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# Conference on Disarmament

24 August 2010

English

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## Final record of the one thousand one hundred and ninety-fourth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 24 August 2010, at 10.15 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Gancho Ganev .....(Bulgaria)

**The President:** I declare open the 1194th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey. Our new colleague comes from a friendly neighbouring country to Bulgaria and has just joined us. I wish to assure Ambassador Demiralp of our fullest cooperation and support in carrying out his duties. I wish you, Mr. Ambassador, all success in the discharge of your important functions.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the participants in the 2010 United Nations Fellowship Programme on Disarmament who are observing the proceedings of this plenary meeting. I am sure that they will benefit from the exposure to our forum, and especially from the presentations that will be made to them on various aspects of the work of the Conference. I wish them a fruitful stay in Geneva.

Now, I have a number of delegations on my list of speakers. First, I would like to give the floor to the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Turkey, Mr. Oğuz Demiralp.

**Mr. Demiralp (Turkey):** Mr. President, I am a newcomer. Therefore, I am not well placed to lecture or to make a lengthy speech on disarmament issues. I intend to learn many things from you and from my colleagues, and of course eventually to make positive contributions to the work of this Conference.

However, let me say that, as a diplomat, I know of no armament other than diplomacy. I am aware that even stronger diplomatic armament is necessary to achieve the lofty goals of disarmament. In this context, I think the role of this Conference is of global significance.

I also seize this opportunity to extend my feelings of sympathy and solidarity to Pakistan in the difficulties they are facing right now.

I would like to thank you again for your warm welcome, and I stand ready for some warm debates.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Brazil.

**Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil):** Mr. President, I would like to express briefly some views of the Brazilian Government concerning the ministerial meeting scheduled to take place in New York on 24 September on “Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”. The following points will be further developed at the meeting itself. However, it may be of interest for the United Nations Secretary-General to receive some inputs from the Conference on Disarmament.

First, Brazil considers to be essential the existence of a multilateral permanent forum — the Conference on Disarmament — for the negotiation of disarmament issues.

Second, the continuation of the deadlock around the adoption of a programme of work for the Conference has direct implications for the credibility of the organ as well as for the whole machinery for negotiations and substantive discussions on subjects that are central to the agenda of international security.

Third, given the positive results of the Eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, it was to be expected that the Conference on Disarmament would be able to maintain the political impetus and to start substantive work, in particular on a treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for explosive purposes as well as on themes like the prevention of an arms race in outer space and negative security assurances.

Fourth, Brazil considers that the high-level meeting should express genuine support for the activities of the Conference, to prevent the establishment of parallel negotiations on issues that are the primary competence of the Conference on Disarmament and promote an agenda of disarmament and not only of non-proliferation.

Fifth, Brazil expects that the Conference may recover the vitality it demonstrated in the negotiation of instruments on the prohibition of biological and chemical weapons and on banning nuclear-weapon tests. A logical step to overcome the deadlock could be the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, which could provide the only way for an encompassing and balanced review of the entire multilateral machinery in the area of disarmament.

My delegation stands ready to continue cooperating to ensure the success of the Secretary-General's initiative.

**The President:** I thank the Ambassador of Brazil for his statement. Next on my list is Ambassador Jazairy of Algeria.

**Mr. Jazairy** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I should first like to welcome Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey and wish him every success in carrying out his demanding duties in the context of our Conference. Secondly, I wish to comment on the high-level meeting entitled "Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations" to be held in New York on 24 September 2010.

We should clarify at the outset the context and reasons that prompted the call for such a high-level meeting, namely the inability of the Conference to proceed to the stage of negotiations and the fact that this situation has persisted for a lengthy period. As a matter of fact, we find the use of the term "revitalizing the Conference" to describe the meeting inappropriate. It gives people the impression that the Conference on Disarmament is in a state of lethargy and that the problem is due to its operating procedures, whereas the delegations have been unstinting in their ideas and endeavours to elaborate a programme of work. In May 2009, for instance, the member States adopted by consensus decision 1864 on the establishment of a programme of work. Unfortunately, however, the decision proved to be mere ink on paper, inasmuch as the events that occurred outside the Conference during the period in question disturbed the security balance that had made it possible to adopt the decision. In spite of the goodwill that has been displayed and the repeated efforts made during the current year, the situation has remained unchanged.

In short, the Conference has fallen victim to external complications, especially those relating to the balance of security at the regional level. Basically, the problem does not lie in the Conference and its decision-making procedures but in security developments among States and the selective approach of some nuclear-weapon States to the application of the non-proliferation regime. With regard to our expectations vis-à-vis the high-level meeting, I wish to make four basic points:

- First, the high-level meeting should provide the requisite political support for a nuclear-weapon-free world, in accordance with the provisions of the final document adopted by consensus at the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in 1978.
- Second, initiatives outside the framework of the Conference on Disarmament that may adversely affect efforts to move forward with the negotiations should be discouraged.
- Third, States should refrain from any attempts or threats to resort to other forums as an alternative to negotiations.

- Fourth, it is important to avoid a selective approach that endorses the priorities and concerns of some States at the expense of others. There is a tendency in the Conference to reiterate claims that a particular issue is ripe for negotiation based on a subjective political assessment motivated by the interests of certain blocs. For example, some States consider that the question of a ban on the production of fissile materials is ripe for negotiation, while other States consider, for their part, that matters such as the ratification of a comprehensive treaty on nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances or prevention of an arms race in outer space are ripe for negotiation. Hence the importance of reaching an understanding that reflects a comprehensive and harmonious or at least a balanced vision of what will serve the interests of all States and groups of States, bearing in mind that the development of a climate built upon trust depends on the adoption of such approaches.

Lastly, we hope that the summary prepared by the United Nations Secretary-General after the high-level meeting will reflect the different views and priorities expressed and open up promising vistas leading to a strengthening of international security and stability. Any follow-up mechanisms that may be proposed in this connection should not undermine the Conference but enhance its credibility and authority as the only multilateral forum in the area of disarmament. Reference should be made in this context to the requests of numerous States for the holding of a fourth special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament in order to give a fresh stimulus to multilateral disarmament.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Jazairy for his statement. I now give the floor to Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze** (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): Mr. President, after the statements of my good friends the ambassadors of Brazil and Algeria, I see some kind of misunderstanding of the intentions of the Secretary-General and a certain confusion in the room. I want to clarify, as his Personal Representative — you can understand that the Secretary-General conveys something to his Personal Representative — and emphasize several things.

First, obviously, as the Ambassador of Algeria said, the meeting should involve the necessary political support. As I understood from conversations, from your official statements, from our informal talks, the Conference supports the high-level meeting. And as I understood from my meeting with the regional groups that involved not only Conference members but all States Members of the United Nations, they all also supported the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting that is probably of concern to certain delegations — at least as I gathered from the Algerian statement contained in the letter that was sent by the Secretary-General on 20 July — is to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament, taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations, and the purpose of the high-level meeting is to offer a unique opportunity to provide greater political impetus for revitalizing the work of the Conference through high-level participation. It will also aim at promoting multilateral disarmament, including by addressing the larger challenges facing the wider architecture of disarmament machinery.

Frankly speaking, there is nothing for the Conference on Disarmament to be concerned about, because the meeting, according to the Secretary-General's letter, is going to be his meeting. He is inviting all foreign ministers and/or at a level above, as he puts it in his letter, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on 24 September, to give the necessary political impetus to the Conference on Disarmament, and maybe, if they want, they can express their views vis-à-vis general disarmament.

After that, the Secretary-General will reflect whatever has been said at that meeting in his summary. Obviously he will reflect his own view as well as your views. This is a standard United Nations procedure, so you do not have to be concerned that some views are reflected and others are not. I do not know what he will do with the summary, frankly speaking. He might give it to the President of the General Assembly; he might distribute it, but you know, the very fact that the foreign ministers or even some higher-level officials will participate in the meeting, and will express their views of course, will be important for the disarmament process in general. We do not have many meetings of this kind.

We also have to take into account that it is going to be all Member States, not only members of the Conference on Disarmament. This is the intention of the Secretary-General.

As to the other issues, frankly speaking, I do not know whether some kind of parallel discussions are going on. At least I am not informed of any. And as I told all of you, and especially the Algerian Ambassador, the summary will take into account all proposals and all the views your foreign ministers or other higher-level officials express. This is what the Secretary-General intends to do.

Maybe I am a bad Secretary-General of the Conference, but I am not aware of any parallel negotiations. Concerning a special session on disarmament, this is of course the prerogative of the General Assembly. It is not our prerogative. When you are at the First Committee, you can express your views.

So, frankly speaking, I do not see in what way you, I or the President of the Conference might make a substantive input to that meeting. Your best input to that meeting will be to write to your foreign ministers, saying that there should be a real political impetus and that we should adopt a programme of work. Otherwise, I do not see any better solutions, because the Secretary-General is the chief executive of the United Nations Secretariat, and the United Nations Secretariat does not take political sides whatever the issue is. Contrary to what I have heard from some delegations, the United Nations Secretariat is supposed to promote the work of the United Nations but not to take political sides.

I think at the moment I have informed you about something. The other thing is that some important information will soon be coming from the Secretary-General which will detail everything — probably Mr. Sareva has already informed you — but it will be a little more detailed and might have certain technical changes.

As to where to go at 8 o'clock in the morning — because the meeting will start at 8 a.m. and last until 1 o'clock in the afternoon — it will be in the Economic and Social Council room, and the overflow room will be adjacent to that room.

The Secretary-General has invited three sister organizations — the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization — to speak at the end of the meeting. The end will be at 1 p.m., when the Secretary-General will read his summary.

I would expect that the Conference on Disarmament, or at least members of the Conference, through their foreign ministers or other higher-level officials, will support what not many — except one ambassador, the Algerian Ambassador — have been successful in achieving, that is, the adoption of a programme of work, and a real start to the work of the Conference. That is what the Secretary-General needs, what we all need: to start real work, because otherwise ... and you were right in that case to mention some parallel mechanisms, certain parallel meetings. You know, not only in the United Nations, but in any other organization, it is very natural that if you are not delivering, somebody else will take the matter up, and that moment has come — that much is definite. You will have the next session, one year more, and that is it. If you are not able to deliver, my guess — this is my

very personal guess, I will be very frank with you as my colleagues and friends — then somebody else will organize these parallel meetings and parallel consultations and parallel discussions, and maybe they will be more successful than we are. But that would be a big blow to the Conference and to me personally as Secretary-General of the Conference. I hope that will not happen.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Ordzhonikidze for his statement and the qualifications he presented. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Mr. President, first of all, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our Turkish colleague, Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp, to the Conference. Pakistan and Turkey have traditionally maintained the closest of relations, and it is a great pleasure for us to see him at the Conference today. I would like to take this opportunity to assure him of the continued friendship and support that Pakistan has already extended to Turkey and the Turkish delegation.

I do not intend to make a statement today. I will be making a statement at our next plenary. But considering what has been said, I would like to express my agreement with the views that have been expressed by the ambassadors of Algeria and Brazil with regard to this high-level meeting.

Those of you who have been in the Conference with me for the last year or so know very well that I do not mince my words. I will not do so today. Let me say very bluntly that the whole proposal of holding this high-level meeting is a half-baked idea, both in terms of procedure and in terms of substance.

In terms of procedure, I really do not see how meeting for half a day — even if it is presided over by the Secretary-General of the United Nations — can reach any meaningful conclusions that can revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament or revitalize the work of the entire disarmament machinery.

I will not go into the details of each of these issues, because I understand that there will be a meeting related to this issue of the Conference on Disarmament in an informal setting later and I will make my more detailed remarks at that point. But I think that there are certain aspects of what has been said by the Director-General this morning which require a response.

First of all, with regard to the argument that the Conference on Disarmament supports this meeting, as far as I am aware, the Conference has not discussed this meeting so far. Until today we have not had a plenary meeting that has included statements that relate to this high-level meeting. So we are assuming that the Conference on Disarmament supports this meeting.

The second point concerns the outcome. If the Secretary-General makes a summary of what has been said, then that remains a summary of his perception of what has been said, I do not see how in substance that will add to revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament is the result of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and if the international disarmament machinery has to be revitalized, including the Conference, then what we really need is a fourth special session on disarmament, not some high-level meeting for half a day in which the level of participation, as far as I can tell, is not going to be very high, because a number of our senior officials and foreign ministers will have preoccupations of a greater number and higher priority for them at this time. So we will have to wait and see how many foreign ministers or high-level members participate.

And finally, what is most unacceptable to my delegation is the presumption on the part of the Director-General to effectively and in clear terms threaten the Conference on Disarmament that if we do not reach a conclusion, and if we do not, in his words, “make progress”, then an alternative forum will need to come up or may come up.

Every delegation here represents the security interests of the participating member countries. We all work on the basis of our national security interests, and we will take our decisions in accordance with those national security interests.

It is not as if the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to make progress for only the last few years; it has been the last 14 years. I do not recall any other Director-General of the United Nations having made such a threat to the Conference in the past 14 years, and I do not think we should accept such a statement at this point either.

Finally, Mr. President, we look forward to a discussion on the Secretary-General’s proposed high-level meeting, which I understand you will convene later on, and we will make our substantive contributions at that meeting. But at this stage, I would like to reiterate that a decision on the work that we do is the prerogative of the member States, and only the member States.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Akram for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Algeria, Ambassador Jazairy.

**Mr. Jazairy (Algeria):** Mr. President, I just wish to make my comments clear. What I was trying to do was to express the preliminary — with the emphasis on “preliminary” — reaction of the Algerian mission to this meeting on 24 September, because indeed we had been invited to make our contribution to this exercise. It was not intended to be an expression of a value judgement on the initiative itself, but rather a contribution to the debate in the hope that, with all other contributions, this would be helpful to the Secretary-General in the process of preparing this meeting. There was no notion of concern as such, but a specific comment.

One comment I made was on the subject of revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament. My purpose was to say that what we need to revitalize is not an organ. What we need to revitalize is an international approach to disarmament, so that things would go forward. Whilst challenging the notion of revitalizing the Conference, it is more by way of drawing attention to the fact that we should not just be mesmerized by the procedures of the Conference or by how good or how bad we are in discharging our mission. The problem goes beyond that. The problem concerns the security concerns of different countries and how we can balance all those, and how we avoid outside the Conference on Disarmament taking action which would compromise the possibility of negotiating with a sense of mutual trust the agreements that we so want to achieve together.

So the emphasis of my preliminary remark was to say, be aware that the problem is not just a procedural problem in the Conference on Disarmament, and that the search for alternative forums would probably not provide a solution unless we address the substance of the problem. Address the substance of the problem, and then you will see that the mechanisms to put this in the form of a negotiated agreement will be overcome.

So this was the preliminary remark I wanted to make, and the other four points I made I think are elements that could be taken into account. I was pleased that both my distinguished colleagues, from Pakistan and from Brazil, also supported the approach that I put at the end of my text regarding a fourth special session on disarmament. If this meeting on 24 September creates a momentum that will facilitate the convening of such a special session, that would be fine. But, as I say, let us not just be mesmerized by an organ. It is not an organic problem. It is a political problem.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Jazairy for his statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Germany on a point of order.

**Mr. Hoffmann** (Germany): Mr. President, am I right in assuming that following this meeting we will have informal consultations on the issue of the high-level meeting? I intended to speak at that time, but I am just wondering whether it might not also be useful to make a statement here. If you do indeed have the intention to have informal consultations immediately following this meeting, then I would make my statement then.

**The President:** Thank you, Ambassador Hoffmann. I am also wondering if we will have such an informal meeting. It was my intention to have such a meeting today at 11 o'clock, and all the delegations were informed yesterday by the secretariat. From what I understand, the concept of holding "informal informals" is accepted by this body and is acceptable to all the member States. But this morning I got a request from one of the regional groups. The request is to postpone this "informal informal". So my intention was to inform you about this request at the end of our plenary session, but as you have asked me now, I have this possibility to inform you. So after saying this, my suggestion would be that I have consultations with the regional coordinators and, after that, about the timing of the "informal informal", and you will be informed of the date we may have such "informal informal" consultations. But of course this is a plenary meeting. At a plenary meeting, I cannot prevent anybody from taking the floor. So I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Canada, Ambassador Marius Grinius.

**Mr. Grinius** (Canada): Thank you, Mr. President, for your clarification in terms of "informal informals", etc., to which we look forward. But as there have already been some references to the high-level meeting, I would just like to take up a few comments.

First, of course, I would like to welcome our new Turkish colleague to the Conference on Disarmament. I look forward to working with him both on a professional level and a personal level.

I certainly thank Ambassador Macedo Soares for his comments and the very clear points that he made, and I agree with much of what he said, particularly the issue of direct implications for the credibility of the Conference on Disarmament.

We are just four weeks away from the high-level meeting, and it is about time that we had some more open discussions in terms of preparations. I also noted the two interventions of Ambassador Jazairy, who of course now remains historically famous as the President who got a programme of work agreed to, CD/1864, but already I am finding that that is a kind of nostalgic memory of last year. I do not think that the Conference on Disarmament, as he said, has not been asleep, but I really feel that the Conference on Disarmament has been sleepwalking. There have been lots of wonderful meetings. We are now up to the 1194th meeting in the entire history of the Conference on Disarmament, but many of the meetings in the recent past have not been particularly productive.

Canada of course is very, very supportive of the Secretary-General's initiative to call a high-level meeting in September, and I do thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Ordzhonikidze, for the various clarifications that he has provided, including the aspects of the larger challenges in terms of the whole disarmament architecture and the United Nations machinery for disarmament. I really believe that the discussion has to be open, not just on the questions, as Ambassador Jazairy said, in terms of the Conference on Disarmament, but on the whole international approach to disarmament, and that is why we do have to address a lot of the substance, including, obviously, national security concerns.

There was reference to the possibility of a fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, and I would just like to remind colleagues that the first special session, way back in 1978, recognized the need for a single multilateral disarmament



negotiating forum of limited size. At the same special session, also included in its declaration was the recognition that “all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations”, and I believe that that is clear acknowledgement that the Conference on Disarmament is intended to be accountable to the larger global community, and not just accountable to itself. Again, since the first special session took place in the middle of the cold war, things have really changed, and it is time for us to reflect perhaps the evolution and the reality. The cautionary point here is that we are talking about a fourth special session: so what happened to the second and third special sessions? Brave attempts perhaps, but they did not live up to expectations, so we still have the 1978 mechanisms that we work for.

I noted also our Pakistan colleague’s remarks about the fact that the high-level meeting is “a half-baked idea”. I do not look at it at all in that way. I look at it as an element of an important pattern of disarmament and international security discussions and outcomes that have already happened, and I of course refer to the Security Council summit, the Nuclear Security Summit, the fact that the United States and Russia have agreed to a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START II, which is important. I look at the outcomes of the NPT Review Conference, and I see the high-level meeting as a serious building block in the context of that pattern.

As for what the Secretary-General of the Conference said about our having perhaps one more year, and the moment has come, I do not look at that at all as a threat. I look at that as a reality check in terms of what is happening as we continue to sleepwalk and discuss some of these very, very important issues.

Parallel mechanisms? Well, I do remind distinguished colleagues here that there is something called the Ottawa Convention; there is something called the Oslo Convention. In terms of serious results when things did not exactly happen within the Conference on Disarmament, all of us I believe are involved in the discussions and negotiations on an arms trade treaty, again something that is outside of the Conference on Disarmament’s purview. So there is a rich element for discussion, including at the high-level meeting, but before that, I look forward to the informal discussions that we will have, because we will have some other comments at that time.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Grinius for his statement. Next on my list is the distinguished representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, Ambassador Faysal Khabbaz Hamoui.

**Mr. Khabbaz Hamoui** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I should first like to welcome the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Oğuz Demiralp, and to wish him and his delegation every success and satisfaction in their work.

I was surprised, Mr. President, and wondered whether it was possible, during a meeting lasting just three or four hours, to solve the problems that have been accumulating for more than 12 years. When the United Nations Secretary-General convened the meeting, he was undoubtedly motivated by the best of intentions. While I can state quite unequivocally that we are not convinced that the meeting will yield magical results as far as CD issues are concerned, we shall nonetheless respond to the invitation in the hope that it will confirm the fact that, on the one hand, the Conference on Disarmament is the only forum for negotiations and, on the other, respect for its rules of procedure is the key to its success.

Everyone knows full well that the meeting will not yield a solution. The solution to this Conference’s problems lies in certain capital cities. These capitals are interested only in the status of the fissile material cut-off treaty and neglect other basic CD topics such as nuclear disarmament, prevention of an arms race in outer space and negative security

assurances. The capitals in question pay no heed to the security concerns of a number of States, and we shall naturally be unable to reach agreement without taking the security concerns of those States into account.

I wish to express strong support for the excellent statements made today by the ambassadors of Algeria and Brazil. I fully agree with all the points they made.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Khabbaz Hamoui for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Serbia, Ambassador Uglješa Zvekić.

**Mr. Zvekić (Serbia):** Mr. President, at the outset, let me clarify that the statement of the observer States to the Conference on Disarmament should have been delivered by the Ambassador of Thailand in his capacity as coordinator of the informal group of observer States. In his absence, as the ambassador of a country belonging to the informal group of observer States, and as the closest in this room to the delegation of Thailand, I will deliver the statement.

On behalf of the informal group of observer States to the Conference on Disarmament, I wish to thank your presidency for its consistent contacts and briefings with the observer States. We appreciate the engagement with both the members and observers of the Conference in the preparation of the forthcoming high-level meeting. We also look forward to further engagement as we approach the date. We wish to take this opportunity to comment on both the procedural and the substantive parts of the meeting.

On the procedural aspect, we are pleased to learn that representatives at the ministerial level and above will be able to deliver a statement. It has been our group's firm position that all States Members of the United Nations should have an equal opportunity to participate in these important meetings in order to enhance the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the disarmament and non-proliferation process. Many of the observer States' ministerial representatives have expressed interest in joining the meeting. We would appreciate it if the United Nations Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the Conference would facilitate the presentation of the position of the observer States at the high-level meeting by the designated representative of the observer States to the Conference, and, in that capacity, that they be permitted to sign up on the list of speakers.

We hope that the deliberations at the high-level meeting will include a forward-looking dimension. At the same time, we are of the view that future activities should take place within the Conference on Disarmament in order to strengthen its work as the unique and distinct multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

We recognize that the examination of the work of the Conference on Disarmament is one of the main objectives of this high-level meeting, as stated in the United Nations Secretary-General's letter of invitation. Given that there has been no review of Conference membership for the past decade, the observer States wish to urge that the second rule of the rules of procedure of the Conference, which states that "the membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals", be addressed during the high-level meeting, with a possible suggestion in the summary to appoint in 2011 a special coordinator on expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. It is the hope among observer States that the issue of such expansion be seriously considered at the high-level meeting and beyond.

We also hope that the participating States can use the opportunity to discuss reforms of the disarmament machinery. It is important to evaluate the capacity of the current machinery to respond to new security challenges as well as to the peaceful opportunities of the twenty-first century.

In closing, the observer States to the Conference on Disarmament look forward to participating actively in this important high-level meeting and to supporting the United Nations Secretary-General in making it a success.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Serbia for his statement on behalf of the observer States. Next on my list is the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**Mr. Barthorp** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I would like to add the thoughts of the United Kingdom delegation to the discussions on the high-level meeting.

The first point I should say is that we welcome the personal commitment and leadership which the Secretary-General has shown on disarmament and non-proliferation. And included in that is the clarification and the leadership shown by the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament to this project. The United Kingdom is keen to work with the Secretary-General for a successful and balanced outcome of the 24 September meeting.

Some thoughts on the substance. Our hope is that the meeting will send a high-level political message of encouragement to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, to urge the Conference on Disarmament to examine ways to improve its effectiveness without damaging the principle of consensus, to allow the Conference on Disarmament to better address the global arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation challenges of the twenty-first century, to recall the adoption of Security Council resolution 1887 a year ago on 24 September 2009, and call upon on all States to continue its full implementation.

We hope the meeting will reinforce the Conference on Disarmament in order to agree on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work, to immediately begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and substantive discussion on other core issues: the prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and nuclear disarmament, as called for in its own draft programme of work (CD/1864), in relevant First Committee resolutions and in the 2010 NPT Review Conference action plan.

We hope the meeting will consider how to promote prompt approval by the Conference on Disarmament of its programme of work on the basis of CD/1864, and how to enhance the effectiveness of the existing international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

We hope the meeting will reinforce and build upon the positive developments in arms control and disarmament and non-proliferation of the past year, especially the successful NPT Review Conference.

Our concern is that the meeting should not seek to change the consensus rule of the Conference on Disarmament, nor should it seek to damage the Conference's role as the sole standing multilateral negotiating forum and the possibility for an FMCT to be negotiated within the Conference on Disarmament.

We would hope that the meeting is not unrealistic, and it should not divert us from the priorities established in CD/1864, which we considered to have been the gold standard and to have met the concerns of all, and for which we extend our ongoing gratitude to the Ambassador of Algeria for his hard work in putting together that document.

We hope that the meeting will not produce an explosion of follow-up activities, as this would distract from the menu agreed at the NPT Review Conference and contemplated in the programme of work of the Conference.

Consensus on the convening of a fourth special session on disarmament does not exist at this time.

We hope that the meeting would not seek to reopen the results achieved through painstaking cross-regional negotiations at the NPT Review Conference in May this year.

Finally, we believe that a Chair's summary under the United Nations Secretary-General's own responsibility is the appropriate outcome for the meeting. We do not favour operational conclusions.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Kennedy.

**Ms. Kennedy** (United States of America): I first would like to add my voice in welcome to Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp, whom I can say personally I know to be an extraordinarily skilled diplomat and representative of his great country.

I also have not previously expressed any comments in this forum about the devastating floods in Pakistan, so let me take this opportunity not only to express our solidarity but indeed the hope and expectation that all of us will help to the best of our ability not just now in this immediate crisis but in the longer term, because of course the devastation is widespread with long-term consequences.

I have listened with great interest to all the comments that have been made today. Indeed, I too have comments on the high-level meeting but will hold them back in the expectation that we will have the meeting that you had offered to hold later.

Let me just make two points now. One is to express my appreciation for Secretary-General Ordzhonikidze's clarification today. It was most welcome. Also to say that we do indeed support the Secretary-General's initiative to call this meeting. Of course, we understand and agree with the comments made today that this is not a magic bullet, and that we should not have expectations that it will suddenly cure all of our problems, but the initiative is certainly, I think, a most welcome one. Taking up the concern expressed by our distinguished Pakistani colleague, which he chose to express in some culinary terms, I hope that we will all see this meeting as an opportunity to move forward, not as a threat. So let us all in our various ways, seek to bake this meeting into a nutritious and delicious disarmament pie.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Kennedy for her statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco.

**Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, it was not my delegation's intention to take the floor during this formal session today. However, after hearing the observations made this morning, I think that it might be useful to share a number of our impressions and views regarding the high-level meeting to be held in New York. Before doing so, however, I would like to take this opportunity, since it is the first time that I will be addressing the members of the Conference under your presidency, to congratulate you and to assure you of my delegation's full support during these difficult times for the presidency of the Conference. I would also like to express my delight upon seeing a long-standing friend and seasoned diplomat, Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey, join us here. The Conference on Disarmament is strengthened by the arrival of such a skilful, well-informed diplomat of his professional stature. I am confident that he, in the name of Turkey, will make an enormous contribution to our work.

The Kingdom of Morocco applauded the initiative taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in deciding to convene a high-level meeting in New York for the purpose of revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that, in so doing, the Secretary-General has acted responsibly and displayed leadership, quite simply because he could not stand by and do nothing when, for years now, the Conference has been locked in an impasse and has lost its voice. We thus welcome this very timely high-level meeting.

Yet we must ask ourselves: what do we expect to bring back from this high-level meeting? Do we simply want to go to New York, make speeches and then leave? Or do we want to actually delve into the matter and determine what we need to do in order to overcome the difficulties and obstacles faced by the Conference? I believe that the Secretary-General of the United Nations has called for this high-level meeting in New York in order to provide us with an opportunity to enter into a frank discussion, to identify the points that pose difficulties or problems for the Conference and, above all, to come up with solutions, to suggest ways in which we can reach compromises that will allow the Conference to shake off its lethargy. In order to accomplish this and ensure that the meeting in New York does not become an end in itself, nothing more than a series of speeches that can be summed up in a few lines, it is our duty, here in Geneva, as the experts who have been given plenipotentiary powers to act on behalf of our Governments in these negotiations, to enter into a frank dialogue and to lay aside the differences that have brought the Conference to a standstill. We need to do this in order to work out how we can succeed in New York, how we can overcome our difficulties, how we can avoid reproducing the divisions and friction in New York that have brought us to this impasse in Geneva, which would be catastrophic. If we leave for New York with the same attitudes and the same lack of a clear goal and of a basic minimum of agreement and compromise, then the meeting of 24 September will be doomed to failure. To avoid that, we must prepare for this meeting properly. The point is not for each group to go into its own corner and work on a position paper setting out its "vision". That may be fine during a preliminary stage, but I believe that we have an obligation to sit down together, to talk with one another and to see what points we can agree upon. There may not be many such points, but it is imperative that we work together so that we can devise ways of solving the problems we face here, for the greatest danger of all would be for us to go to New York and to come back with our hands empty. That would spell the doom of the Conference.

The Secretary-General of our Conference has said that the Conference might have no more than one year left. I do not agree with that view, but I do agree that pessimism will be there, in the air, and will gain ground and that the Conference will not be strengthened unless, Mr. President, we do something. This morning, it was said that the members of the Conference should not prepare anything. We do not agree, because we are the ones who are responsible for dealing with the issue. We are the negotiators. In New York it will thus be our job to inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the States Members of the United Nations that are not members of the Conference about the difficulties encountered by the Conference and to identify the means at our disposal for overcoming them. To go to New York without such a vision would be tantamount to walking to Canossa.

Another observation: we do not believe that either the Secretary-General of the United Nations or the Secretary-General of the Conference will be to blame if we fail. If we fail, the members of the Conference on Disarmament must bear that responsibility. The machinery of the United Nations will bear none. As is true of all meetings of the United Nations or other international organizations, if a successful outcome is attained, it is that machinery, as well as the members, that is to thank. If they end in failure, on the other hand, then the blame must be laid at the door of those who refuse to compromise or to find solutions.

We thus call for a return to reason, to wisdom and, above all, to the spirit of compromise that have informed the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament since its inception in 1978. Nostalgic references have been made to the 1970s, to the special sessions of the General Assembly on disarmament, but I would just like to remind you that the Chemical Weapons Convention was negotiated here and that the necessary impetus for that Convention came in the wake of one of the special sessions of the General Assembly. We need not despair. What we do need to do is to see how New York can serve as a

platform for garnering the political will required to move our work forward so that we can, with a little understanding, with more understanding for the various positions that have been adopted, find an approach that will allow us to get back to work on the basis of a programme of work that is acceptable to all. We must, above all, bear in mind that we all have a responsibility. If we criticize one another and seek to shift responsibility to others, we will not resolve the problem faced by the Conference and we will prevent the high-level meeting in New York from securing any results. I would like to conclude with one last observation. This morning it was said that the Secretary-General would prepare a summary of a few lines, or perhaps a single page, in length. Personally, I doubt that a summary can rouse the Conference to action. What is needed is for the different groups within the Conference to think, either here or over there, about drawing up a consensus document concerning the statements that will be made. Will the members of the Conference on Disarmament or the participants in this meeting be in a position, at the time that our ministers are making their statements, of preparing a summary on the spot? Yet why should it be a summary? Why not think in terms of a road map? Why not think in more ambitious terms? Why not envision an even more positive result, one that would meet the challenges of this meeting? The meeting should yield a result, and that is why painstaking preparations are called for. That is why the G-21 has asked that each group be given time to reflect, to draw up proposals and to arrive at a formulation of their individual views, which can then be melded into one collective vision. If we do not take this approach, we must acknowledge that we are headed straight for failure. Yet Morocco remains hopeful and has the political will to work with each and every one of you in the Conference to arrive at the necessary compromises, and we have the political courage to help ensure that this meeting in New York will galvanize and revitalize our work. It will not be the statements made in New York that will revitalize our Conference. It will be the decisions and the agreements that we reach in New York, provided that we start thinking about them now. If the different groups do not take this more open approach to working with one another, the meeting in New York may well come to resemble those that we have once or twice every week here in Geneva.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Hilale for his statement. Now I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany, Ambassador Hoffmann.

**Mr. Hoffmann (Germany):** Mr. President, can I first of all join others in welcoming our new colleague from Turkey, Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp? I would like to say that I look forward to working with him.

Every good meeting needs good preparation, and one has to say that we are four weeks away from the high-level meeting in New York. I think it is high time that we get going. In fact, I think that this is the first time that we have had a substantive debate about this meeting in New York.

I am grateful for your information about not intending to hold informal consultations after this formal plenary. I was a bit taken by surprise, I have to say, and I am quite glad that I put the question, because I would actually have made my statement on the substance of the matter in the informal meeting, but if there is no informal meeting today, I will make it in the formal meeting, because I think it is important that we speak up. A number of statements have been made, and I think now it is right to make one's voice heard also.

I am grateful to the Secretary-General of the Conference for his clarifications. Of course, I think no one expects the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take sides, but I think it is important that members of the Conference on Disarmament and the international community, even going beyond the Conference, make their voices heard in order to assist him to form his view of the state of affairs.

The German delegation has welcomed from the beginning the initiative of the Secretary-General of the Conference and eventually the Secretary-General of the United

Nations to convene this high-level meeting, and we attach major importance to it. We have recommended that our Foreign Minister attend the meeting. Now I hope there will be many foreign ministers at the meeting, maybe even possibly heads of State. I think we must not waste the opportunity to create momentum.

I think it is necessary at this point to recall why this meeting has become necessary at all. As we all know, for over a decade there has been no agreement on what to negotiate on in the Conference on Disarmament. And this is due to a complicated, rather arcane, system of linkages and blockades. But in 2009 we indeed had a breakthrough, and we had a consensus work programme, CD/1864. Unfortunately — and this has also been referred to already today — events led to a situation where one delegation explicitly raised reservations when we tried to implement this programme. Many efforts were made in the Conference itself and also through bilateral contacts to break the deadlock, but unfortunately so far to no avail.

I think it remains important to note that there was — and I still continue to believe that there still is — a very widely shared view that CD/1864 offers the best possible approach in its subtle combination of how to deal with all core issues. If one reads CD/1864 carefully, one will note that in operational terms, at the heart of it, is the opening of FMCT negotiations.

Now the protracted stalemate over the implementation of CD/1864 has led the Secretary-General to develop the idea of a high-level meeting. I remember quite well the early discussions we had about this. In my understanding, the underlying idea was to assist in persuading all sides concerned to open the way to implementing the approach put forward in CD/1864.

Germany continues to believe that CD/1864, together — and I would like to mention this here too — with Action 15 of the outcome document of the NPT Review Conference, provide a good orientation for our endeavours. My Government is engaged at the political level in helping to implement the outcome of the NPT Review Conference, and we seek to implement both documents, that is, CD/1864 and the outcome document of the Review Conference, in a consensual manner.

We are convinced that if States take a clear and enlightened look at their real security situation, the real security threats and the interests which follow from that in a broader perspective, they will come to the conclusion that assisting the international community in opening negotiations on an important issue in nuclear disarmament can only serve their own interests as well. And as far as we are concerned, I would add this: when we say that we give priority to the opening of FMCT negotiations, we want to make it very clear at the same time that we would certainly welcome progress on all other core issues of the Conference on Disarmament. Germany is open to constructive and concrete ideas to overcome the stalemate in this body.

Now if, in the short term, it turns out that the blockage cannot be overcome soon, we also wish to say quite clearly that, in that case, we would be open to innovative ideas on how best to proceed, and I note in that context that some ideas are already under discussion, for instance, with regard to the role of the United Nations General Assembly.

Whatever the outcome of such discussions may be at the end of the day, we do not wish to call into question the existence of the Conference on Disarmament, which, in spite of its current difficulties, in our view remains an important institution in the field of disarmament and arms control.

So let me underline once again, we must not waste the opportunity the high-level meeting gives us to create momentum to progress in disarmament, and we should use it to

send out a clear signal, namely, that the international community expects the Conference on Disarmament to take up its substantive work.

Let me, in conclusion, make a comment on the warning we heard from the Secretary-General of the Conference, which was commented on in no uncertain terms by our distinguished colleague from Pakistan. I took it as his personal view, and I appreciate it very much. I think it is important to have an honest debate about where we stand, and we must not continue, if I may say so, to stick our heads in the sand. There are really risks out there. I have explained where we stand on the substance of the matter. We attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament, but I think one should realistically see that a time may come when States and delegations are simply not ready to put up with the continued stalemate in this institution.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Hoffmann for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ireland, Ambassador Corr.

**Mr. Corr (Ireland):** Mr. President, since this is the first time I have spoken under your presidency, may I also congratulate you on assuming the presidency, and also extend a warm welcome, as other colleagues have done, to the Ambassador of Turkey, Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp? We look forward very much to working with him in the period ahead.

The comments I would make, I probably would have made some of them in the informals. That may still of course happen, so I will give a general summary, since I think it is valuable and others have done so, in terms of how we should approach, in the view of the Irish delegation, the high-level meeting of the Secretary-General.

First of all, I would say that Ireland very much welcomes and appreciates the decision of the Secretary-General to convene this meeting. It is under the prerogative of the Secretary-General. We have heard very many clear explanations of how the Secretary-General intends to approach this meeting. An important point about this meeting, as has been said by the Secretary-General of the Conference, is that all Member States will be attending, not just the members of the Conference. It will address the architecture of international multilateral disarmament, not just the issues that paralyse and have paralysed the Conference for some time.

So the meeting should be viewed not with any apprehension or in any way a challenge in terms of the prerogatives of the Conference on Disarmament, but in terms of how best we can together reassume the functions of the Conference on Disarmament and its programme.

I would make two or three general points on that.

First of all, the Conference on Disarmament is of course the central multilateral disarmament negotiation framework, and it has for many years failed to meet this function. For countries like Ireland and many countries that are in the Conference, and others that are not in it, our commitment to the multilateral disarmament process comes from a firm conviction that multilateral cooperation is in the interests of all, and particularly serves the interests of the smaller States, who, lacking military power, have to rely on building and supporting a strong, rule-based system, and have to place faith in the multilateral regime of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements.

The Conference on Disarmament has an important role in this, a critical role. A central point of the high-level meeting would be after many years to see where we go from here in having the Conference perform its functions. It is more than appropriate therefore for the question of revitalizing the work of the Conference to be placed before the international community, which is what the Secretary-General is doing in terms of the high-level meeting.



My delegation's view is that the meeting in New York will be primarily a political meeting. It will be heads of State and government. It will be foreign ministers. It is asking too much — nor do I think it is the expectation — that there will be any agreement necessarily coming from the meeting, but the aim will be to give a political push and dynamic to ending the state of paralysis that has stymied the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Clearly it will be important in the meeting today and at the “informal informals” to clarify this, that there should not necessarily be any unnecessary finger-pointing, still less any recycling of procedural points that we have heard all too often in the Conference itself. Rather, the aim should be to look at possible ways forward, including some of the ideas we have heard: special sessions of the General Assembly, or whatever.

It is impossible, however, not to also look at other issues. It would be naive to think that all of the problems of the Conference on Disarmament are to be found within the body itself and in its procedures, and this is a point that has been made repeatedly this morning. Factors external to the Conference do play a role, perhaps even the major role, in determining whether or not this body is able to undertake the work of negotiations for which it was established. However, it is also the case that certain aspects of the manner in which the Conference has operated — or, more accurately, failed to operate — can be noted as hindrances to the conduct of the work of negotiation.

This is not to say that these issues should necessarily be a factor in the high-level meeting, but they have to be considered and they have to be at the back of our minds. Foremost among these, in the view of my delegation, is the manner in which the requirement to adopt annually a programme of work has been interpreted and applied. In most other multilateral bodies, a programme of work is essentially a calendar of activities which would be undertaken. It seems to be only in the Conference on Disarmament that the programme of work has been imbued with a level of almost theological importance going beyond its purely administrative character.

A second inhibiting factor clearly is the interpretation of the rules of procedure as requiring consensus for all directorate decisions, even purely procedural ones. It is perfectly possible to argue in favour of the requirement of consensus, and many do. And it is possible to do this also in terms of the eventual adoption of a negotiated instrument, though perhaps not entirely convincingly, since every State has the sovereign right to decide whether to become a party to such an instrument. But it is difficult to understand why consensus should be required to merely begin negotiations, or indeed, for much less significant decisions, such as the annual adoption of the Conference agenda.

A third point that has been mentioned, although not today, is the practice of conducting consultations on some standard matters via regional groups, which have no existence in the rules of procedure. This is something that is also a practice that obscures the real picture regarding the respective views of the membership of the Conference, and it does hinder open debate and the possibility of finding compromise solutions.

Finally, on the question of the limited membership of the Conference on Disarmament, the Ambassador of Serbia has gone into that in detail. All States have a legitimate interest in the questions on which the Conference is supposed to negotiate. Therefore, the question of the expansion of the Conference seems to my delegation an extremely critical question. We strongly support this. We think that it is something that may emerge in due course from the process that has now been set under way. The final point on that of course is also that, of the ministers who will speak at the high-level meeting, the majority will not be from States members of the Conference on Disarmament. The issue of international disarmament and the multilateral process belongs to all the States Members of the United Nations, and indeed to the world community, not just to the States that are

members of the Conference. Many of the States who are observers have of course wished to become members of the Conference for a long time, but have not been able.

Finally, it is the hope of my delegation that the meeting on 24 September will give a new and fresh look at the whole architecture of disarmament, as the Secretary-General has said, that it will give a new dynamic and a new push to how the Conference on Disarmament can assume its role, so that it will not become stymied on issues of procedure, or rather, as is the Secretary-General's intention, will predominantly look at the challenges and the opportunities and how it would be possible for all States Members of the United Nations to meet the responsibilities in addressing those challenges and responsibilities.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Corr for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Sweden, Mr. Hellgren.

**Mr. Hellgren (Sweden):** Mr. President, since this is the first time I have taken the floor during your presidency, allow me to express our full support and our congratulations to you at this important juncture, and also to welcome our new Turkish colleague.

I was not planning to take the floor today in the formal plenary, but some things have been said on record that merit some short and very brief remarks.

First of all, my Government strongly welcomes the fact that the United Nations Secretary-General devotes his interest, his time and, not least, his political influence to the issues of both stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and fulfilling the commitment made by all to creating a weapon-free world. And also, in this context, the fact that he takes a personal interest in the situation within the disarmament machinery, and in particular, the efforts to break the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament. It cannot be more warmly welcomed than what I have just expressed.

Secondly, we feel that it is important that our political leaders — and not only ambassadors in the Conference — focus their attention on this situation. We have consistently explained in this forum how hard it is for us to explain year after year to our political leaders the difficulties this body has in getting its act together and starting doing any substantial work. It is important both from our perspective and from the perspective of our political leaders that they get an opportunity to speak about this situation directly among themselves, and I know my Foreign Minister himself has publicly expressed a clear interest in being present at the meeting on 24 September. The only uncertainty is the fact that we have a general election a couple of days before then, but he hopes to remain in office so that he can be there to discuss with his fellow foreign ministers the situation in the Conference on Disarmament and in the disarmament machinery in general.

The third point regards the culinary aspect that was very eloquently commented on by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States. If we want all high-level meetings of the United Nations to be precooked and have an ability to solve all the issues that they are addressing, there would be very few high-level meetings of the United Nations. I think our political leaders need to be able to get together and discuss very hard, very difficult issues, and see what contribution can be made to solving them, even though they will not all be resolved at the very meeting when it takes place.

Finally, let me say on my own behalf that, after having spent six years here in the Conference on Disarmament, I share what I took as the personal assessment of the Director-General that the situation in the Conference needs to be urgently addressed, that there is not that much time left for the Conference; that if not this year, the 2011 session will be of crucial importance for the future of this institution; and that the Conference on Disarmament, like all governmental and multilateral work, needs to go through, and is going through, what is often called a results-based assessment, and as we stand now, the Conference is not coming out very well in this results-based assessment. So I welcome the

fact that we have a Secretary-General of the Conference who has expressed his assessment to us in such clear terms, and, on a personal level, I share his assessment.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Hellgren for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador van den IJssel.

**Mr. van den IJssel** (Netherlands): Mr. President, let me start, as others have done, by welcoming our Turkish colleague. We are very much looking forward to working with him and to continuing our intensive work with his delegation.

Like some others, I did not come to this meeting with the intention of intervening on the subject of the high-level meeting, because I also believed that we would have an exchange of views on that subject during an informal meeting later today. Having just heard from you that this informal meeting has been postponed, for reasons unknown to me that I do not quite understand, and having already listened to a wide range of views, I would nevertheless like to use this occasion to share some of our views, which, in spite of the formal character of this meeting, are still of a preliminary character.

The Netherlands fully supports the initiative of the Secretary-General to convene a high-level meeting on the work of the Conference on Disarmament and to take forward multilateral disarmament negotiations. Continuing in the way that we have been doing for over a decade is not an option. We have to be absolutely clear that, after 13 years of stagnation, one cannot say that the Conference on Disarmament is merely facing temporary difficulties. If we do not act, the Conference will become irrelevant and faces becoming obsolete. Whether that takes place as a result of formal steps, or through informal measures, like lowering the level of participation or further weakening interest on the part of capitals, for example, does not make much of a difference. Sleepwalking or dreaming will not prevent these real possibilities from occurring.

In that context, we see 24 September as an opportunity to counter the tide. It is not a threat. We should not let the opportunity slip, because — and here I agree with the Secretary-General of the Conference — there may not be many other opportunities. The Netherlands does not see the high-level meeting as a stand-alone event. If we want to revitalize the Conference, follow-up is essential. Like the Secretary-General of the United Nations, we believe that this follow-up could take the form of a resolution of the First Committee of the General Assembly, as a start.

In our view, the resolution should call upon the Conference on Disarmament to start work on the basis of the agreed programme of work in 2009 and/or the two drafts submitted in 2010. We believe that these proposals have the strongest international support. As far as the exact wording is concerned, as I have stated on previous occasions, the Netherlands is flexible. We are ready to start work on all four core issues. But we are not ready to wait for another 13 years. We should set ourselves a strict deadline of one year, and if we fail to meet that deadline, the General Assembly should consider the best way to make progress on the issues of multilateral disarmament.

In that respect, we do not subscribe to the view that we should prevent negotiations taking place outside the Conference on Disarmament at all costs. As stated in this hall before, we think that the Conference is an instrument and that, if it cannot get the job done, we may have to look at other, better instruments, taking into account the international situation.

It may be useful to seek external advice on the best way to revive the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference would not be the first body to look to outsiders to give it useful advice. We would have an open mind on such an approach, but it should always be linked to a deadline, to avoid the situation whereby the Conference will spend the next 13 years talking about its own future.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished representative of the Netherlands for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ukraine, Mr. Andriy Kasianov.

**Mr. Kasianov (Ukraine)** (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, Secretary-General, on behalf of Ukraine, I welcome all participants to today's meeting on this momentous day for our country. On 24 August 2010 Ukraine celebrates the nineteenth anniversary of its independence.

Given the nature of today's discussions, I would like to thank the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and the current President, Ambassador Gancho Ganev, for giving us the opportunity to discuss important aspects of the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the high-level meeting scheduled to be held in New York.

Our country welcomes the initiative of Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to hold a high-level segment on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that all of us have high hopes for the forthcoming meeting, since the Conference on Disarmament is currently unable to overcome the problems arising in its work on its own.

Given the lack of clear results over the last 10 years, the international community in general and participants at the New York meeting in particular are faced with a complex and important task: to analyse the experience of years past and to steer the work of the Conference on Disarmament onto a constructive course. In this context, we believe that an important objective of today's meeting is to discuss the political aspects of the New York meeting with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the work of high-level officials from the Member States of the United Nations in New York.

We suppose that there are different views on how the high-level meeting should be organized and on its outcome. We therefore call upon those present today not to be very categorical in their views, but to try to take into account all the wishes of States so as to select the very best and most valid ones.

As for Ukraine, our delegation has repeatedly stated its views in plenary meetings and during consultations. Today I would like to reiterate our position.

First, since on account of his commitments, the Secretary-General can devote only one day to this special forum in the field of disarmament and peacekeeping, namely the Conference on Disarmament, Ukraine proposes that optimum use should be made of the working hours of the high-level officials going to New York, and that the possibility of extending the meeting from five hours to a full working day should be considered if necessary.

Second, in view of the broad scope of the discussions in New York and the fact that meetings at foreign minister level are such rare events, it would be advisable to allow everyone who so wishes to address the meeting.

Third, since the appeals made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and foreign ministers addressing the Conference on Disarmament to show political will and to set aside differences in the Conference with a view to revitalizing the work of the forum have had no effect, Ukraine proposes that those participating in today's consultations should allocate time during the high-level meeting for an interactive dialogue and preparation of the final document of the outcome of the meeting. In our view, active discussion of the statements delivered during the general debate will help with the adoption in the final stages of the meeting not only of the Chair's summary, but also of specific recommendations for revitalizing the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion I would like once again to thank Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for exercising his mandate and convening the high-level meeting in New York.

However, I should like to recall that the primary responsibility for the success of the aforementioned meeting lies directly with the Member States of the United Nations. Consequently, working within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, we can help to create favourable conditions for the successful outcome of the New York meeting.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished representative of Ukraine for his statement, and I take this opportunity to extend our warmest congratulations to Ukraine on the occasion of the national day of that country. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Im.

**Mr. Im** (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, like some other delegates, we did not intend to make an intervention at this meeting, but since I sense lingering doubts about the utility or value of having a high-level meeting on the revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament, I feel obliged to intervene.

I think we have to think about what has brought us to this situation. Why is the Secretary-General requested to call this high-level meeting? In what context and under what circumstances? Of course, it was requested by the NPT resolutions, to which some members of the Conference are parties. Nevertheless, there is a clear stipulation asking the Secretary-General to convene that meeting. Furthermore, I think there is another urgent reason why this meeting is being called. I believe the Secretary-General is being pressed or pressurized by the international community, which is discontented and frustrated with the long-term stalemate in and around the Conference on Disarmament over the last 13 years.

All States Members of the United Nations are requested to attend the meeting, and we will be participating in the meeting in our individual capacity as a State Member of the United Nations. We will not be participating in that meeting as a member of the Conference on Disarmament itself. However, I believe that, because this meeting is all about the Conference on Disarmament, the participation and the blessing of the whole Conference membership are critical in producing any meaningful outcome at the next meeting. I believe this is a real opportunity to do some soul-searching — which we desperately need at this time — and set out a future direction, not only for Conference members, but also for the international community as a whole.

Secondly, I just want to make a brief comment on the statement by the Secretary-General of the Conference. Obviously, it is a very bitter pill for Conference members to swallow, but I think his remarks should not be dismissed, and his good intentions must be taken seriously in due course.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Im for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Norway, Mr. Strømø.

**Mr. Strømø** (Norway): Mr. President, I would also like to use the opportunity to give comments on the high-level meeting in New York.

First of all, Norway looks forward to the high-level meeting as an opportunity to address the issue of how to take forward multilateral disarmament negotiations; the Conference on Disarmament is one of several bodies in need of reform and revitalization. Norway considers it important that the Secretary-General has invited all States Members of the United Nations to attend the meeting. Thus, we should have a comprehensive approach to the high-level meeting, not limiting ourselves to commenting on Conference on Disarmament issues only.

It is important to underline that disarmament is a tool to enhance international, national and human security for States and for people, independent of their gender or the bodies in which we decide to interact.

We hope that the debate in New York may serve to kick off a more comprehensive and systematic debate on the overall disarmament architecture and on the extent to which it is suitable to meet present and future disarmament and non-proliferation challenges.

We need to examine whether the institutions created during the cold war are fit to deliver results. If the Conference on Disarmament is unable to fulfil its purpose, the General Assembly should give serious consideration to the state of affairs at the Conference.

The process of negotiating disarmament treaties outside established bodies provides grounds for serious concern with regard to the way we have conducted our business in the Conference, but also grounds for inspiration. It proves that with sufficient political will it is possible to find ways to make progress.

Additionally, we should recognize that the failure of the Conference to include relevant stakeholders, such as representatives from civil society, means cheating ourselves out of benefiting from their experience and knowledge.

The fact that the Conference membership is limited to only a minority of States Members of the United Nations makes this challenge even more obvious, and it should be reflected in the discussion at the high-level meeting.

Lastly, we support the idea that the output of the meeting should be a Chair's summary reflecting the Secretary-General's view and the discussions in general.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished representative of Norway. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador Hernández Basave.

**Mr. Hernández Basave (Mexico)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and to welcome Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey and assure him of our full cooperation in the pursuit of our work.

Mexico does not understand, much less share, the suspicions and fears expressed by some with regard to the Secretary-General's decision to convene a special meeting on such an important topic as the one that we will be discussing on 24 September.

On the contrary, we see the Secretary-General's initiative as a magnificent opportunity to reflect upon world security issues and to position global security at the centre of the international debate. We harbour the hope that the five hours to be devoted to these deliberations on 24 September will help us to remember, not to forget, to emphasize the fact that our objective in the Conference on Disarmament is precisely to make tangible progress towards disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament is a body that is dear to our hearts, and it has borne some fruit, but, regrettably, for over 13 years now it has been gripped by a paralysis that is beginning to become unbearable and unacceptable. We thus understand why some countries have said that, if the Conference is incapable of fulfilling its mission, then we should seek other avenues and other mechanisms for achieving our goal, which is, I repeat, to achieve disarmament and thereby increase international security and eliminate threats to that security.

We believe that this high-level segment will provide us with an opportunity to bring an open mind and political will to the task of determining the future of the Conference. We must not forget that some of the most important achievements in the field of disarmament,

some of the most important disarmament treaties, which remain in force today, were forged before the Conference on Disarmament was created, that is to say, outside the framework of the Conference.

Furthermore, when talking about the Conference on Disarmament, we must remember that, at one time, we had the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament, then the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, then the Conference on Disarmament had 36 members, then 56. The international situation is not static, and the mechanisms and tools we use should not be static either. It would hardly do to remain impassive in the face of the formidable challenges to global security that we face.

We see this high-level dialogue as an opportunity to delve into global security issues, and disarmament is at the heart of those issues.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished representative of Mexico for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy, Ambassador Manfredi.

**Mr. Manfredi (Italy):** Mr. President, first of all I would like to join my other colleagues in warmly welcoming here at the Conference on Disarmament our new Turkish colleague, Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp.

Italy fully supports the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General to convene the high-level meeting. We urge all countries to participate at the ministerial level, and I would like to say that our Foreign Minister has already confirmed that he will be there.

The reasons to convene the high-level meeting have been clearly illustrated by the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Ordzhonikidze, and they are compelling and well known to us all, so I will not repeat them here. We believe that the discussions at the high-level meeting should be as free and wide-ranging as possible, and we also think that they should include examining the relevance of the present United Nations disarmament mechanism, and also the effects of certain rules of procedure of the Conference on Disarmament, which in these last years we have seen have sometimes unfortunate effects.

In this framework, we hope that the high-level meeting will reassert the validity of CD/1864 as a balanced and realistic programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament in the coming years.

Finally, as our Moroccan and Irish colleagues have also urged, the high-level meeting should be as free as possible of recriminations and finger-pointing that serve no useful purpose in revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament and multilateral disarmament efforts in general.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Manfredi for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vasiliev.

**Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*):** Mr. President, first of all I should like to congratulate our Ukrainian brothers and neighbours on their national holiday.

I should also like to welcome the representative of Turkey to this forum and to assure him of the Russian Federation's readiness to cooperate closely with him.

Like several previous speakers, we would be willing to discuss preparations for the high-level meeting in New York, informally, as suggested, and so will defer many of our comments till a later stage.

In general, we would like to say the following. In contrast to the lack of consensus on a programme of work for this forum, I think we have full consensus on the unsatisfactory nature of the situation in which we find ourselves; and, of course, this situation must be changed.

The best solution would have been the adoption of a programme of work for our forum. Unfortunately, this did not happen. The Russian delegation played its part, by departing from some of its positions in order to support the draft programme of work in document CD/1864. Our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, has addressed this forum twice in the last three years to outline our views.

A high-level ministerial meeting here in Geneva would probably have helped the Conference to move forward. However, we all understand that, for various reasons, it is impossible. In this regard, we consider the option proposed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to be the best and, perhaps, only one available in the situation in which we find ourselves. We therefore support the proposal to hold this meeting.

Of course, we do not expect that a miracle will occur and that during the meeting we will take the decision that will unblock the deadlock which the Conference has been in for 12 years. Moreover, as was mentioned, this serious conversation should give impetus to innovative ideas that might move multilateral disarmament forward. In this connection, we consider that we must not overlook the work done by the Conference on Disarmament, and, in our view, such innovative approaches should not undermine what has virtually been agreed upon here, namely the package of measures which is contained in the draft programme of work adopted under the presidency of the distinguished Ambassador of Algeria.

I also think that now it is probably somewhat premature to say that convening a fourth special session on disarmament would provide some impetus, as no consensus has yet been reached on the process, and clear evidence of this is that the working group established to prepare for the special session on disarmament in New York has actually discontinued its work, given the unsatisfactory results.

Once again let me say that the Russian delegation is willing to discuss the framework for the high-level meeting, informally, as suggested, and will play an active and constructive role in the discussions.

**The President:** I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Switzerland, Ms. Torriani.

**Ms. Torriani** (Switzerland): Mr. President, as this is the first time I have taken the floor under your presidency, let me congratulate you, in the name of the Swiss delegation, on your assumption of the presidency, and assure you of our full support.

I was not planning to speak in this formal setting, but in the light of the debate, let me nonetheless add a few points in the plenary here.

Firstly, I would like to thank all the previous speakers for their interventions, and I would particularly like to add my delegation's support — in fact my delegation's strong support — for the high-level meeting that is planned in September in New York. We highly appreciate the Secretary-General's initiative to have such a meeting. Switzerland is looking forward to an open exchange covering many of the aspects that have preoccupied us here in Geneva for a long time. In that respect, we do not consider the high-level meeting that is planned a threat, but rather an opportunity, to address precisely these issues whose solutions have so far eluded us.

For a country like Switzerland, which is keen on making progress on all four core issues and which has supported all previous efforts to get the Conference on Disarmament out of deadlock, it is increasingly difficult to accept that it is the Conference itself that is blocking many of our core priorities in disarmament, and that it has in a way become an instrument of ensuring the status quo, in particular regarding nuclear disarmament.



Therefore, in order to revitalize the disarmament discussion, we are hoping for short-, medium- and long-term approaches, and it is precisely in this context that we welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold a high-level meeting in New York.

We are looking forward to an exchange of views covering the following aspects.

Firstly, we would like to see a thematic debate on current disarmament-specific challenges and on the requirements for the disarmament machinery of the twenty-first century.

Secondly, we are also hoping for a debate on medium- and long-term measures to make the disarmament machinery, and in particular the Conference on Disarmament, fit to address the challenges of the twenty-first century.

And thirdly, we would like a debate on short-term measures that would enable us to make specific progress on some of the core issues very soon.

It is important also for us that there will be a follow-up, especially to these short-term measures.

In fact, in order to avoid ending up in the kind of paralysis that we have known far too long, it is in our view of great importance that we do not here try to pre-negotiate the outcome of the high-level meeting. Instead, we welcome the Secretary-General's approach to come up with his own Chair's summary, and we are also glad to hear that it will be forward-looking and inclusive.

We suggest more specifically that we could make use of the cluster on disarmament machinery in this year's First Committee to ensure a follow-up discussion, but we will be happy to engage in more detailed points about such issues in the informal debate.

These were Switzerland's points for the time being, and we will make the other points in the informal debate.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Switzerland for her statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Pakistan, Ambassador Akram.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Mr. President, from the outset I apologize for taking the floor a second time. I just want to take this opportunity to make some points of clarification in response to some of the comments that have been made by my distinguished colleagues.

My friend from the United States used an allegory of culinary talents when I described the Secretary-General's proposal as half-baked. I will be the first to admit that I have no culinary talents whatsoever. However, I do know what tastes good and what tastes bad. I also know that to prepare a dish that is tasty, you have to have the right ingredients and give them sufficient time to cook. That is what is lacking in this approach: we have not had sufficient time, or we will not have sufficient time, to discuss these very important issues during a half-day meeting in New York, and the second point is, what are the ingredients that we will put into it that can lead to an outcome that would really contribute positively to taking forward the work of the United Nations disarmament machinery?

I must say that I am not surprised by the almost orchestrated Western expression of views this morning. I am not surprised because I know that their views are shared obviously by that group, and I also believe that these have already been communicated to the United Nations Secretary-General. The statement by the representative of the United Kingdom in fact gives a very good indication of what the Secretary-General has been advised should be the outcome of this meeting. I would be very interested at a later stage when we come back to this Conference to make a good comparison between what has been stated by the United Kingdom delegation and by the outcome that takes place in New York in the shape of the conclusions drawn by the Secretary-General.

My delegation's point of view is very similar to the point of view that you will hear from the Group of 21, when we actually do undertake an informal meeting on this issue at a later stage – I hope as soon as possible. But I think it is important to underline some of the issues that we need to discuss and also the issues that need to be addressed by the Secretary-General.

For us — and I dare say that the Group of 21 is also part of a larger group of countries in New York representing the Non-Aligned Movement, and that is more than 100 countries — the importance of the international disarmament machinery does not rest only with the Conference on Disarmament but also with the other areas and avenues in which disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues are pursued. For us, the issue of the highest priority is nuclear disarmament.

We are also interested — or some of us who are still in this room have already stated that we are interested — in negative security assurances, as well as the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In principle, fissile material is an issue which most of us in the Group of 21 and in the Non-Aligned Movement believe must not only take into account the ban on future production, but also the reduction of existing stockpiles.

For my country — and it is no secret — our difficulty with the FMCT is the existence or the practice of double standards by certain countries who on the one hand profess commitments to the objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, but use the forum of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to engage in activities that have directly affected our security. I will not dwell on that further, but suffice it to say at this stage that that is our concern and our problem with the FMCT. That does not mean that the Conference on Disarmament cannot and should not negotiate other items on its agenda.

Where there is consensus we can make progress, but there is no consensus. We cannot make progress. That is the way that the Conference on Disarmament operates, and it should be allowed to operate on that basis.

I would also like to express our view that the proposal that there can be alternative options to negotiating an FMCT is an eventuality that Pakistan has always accepted exists. We will not be a part of it. That is a separate question. But if that is the option that the international community takes as a course of action, we will respect that decision.

As for the outcome of the high-level meeting – if I have given the impression that we are opposed to this high-level meeting, nothing could be farther from the truth. We are not. In fact, on the contrary, we want this high-level meeting to have a substantive, meaningful outcome. That is why we are saying that we need to prepare for it properly. We need to ensure that the outcome of this meeting has relevance to us and to the entire global disarmament machinery. But if we are simply going to expect the Secretary-General to come up with a summary of his conclusions and think that that is how we are going to progress, then I am sorry, but we are going to end up being very disappointed.

I understand that a number of agencies whose work is connected to ours will have an opportunity to speak. I did not hear any reference to an opportunity being given to the President of the Conference on Disarmament to make a statement at this high-level meeting. I may be mistaken. But if he is not invited to make a statement, I think that that is going to be a major flaw in this high-level meeting. If this meeting is primarily aimed at revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament, then it should hear what the President of the Conference has to say, and explain what the concerns are.

So these are some of the points I would like to share with our distinguished colleagues, and I apologize once again for taking the floor.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Akram for his statement and clarifications. I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba, Mr. Quintanilla Román.

**Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, we had not intended to speak at this plenary session, but some of the comments made earlier have prompted me to do so.

I am referring to what might be likened to a personal ultimatum issued by the Secretary-General of the Conference, which has been echoed by some delegations. I find these types of comments surprising and, indeed, disturbing.

It has been said that the Conference is at a standstill and has not produced any tangible results for 13 years. It has not always been the same groups that have prevented the work of the Conference on Disarmament from moving forward. We would do well to remember, today, that when other groups, maintaining other positions, were holding back progress, nobody issued an ultimatum setting a one-year or any other deadline for this forum.

We do not subscribe to these allegations, which we find inappropriate and simplistic. The main outcome of the high-level meeting in New York could be the reaffirmation of the Conference as the sole disarmament negotiating forum and support for its work.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Cuba for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of France, Ambassador Danon.

**Mr. Danon** (France) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I had not planned on asking for the floor either, and would have preferred to speak during an informal meeting. But the Conference on Disarmament has become so firmly deadlocked that days and days of discussions are required even to arrive at a decision to hold an “informal informal” meeting: this demonstrates just how ineffective we have become.

I would first of all like to welcome our colleague, the Ambassador of Turkey, and assure him that the French delegation looks forward to working with him as soon as possible and that he can rely on being well received. I would like to say a few words about the high-level meeting scheduled for 24 September. First of all, I would like to say that we fully support the Secretary-General’s initiative. I wish to make it quite clear that we regard this as a very good initiative. It attests to the Secretary-General’s commitment to these issues, and it shows that the Secretary-General is taking into consideration certain dynamics within the domain of nuclear disarmament and nuclear issues more generally. This meeting may represent the first step towards resolving an anomaly in the practices of the Conference, which is that the Conference has never convened a ministerial meeting when it has reached an impasse. It is one of very few forums within the United Nations system which, when it finds itself deadlocked, does not take the issue to a higher level, the ministerial level. When almost any of the other forums comes to a standstill, they take their deliberations up to the next highest level. Yet we have never done so. Clearly, it would no doubt be preferable to resolve the matter here, in Geneva. Yet we all know that this is not possible; assembling over 60 ministers for foreign affairs here at the same time is completely out of the question. The Secretary-General has seized the opportunity presented by the week-long ministerial segment of the General Assembly for this purpose. We see this as a very positive step and we are very pleased that the deliberations are being taken to a wider level of representation than that of the Conference because, at that level, we find the rest of the disarmament machinery, including the Disarmament Commission, which brings all the countries together in New York, as well as the NPT participants and others. We therefore look forward to this opportunity to bring the countries together at a high level.

I believe that we need to become accustomed to talking about security and about nuclear and other forms of disarmament at a political level in order to try to ease the deadlock. The situation being as it is, it is no easy matter to extricate the Conference from this impasse. Why? Basically, because it is not a question of having the proper machinery or mechanism. As we all know, the Conference is a mirror. It was created to serve as a

mirror for the world during the cold war; the problem is that, today, it is still a mirror, but it no longer reflects the world as it is. It reflects the world of the cold war. The clearest evidence of this is provided by its agenda. We talk about a programme of work that should have been readily adopted, but we never talk about the agenda, which has never changed. The item on the agenda is always the cessation of the nuclear arms race, which does not accurately reflect the concerns of today's world. Regardless, everyone knows why the Conference finds itself in its present position. It is a mirror that, unfortunately, reflects only the current impasse, whereas it should reflect current global dynamics, of which there are many. The NPT Conference was, from that standpoint, very encouraging, because it put the non-proliferation regime back on track, gave rise to the adoption of a number of different measures, including measures relating to the first pillar of disarmament; 64 measures in all have been adopted, and even though they may be less relevant for three of the countries represented in this room, they will have to be put in place, and rightly so. We are pleased that the initiative to convene a meeting at the political level has been taken. And we hope that it will be a lasting one in the sense that it will set a precedent. Even if the first high-level meeting does not produce entirely satisfactory substantive results, we can at least hope that it will continue to be an option and that we can trust that meetings of States Members of the United Nations will be able to focus on security and disarmament issues at the ministerial level. The time for this has come.

As for the substantive issues and ideas about how to move things forward, I prefer to reserve my comments until the informal meeting is held. I hope that you, Mr. President, will convene such a meeting as soon as possible. Sometimes, when matters are simply allowed to take their course, time is wasted. We feel that, at present, we are losing a great deal of time, with the high-level meeting just four weeks from now, and we can understand — although I do not know the real reason for the meeting's postponement — that it is absolutely necessary to continue discussing substantive matters so that the countries' representatives will know a bit about what others may say and can decide what position to take with regard to such statements, and so forth.

As for the substantive issues before the Conference, the agenda, the issue of a ban on fissile material and so forth, as the clock is ticking, I would rather address those subjects during the informal meeting and would like to show that, if negotiations are put off too long, we may find ourselves without a forum in which to hold them, and the negotiations will, in any event, have to take place some day; that is inevitable. It is an issue that is ripe for negotiation. We will speak with the Ambassador of Algeria about what that means, but I think it is quite straightforward. An issue is ripe for negotiation when a consensus or a near-consensus can be reached. But we will find an opportunity to come back to this topic during the informal meeting.

**The President:** I thank the Ambassador for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of India, Ambassador Rao.

**Mr. Rao (India):** Mr. President, first of all, let me join my other colleagues in welcoming Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey to the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation and I look forward to working with him.

It was not my intention to speak today, and we will make detailed comments when you schedule the informal meeting for that specific purpose. However, we have noted the clarifications which the Secretary-General of the Conference has offered this morning, namely on the outcome of the meeting — that it will be a summary reflecting the views of the Secretary-General and the views of Member States, and that there will be no conclusions or recommendations in that summary. We have noted those points.

I spoke at length last week on the disarmament agenda, and on the Conference on Disarmament and its role, in my general statement, and I hope that the secretariat will take

that into account. At this stage let me just state that India has consistently attached the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, and we are ready to negotiate a nuclear weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament, as the United Nations Secretary-General himself has called for.

With regard to the work of the Conference, briefly, let me recapitulate what I said in my statement on 17 August: that a substantive agenda and a programme of work were adopted by the Conference in CD/1864 last year. Our effort, including at the high-level meeting, should be to encourage the Conference back to that situation.

Of course, on the disarmament machinery, our views are well known, and lunch hour is approaching fast. I should not like to repeat those views again; they were actually given in detail in my statement in the plenary itself last week.

With these comments, we look forward to the informal meeting which you intend to convene on this subject soon.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Rao for his statement. I have four more speakers on my list. As lunchtime is approaching, I will say that the list is now closed. I do not want you to go from being hungry to being angry.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Colombia, Ambassador Arango Olmos.

**Ms. Arango Olmos** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Colombian mission, I would like to welcome the Ambassador of Turkey, with whom we hope to work together on all of these issues. I would also, on behalf of my country, like to express our solidarity to the Ambassador of Pakistan in view of the extremely severe flooding in his country and to offer whatever type of assistance may be needed. Colombia has also suffered these types of floods on numerous occasions, and we know what an impact they have on a country.

Mr. President, I am grateful for your efforts to convene this meeting in a timely manner and, we would hope, the informal meeting as well. We had not intended to speak in the formal meeting either, whereas we had planned on making some comments at the informal meeting.

In this exchange of views regarding the high-level meeting to be held in New York on 24 September, Colombia supports the Secretary-General's initiative. We feel that, as the sole disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference has accomplished a great deal within the framework of its multilateral negotiations and, in the past, produced results that, as we all know, have contributed to international peace and security. Over 10 years have passed, however, and we have not succeeded in resuming the course of action that we once followed, the course of action that allowed us to demonstrate the effectiveness of multilateralism, a principle that we defend and support.

My question is therefore this: why, for so many years now, have we been unable to adopt a programme of work, implement that programme and start negotiations on the issues we identify? It may be that political will is lacking. It may be that circumstances outside the Conference on Disarmament and situations which our countries are faced with are blocking our progress. It may be that the consensus rule has been flouted for many years and that this has undermined the spirit of cooperation and flexibility that once prevailed. Or it may also be that some of the ways in which the Conference operates are hampering our work.

I believe that the high-level meeting in New York will be an opportunity for us to express just how important this multilateral forum is. It is also an opportunity for us to talk or think about the difficulties we are having. The active participation of all our delegations

in all our negotiations on the meeting is therefore essential in order to help identify possible solutions or options for putting the Conference on Disarmament back on course.

The high-level meeting could be the first major step in a continuing process of analysis and action that will allow us to get back on track and fulfil the Conference's mandate.

Colombia wants nothing other than for this forum to commence its work and negotiations as soon as possible. We cannot allow ourselves the luxury of continuing to wait for some magical solution to appear. We ourselves must actively seize every opportunity to rechart the course of the Conference on Disarmament.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Arango Olmos for her statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil, Ambassador Macedo Soares.

**Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil):** Mr. President, first of all, on behalf of the delegation of Brazil to the Conference on Disarmament, a warm word of welcome to Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey.

I had heard that one or more delegations have had difficulties in having a debate in the Conference on Disarmament on the high-level meeting, or HLM, as it is referred to by some speakers. (By the way, I was thinking Ambassador Danon would say that HLM is in France an acronym for social housing.) And then there was a discussion which was difficult for me to understand on whether the meeting should have the stuttering designation of "informal informal". But I am glad that we are having a discussion in a formal setting, and on the part of my delegation, I would not have any problem continuing this exchange of views on the same basis, in a formal meeting.

I would through you, Mr. President, request the secretariat, if possible, to provide delegations with the verbatim record of this formal meeting as soon as possible, in a special way, even if it is in a preliminary form.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Macedo Soares for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Mr. Daryaei (Islamic Republic of Iran):** Mr. President, since this is the first time that I have taken the floor under your able presidency, allow me to express my deep appreciation for the way that you are conducting the meeting and informal consultations.

Also allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to join others in welcoming Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp of Turkey, a friendly country near ours, and to assure him of our full support and cooperation in discharging his functions related to the Conference on Disarmament.

I did not want to take the floor because we were expecting to have an informal meeting which focused on this issue. However, in reaction to some of the comments that we have heard at this meeting, we have no choice but to react.

First of all, we thank the distinguished Secretary-General of the Conference for informing us and again emphasizing that the initiative to hold this high-level meeting originated from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and that the main purpose is to demonstrate political support for the multilateral disarmament agenda and United Nations disarmament machinery. We share that view and we believe that the exercise is in that direction. Therefore, we believe that the responsibility for the outcome of this meeting remains solely with the United Nations Secretary-General. The United Nations Secretary-General, however, is encouraged to take into account the comments of the Member States, and we hope that we can move in a direction to avoid the situation that the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan rightly mentioned – a half-baked situation. However, we believe that due to lack of time, we would not be able to make sure the dish was well done.

So let us speak to the purpose of this meeting, which is political support, and I really cannot see any consistency between encouraging political support and the psychological campaign of threats. This is something that is totally rejected by our delegation, and the matter of concern is more that we are witnessing that the threat comes from the secretariat. We hope that we will not again see such a situation.

We do not want to again emphasize that the problem facing the Conference on Disarmament is not an institutional one; it is not an organic problem. It is a problem of political will, and we do not have the political will to start negotiations here, so we would like to have a meeting to encourage an increase in political will to overcome this deadlock.

The Conference on Disarmament has a very broad agenda, and we always support a balanced and comprehensive programme of work. We really cannot understand why the work of the Conference has been hostage to one subject, while we have other agenda items. We fully support starting negotiations on nuclear disarmament, on negative security assurances and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and also on an FMCT, provided that it covers the stockpiles of already produced material. So that means that we do not have a problem with the negotiation of all four core issues.

We really would like to use this opportunity to wash our eyes, to see the situation from different angles. We need to get past this situation and the presumption which prevails from the cold war. We have to put aside all these requirements, which mainly related to the situation of an international order which mainly had polarity. We believe that we have passed that age, and that is why we also support starting negotiations on a fourth special session on disarmament.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement. I now give the floor to the last speaker on my list, the distinguished representative of Australia, Mr. Paul Wilson.

**Mr. Wilson (Australia):** Mr. President, I assure you I will be brief. I wish to thank you for your leadership during your presidency, and I also wish to welcome the Turkish Ambassador.

I will leave it for the informal meeting to make more detailed comments, but I just wish to say simply that Australia strongly supports the Secretary-General's initiative in calling the high-level meeting. Australia strongly supports his prerogative to do so and to present a summary of the meeting.

We see the high-level meeting as an opportunity. We should welcome it. We should not waste it, and we should maintain an open mind about its potential value, both in the immediate and in the longer term. We should also use it to reflect on certain realities which we have seen in this place over 13 years.

The only other comment I wish to make — and as I said, I shall leave it for the informal meeting to make more detailed comments — is simply that I welcome the cross-regional expression of views that we have seen during this meeting.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Australia for his statement. Before making my concluding remarks, I would like to give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference for a technical announcement.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations):** For those delegations who were not able to hear the information that we provided on behalf of the Secretary-General, I would like to inform you that the President of the Conference on Disarmament will speak along with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the General Assembly.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference for his announcement. So now before concluding, just a few words.

Thank you very much for the discussions. Thank you, all speakers. I think it was a good discussion, although not previewed on our agenda for today. On a preliminary basis, I could say that this was the last plenary session of the Bulgarian presidency. I have the feeling that this has been the longest-lasting plenary meeting, at least this year. Thank you for the intellectual efforts made by the speakers in order to have this discussion.

With regard to the “informal informals”, as I have already mentioned, I had the intention to convene and hold this meeting today. I was requested by a regional group to postpone the “informal informal” meeting. I am still willing to hold such a meeting, which I understand is the wish of the whole body. The only realistic possibility to hold such a meeting is maybe the day after tomorrow. I am speaking about the Bulgarian presidency, although there are other conflicting meetings on Thursday, 26 August. I will take my decision after consultations with you through the regional coordinators. I do not want to have another situation like today, convening a meeting and then being asked to postpone it. I think that I am very clear in my message.

I would be grateful if the regional coordinators would contact me by tomorrow, and tomorrow I will take my decision and I will communicate my decision on whether, and if so when, there will be the “informal informal” meeting.

I thank you very much for your attention.

The meeting is adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*