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# Conference on Disarmament

21 June 2011

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## **Letter of 16 June 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Austria addressed to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament transmitting the common statement of 29 delegations to the Conference of Disarmament on the HLM follow-up debate in the General Assembly, delivered on 9 June 2011**

Let me take the opportunity to congratulate you on the assumption of your post and wish you all the best for your tenure as Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and Secretary-General of the CD.

I had the honor to deliver a statement on June 9 2011 at the informal plenary that dealt with the question of the revitalization of the CD on behalf of 29 delegations to the Conference on Disarmament.

In the light of avoiding unnecessary repetition I would like to briefly refer to this statement at the formal plenary today (16.06.2011) and would kindly request the CD Secretariat to circulate the attached text – as delivered on 9 June and make it an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

*(Signed):* Christian Strohal  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

## **Common statement of 29 delegations to the Conference of Disarmament on the HLM follow- up debate in the General Assembly**

**(as presented at the informal plenary meeting on 9 June 2011)**

1. Mr. Christian Strohal, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Austria, took the floor on behalf of the following delegations to the Conference on Disarmament: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.
2. Ambassador Strohal thanked the President for tabling the question of how to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Indeed, ever since the High-Level Meeting on the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations of 24 September 2010, this question had been a major issue of discussion not only in Geneva but also in the General Assembly.
3. On 18 April 2011 a letter on behalf of 49 UN member states was submitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations and to the President of the General Assembly to request a plenary debate of the General Assembly under agenda item 162, on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations.
4. The States that signed the letter expressed their view that the impasse of the Conference on Disarmament has to be addressed at the UNGA and that intensified efforts and more flexibility are needed to allow the immediate start of substantive work.
5. This debate at the General Assembly is scheduled for 27 July 2011. CD delegations should therefore seize this opportunity to discuss meaningful input for the discussions in New York.
6. Given the lack of progress on agreeing on a programme of work that would enable the CD to start negotiations there is no need to pretend that the CD is busy implementing its mandate. The CD has been blocked for more than a decade and consensus on engaging in negotiations has, unfortunately, not been achieved.
7. On the one hand States should examine the working methods of the Conference, including its procedures and operational principles that put heavy constraints on this body. On the other hand should the CD not be able to start substantive work, States will have to look also for further steps to overcome this stalemate in the Conference. The debate in the General Assembly as well as discussions in and with the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters should reflect on all aspects of the Conference's impasse.
8. The 29 delegations to the CD are hopeful that the debate in the General Assembly will provide a suitable platform to discuss in an inclusive manner, inter alia, possible future options for breaking the stalemate, and ideas on how to take forward multilateral disarmament negotiations. The time has come to discuss this issue in a forward-looking and concrete manner, in order to heed to the calls made at the High-Level Meeting.
9. The effective functioning of multilateral disarmament institutions is vital for our security. The long-term deadlock of core disarmament forums such as the CD poses a serious problem and has to come to an end. All States have been called upon to address this problem now.

10. The 29 delegations to the CD stand ready to work with all delegations on further steps to make these suggestions more concrete and operational, so that the Presidency, and the CD, can take a positive message to the General Assembly.

11. Ambassador Strohal thanked the President once more for the questionnaire and the presentation of it by UNIDIR.

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