who will of course go back to Washington soon.

We wish our successor very well. To all of us I wish the necessary courage to advance work next year, not only here, but also in New York, and from the very beginning of next year's session: the courage to distinguish where continuity is useful and where change is necessary.

I thank you very much. This session is closed.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.