

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

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

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 6 February 2007, at 10.10 a.m.

President: Ms. Glaudine MTSHALI (South Africa)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1051st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have the following speakers for today's plenary meeting: Germany, on behalf of the EU, the United States of America, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic, Germany, on behalf of the EU, Egypt, Pakistan, Peru and Japan.

I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, on behalf of the EU, Ambassador Brasack.

Mr. BRASACK (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate Ambassador Strømme of Norway and Ambassador Trezza of Italy on their assumption of the posts of coordinator for item 1 and item 2 of our agenda, respectively. The EU would like to assure you, Madam President, as well as all the coordinators, of our full support in your efforts to guide and lead our work.

Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control remain indispensable elements of cooperative security between States.

We stress the need for an overall reduction of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons in accordance with article VI of the NPT, in particular by those with the largest arsenals, while acknowledging the considerable nuclear arms reductions which have taken place since the end of the cold war, in particular by two EU member States.

We note with concern that serious nuclear proliferation events have occurred in recent years.

We recognize the application of the principle of irreversibility to guide all measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control, as a contribution to the maintenance and enforcement of international peace, security and stability, taking these conditions into account.

The EU notes that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which reduced the United States' and Russia's strategic nuclear weapons arsenal to 6,000 accountable warheads, is due to expire in 2009. We welcomed the ratification of the Moscow Treaty by the Russian Federation and the United States of America in 2002, while at the same time stressing the need for more progress in reducing their arsenals. We also note that the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, which limits each side to no more than 1,700-2,200 deployed strategic nuclear warheads, will expire on 31 December 2012. The EU welcomes the reductions in deployed nuclear weapons which START and the Moscow Treaty have brought about, and stresses the need for more progress in structurally reducing these nuclear arsenals through the appropriate follow-on processes. We would welcome a further continuation of the above processes represented, inter alia, by a bilateral follow-on agreement to the expiring START I Treaty.

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The EU highlights the need to implement the declarations made by the Presidents of Russia and the United States of America in 1991 and 1992 on unilateral reductions in their stocks of non-strategic nuclear weapons and calls on all States with non-strategic nuclear weapons to include them in their arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination.

We are also pursuing efforts to secure transparency as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress in disarmament.

In addition, the EU calls on all States concerned to take appropriate practical measures in order to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war.

The EU recognizes the importance, from the point of view of nuclear disarmament, of the programmes for the physical protection of the destruction and elimination of nuclear weapons and of fissile material as defined under the G-8 Global Partnership. The EU recalls that EU member States and the European Community participate in this effort, which entails, inter alia, the deactivation of thousands of nuclear warheads, the dismantlement of nuclear submarines, and efforts to convert military stockpiles into a form no longer usable in nuclear weapons.

The EU believes the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT are essential for global peace and security. The NPT is the cornerstone of this regime, based on three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We believe it is as important today as it was when first agreed almost 40 years ago. In the face of today's challenges it is of paramount importance to preserve the integrity and authority of the NPT by pursuing all the objectives laid down in the Treaty in a structured and balanced manner, as identified and recorded in the EU Council Common Position that we adopted prior to the Review Conference on 25 April 2005, by which the EU stands.

We also continue to work towards universal adherence to the NPT. The possession of nuclear weapons by States outside the NPT and non-compliance with the Treaty's provisions by States party to the Treaty risk undermining non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Therefore the EU continues, in accordance with the Common Position of 25 April 2005 mentioned above, to call on all States not party to the NPT to pledge commitments to non-proliferation and disarmament and to call on those States to become States parties to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

Furthermore, we call on all States for universal accession to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols.

The EU regrets that the Review Conference of the NPT in 2005 was unable to agree on a substantive final document to address the most pressing challenges to the Treaty. The Review Conference of 2010 is a new opportunity and therefore we will put all our efforts into making this a success. The EU is looking forward to the first Preparatory Committee meeting of the next

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NPT Review Conference in 2007, which will take place in Vienna. We will contribute actively to a successful outcome of that meeting. In our view, during the next NPT review cycle, tangible results will have to be produced on all three pillars of the NPT to reinforce the non-proliferation regime and disarmament efforts. We therefore look forward to discussing those topics with all parties.

The EU reaffirms its strong support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which we consider as one of the pivotal pillars in the non-proliferation and disarmament framework, together with an FMCT and as part of the 1995 agreement by States parties to the NPT. Therefore the EU attaches the utmost importance to the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date.

The EU continues to call on States, particularly Annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and without conditions. Last year's tenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT reminded us all of the need to redouble our efforts to complete the outstanding ratifications required for the Treaty to enter into force. The EU believes that a legally binding prohibition of nuclear-weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, as well as a credible verification regime, are vital. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, we urge all States to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions which are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the Treaty.

The EU attaches clear priority to the negotiation, at the Conference on Disarmament, of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices, as a means to strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation. Here, at present, in the CD, it is obvious that among the nuclear issues an FMCT is the nearest negotiating opportunity and priority that waits to be seized.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Germany for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Christina Rocca.

Ms. ROCCA (United States of America): The agenda item we are dealing with today is titled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". The title of my remarks today, however, is "Creating the environment necessary for nuclear disarmament". I have chosen this title for a reason. The nuclear arms race ended 15 years ago. It ground to a halt with the end of the cold war and since then we have seen a reduction in nuclear warheads by the chief cold war protagonists on a scale unimaginable not so long ago. The question before us, therefore, is not stopping a race that for most of us no longer exists. Rather, it is how we prevent the emergence of new regional nuclear arms races, and create the environment necessary to complete the process of nuclear disarmament.

For too long, many have taken the easy path of relegating all responsibility in this regard to the nuclear-weapons States. That may be politically convenient, but it ignores the reality of the world in which we live today. The NPT never envisaged complete nuclear disarmament without

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regard to the international security environment. Indeed, just the opposite is true. The treaty wisely makes clear that complete nuclear disarmament is contingent on an improvement in the overall security environment. And in that regard, every State party to the NPT has a responsible role to play in fulfilling the promise of article VI.

In article VI, States parties committed themselves, among other things, to ending the nuclear arms race at an early date. Thankfully, this has been accomplished. Lest there be any doubts that the arms race between the nuclear super-Powers is now over, or about our intentions, let me remind you where the United States is going and what it has accomplished since the end of the cold war. By 2012, the United States nuclear stockpile will be reduced to nearly one quarter of what it was at the end of the cold war, and United States operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads will be reduced to about one third of 2001 levels. These reductions include our most modern systems, the Peacekeeper ICBM, which has already been completely deactivated, and the removal from service of four Trident ballistic missile submarines. In all, over 1,000 strategic missiles and bombers and 450 ICBM silos have been eliminated.

We have now fully implemented the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiative by destroying the last of over 3,000 tactical nuclear warheads. We have down-blended 58 metric tons of highly enriched uranium (HEU) from our defence stockpile into reactor fuel. The United States and Russia have committed to convert a combined total of 68 metric tons (that is, 34 tons from each country) of weapon-grade plutonium into forms unusable for weapons, primarily by burning it as reactor fuel. Under a United States-Russian agreement, Russia has down-blended 292 metric tons of HEU from Russian weapons into reactor fuel. If one uses the IAEA values for “significant quantities” of nuclear material relevant to nuclear weapons, these initiatives would correspond to enough material to make over 20,000 nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia have agreed on shutting down weapons plutonium production reactors and, more recently, on dates for the shutdown of Russia’s last three production reactors and replacing them with fossil fuel plants. The United States has provided funding for over 60,000 former Soviet weapons scientists to do peaceful commercial work. We have also assisted Russia in downsizing and securing its nuclear weapons complex in a manner Russia determined to be consistent with maintaining its own security. The assistance we have provided the States of the former Soviet Union has cost the people of the United States billions of dollars. On top of all this effort and expense to date, the United States Department of Energy has asked Congress to double its budget for nuclear weapon dismantlement, so that we can reduce the backlog of nuclear warheads awaiting elimination. Numerically, the scale of disarmament by the United States and the former Soviet Union since the end of the cold war is unparalleled in history.

Despite these accomplishments, there are those that say reductions are good, but the problem is a continuing reliance on nuclear weapons, albeit at lower numbers. Yet this too fails to grasp the essence of United States nuclear policy. The United States Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), which the President approved in 2002, constituted a clean break from United States nuclear planning of the past, which relied on a strategic nuclear “triad” of land, sea and

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air-delivered nuclear weapons. The NPR established a blueprint for creating a new strategic triad that indeed includes, but significantly no longer relies solely on, nuclear weapons. This new triad consists of strike weapons, both nuclear and conventional, and kinetic and non-kinetic; active and passive defences; a responsive defence infrastructure capable of responding to new and evolving threats; and improved command, control, intelligence and planning capabilities. Providing future United States Presidents with the strategic capabilities called for in the NPR will give those Presidents more information, more options, and more time to make critical decisions, thus raising the decision threshold for use of nuclear weapons. It was precisely the new thinking embodied in the NPR that allowed for the historic reductions we are continuing today. But the impact of the NPR goes beyond these current reductions in stating that even greater reductions in nuclear weapons should be possible once the new triad is fully in place.

Nuclear weapons continue to have relevance in today's world, but that relevance is clearly not incompatible with the NPT. Indeed, until the countries of the world can create the environment necessary for nuclear weapons to be entirely eliminated - which is the ultimate aspiration of all NPT States parties - the protection which the United States extends to all its allies can actually slow nuclear proliferation and help make it less likely that new nuclear arms races will emerge. It is a historical fact that several national nuclear weapons programmes were never initiated, or were halted, because security guarantees provided by a nuclear-armed United States convinced these States not to seek nuclear weapons. Today these guarantees play no small role in helping persuade some countries that they still do not need such capabilities, despite rising threats from States that have violated their NPT commitments by establishing covert nuclear weapons programmes. In this respect, continuation of the United States nuclear umbrella is necessary under current circumstances in order to help lay the foundation for further progress in disarmament. Ultimately, however, the objective of all States should be to create an environment in which it is no longer necessary for anyone to rely upon nuclear weapons for security.

So, what is the environment necessary for ongoing reductions in nuclear weapons to continue to their logical conclusion? What kind of international security situation must exist? One could postulate that such a security situation includes clear and full compliance on the part of all States with their international obligations, particularly those under the NPT. It requires a world in which the community of nations works together to ensure that their territories do not provide safe haven for terrorists or the trafficking of WMD and the materials to produce them. Presumably there also would be some sort of assurances against the reconstitution of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons capabilities, as well as the development of the means by which any security requirements that might remain after nuclear disarmament could be met in non-nuclear military ways - if, indeed, such disarmament were to be contemplated prior to achievement of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. It certainly requires a world in which States do not see increases in their security as a zero-sum equation requiring less security on the part of others. Fundamentally, we are talking about a world in which the lessening of international tension and the strengthening of international trust make it possible for us all to transcend the competitive military dynamics and concerns that have helped encourage reliance

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upon nuclear weapons to date. Such circumstances are not easy to achieve. But they are not unimaginable, and the NPT makes clear that all States parties are committed to this ultimate goal.

Every State has a role to play in establishing this environment, both as sovereign national actors and through multilateral efforts. In confronting the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, the fundamental building block of success is national efforts to control the dangers of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and the delivery systems for such weapons. Multilateral institutions and multilateral instruments cannot by themselves substitute for the exercise by sovereign governments of their responsibility to prevent the proliferation of those weapons. Multilateral institutions and multilateral instruments can establish legal obligations and norms, provide assistance and encouragement to those requesting help to comply with these norms, and impose consequences for violations of the norms. But sovereign States ultimately have the responsibility and, in most cases, the capability to act to stem WMD proliferation.

The United States will continue to remove nuclear weapons from its deployed stockpile in accordance with our announced plan of reductions, even as we work with the international community to create the conditions for the realization of our shared objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world. One area ripe for our collective effort is the rapid conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. While most of the nuclear-weapons States long ago declared a moratorium on production, it is clear that complete and irreversible nuclear reductions cannot be achieved absent this measure becoming global. I urge my colleagues here to join me in a renewed effort to achieve a measure for which we all express support.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for her statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco, Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki.

Mr. LOULICHKI (Morocco) (spoke in French): Madam President, allow me first of all to extend my sincere congratulations to you on the efficient way you have been chairing the Conference on Disarmament and say how happy I am to see a sister from Africa wisely guiding the proceedings of one of the main multilateral bodies in the international community.

Following the initiative of the six Presidents for the 2007 session, this year again, for want of anything better, we are repeating the experience of having thematic debates on all the items on the agenda of our Conference. In the absence of consensus on a programme of work, this remains a useful and relevant step to take, and we are sure that with the help of the coordinators you have appointed, you will bring us closer to our ultimate objective, namely, the launching of negotiations on substantive issues; you can rely on our support and full cooperation to that end.

(Mr. Loulichki, Morocco)

The Kingdom of Morocco has signed and ratified all the multilateral instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction and continues to work for general and complete disarmament, and particularly for irreversible, transparent and verifiable nuclear disarmament. We are convinced that as long as nuclear weapons exist, there can be no real security or effective stability, either regionally or internationally. More than 15 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the ideological and strategic stand-off between the two blocs, the use of the 27,000-odd nuclear weapons worldwide could at any time lead to disaster on an unimaginable scale. The fact that many of these weapons are actively deployed and on permanent alert makes these risks more of a source of concern and makes our responsibility all the greater.

Even ignoring the risk that they might be used, nuclear weapons deprive nations which possess them, or seek to obtain them, of financial, technical and human resources which would allow them to resolve other major problems facing mankind. As the new Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, said in his message to the Conference at the beginning of this session, world military spending now exceeds \$1,000 billion, or 2.5 per cent of the GDP of all countries, or two and a half times the amount which would be necessary to effectively implement the Millennium Development Goals, which the international community has repeatedly undertaken to reach.

The Kingdom of Morocco, which is deeply attached to the virtues of dialogue and consultation, believes that given the current state of positions and perceptions, only a step-by-step strategy focused on the achievement of practical and gradual objectives can enable us to move forward towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The first element of this approach is the strengthening of existing international instruments, and particularly the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible and the effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in a context of strict compliance with the three pillars of that instrument, namely the obligation for the nuclear Powers to work for general and complete disarmament, the need for non-nuclear-weapon States to fully abide by their commitments on non-proliferation, and the recognized right to make peaceful use of nuclear energy. It is also timely to reaffirm the relevance of the final documents of the 1995 and 2000 NPT review conferences, which unfortunately have been only inadequately and sporadically applied, as was the case in particular for the 1995 decision on the Middle East and the 13 practical steps adopted in 2000, calling in particular for the immediate establishment of an appropriate subsidiary body in the Conference on Disarmament to study the question of nuclear disarmament and prepare a convention on the subject.

The risks of traditional military confrontation have been compounded by new, complex and often interrelated threats, first and foremost among which is terrorism, particularly nuclear terrorism. The existence of nuclear materials in rogue hands, the confirmation of a black market in dual-purpose techniques and substances, the chronic crisis afflicting the multilateral bodies responsible for disarmament and non-proliferation, together with the development and unprecedented accessibility of communications technologies as well as an international situation which is unstable or even explosive in some regions, exacerbate these risks and offer a challenge

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to us all. In order to face this global threat of limitless devastation and cruelty, close, concerted and coordinated international cooperation is more vital than ever - strengthened, multidimensional cooperation bringing together political commitment, legal underpinnings and specific operational activities.

It is in this context that my country hosted the first meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which was held on 30 and 31 October 2006 in Rabat with the participation of 13 countries plus the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This initiative, announced on 15 July 2006 by United States President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the G-8 summit, is intended in particular to improve accounting and control of nuclear and radioactive substances as well as their protection and that of nuclear facilities in order to prevent nuclear terrorist activities. The initiative is also intended to create a network of partner nations to address this form of terrorist threat and to prevent and combat any use of nuclear materials for terrorist purposes by taking advantage of technological breakthroughs deriving from globalization. In the long run, it should encourage countries which sign up to it to detect and destroy illicit activities, respond to acts of nuclear terrorism and minimize their consequences as far as possible, and promote cooperation in the development of new techniques for combating this scourge.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism is a part of the thinking which has always prevailed in my country's policy in this field, namely, strict compliance with international law and respect for the rules laid down by the United Nations and particularly international conventions and resolutions adopted by the Security Council, voluntary commitments and finally the right of access to the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies. The individual and collective efforts of the members of the international community to fight international terrorism will not, however, be able to fully achieve their targets unless they go beyond the purely security context and become part of a firmly global and multidimensional approach, tackling the deep-rooted causes of this phenomenon by settling regional and international conflicts, combating injustice, frustration and poverty, establishing partnership in solidarity which is committed to sustainable development, promoting the dialogue among cultures, religions and civilizations and encouraging the efforts of countries themselves to consolidate the rule of law and democracy, including the protection and promotion of human rights, naturally.

That is what we will need to do to ensure that international peace, security and stability are not only preserved but also strengthened, and it is to this end that the Kingdom of Morocco has undertaken, under the guidance of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, to establish a regional policy of dialogue and partnership and to make a positive contribution to the efforts of the international community in order to bring about a world where ourselves and generations to come can all feel safe.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Morocco for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, Mr. Khalil Bitar.

Mr. BITAR (Syrian Arab Republic) (spoke in Arabic): Madam President I should like, first of all, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference and to assure you of our full cooperation as a delegation and as one of the presidents of the 2007 session of the CD.

In order to bring this Conference out of the impasse in which it has been stuck for many years and to enable it to play its role as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, and to deal thus with the real threats to international peace and security, we should like to reaffirm the following issues. Firstly, there is the need to adopt a comprehensive and balanced programme of work entailing the establishment of subsidiary bodies to negotiate the four core issues on the agenda: nuclear disarmament, preventing nuclear war, preventing an arms race in outer space, and negative security assurances.

Secondly, the CD membership must be opened up to all States Members, since the CD deals with issues of concern to the whole of the international community.

Thirdly, the participation of civil society in the work of the CD must be enforced. The non-governmental organizations active in the field of disarmament should be able to make statements at the CD. As a first step, we look forward to honouring the consensus reached in the 2006 session on allowing an NGO representative to address the CD directly on the occasion of International Women's Day.

In the coming days, the Conference will discuss the issues of nuclear disarmament and prevention of nuclear war. This discussion follows the failure of the seventh NPT Review Conference and the World Summit to reach agreement on measures or commitments aimed at achieving disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular. Therefore, and because nuclear disarmament is a top priority, we should like to recall some facts:

Firstly, at its very first session in January 1946, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1 (1) establishing a commission to deal with problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy. The General Assembly requested the commission to make specific proposals for the elimination of atomic weapons and of all other weapons of mass destruction. Since then, nuclear arsenals have grown in quantity and quality a thousand fold.

Secondly, as stated in the preamble of General Assembly resolution 61/83 of 6 December 2006, on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, "the continuing existence of nuclear weapons poses a threat to all of humanity", "their use would have catastrophic consequences for all life on earth", and "the only defence against a nuclear catastrophe is the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the certainty that they will never be produced again".

Thirdly, at its sixty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/97, on a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons requesting the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations in order to reach agreement on an international

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convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. It is time for the CD to establish a subsidiary body, under item 2 of its agenda, to negotiate such a convention.

Based on the foregoing, we express our deep concern with respect to the following issues. Firstly, the nuclear-weapon States have failed to honour their obligations and to abide by General Assembly resolutions and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice by commencing negotiations for the total elimination of nuclear weapons subject to open and effective international monitoring.

Secondly, military doctrines are still being propagated which focus on the possible use of nuclear weapons and threats of use of these weapons by some nuclear-weapon States.

Thirdly, some nuclear-weapon States continue to build their arsenals, both quantitatively and qualitatively, developing tactical nuclear weapons and threatening to use them in what constitutes a grave breach of prior commitments and obligations under international law and international humanitarian law.

Fourthly, some States have used ammunitions containing depleted uranium in the Balkans, Iraq and Lebanon. A recent report proved that enriched uranium was used by Israel during its war on Lebanon in the summer of 2006.

Fifthly, some States concentrate entirely on non-proliferation, in a highly selective way, practising a policy of double standards that denies the inalienable right of all States to use nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

The absence of security and stability in the Middle East, owing to the ongoing Israeli occupation of Arab territory in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine and Israel's rejection of the Arab peace initiative, should motivate the international community to take action, without delay, to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons.

The States parties to the NPT, at the 1995 Review Conference, agreed to extend the Treaty indefinitely in exchange for the adoption of a resolution on making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In the period between the 1995 and 2000 review conferences, Arab States non-parties to the NPT acceded to the Treaty and the 2000 Review Conference welcomed inter alia the accession of all Arab States to the NPT and called on Israel, the only State in the Middle East not yet to have acceded to the NPT, to do so and to place all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime.

In that connection, we should like to point out that, in 2006, for the twenty-seventh year in succession, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/56 calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The General Assembly has also consistently adopted a resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", which receives overwhelming support. The General Assembly also adopted resolution 61/103, in

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which it notes that Israel remains the only State in the Middle East that is not a party to the NPT and it reaffirms the importance of Israel's accession to the NPT and placement of all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime.

Israel, however, persists in its refusal to place its nuclear facilities under the IAEA safeguards regime, in spite of the grave threat that these facilities pose to the security of the States of the region. In flagrant defiance of the wishes, values and laws of the international community, Israel has deliberately buried nuclear waste in the occupied Syrian Golan.

The admission by the Israeli Prime Minister that Israel possesses nuclear weapons increases our concern, because of the threat that these weapons pose to regional and international peace and security. We therefore call upon the Conference to give this matter the attention that it serves and we call upon all States to desist from supplying Israel with nuclear technology and to bring pressure to bear upon Israel to join the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to place all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime, subject to the imposition of international sanctions, in accordance with international law, in case of non-compliance.

Syria, in the framework of the League of Arab States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations, has worked to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction, primarily nuclear weapons. In this respect, we should like to recall the many Arab initiatives that have been launched, the most recent being the initiative which Syria presented to the Security Council on behalf of the Arab group in December 2003. The initiative, which takes the form of a draft resolution on making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, is still in blue on the Security Council table. The draft resolution has not been adopted simply because some members of the Security Council blocked it for political reasons that have nothing to do with protecting international peace and security. We take this opportunity to call upon these States to review their position and to support this initiative, because it would be a major step towards achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, Ambassador Bernhard Brasack, who will speak on behalf of the EU.

Mr. BRASACK (Germany): Thank you very much, Madam President, for your indulgence of giving Germany the second opportunity this morning. This time this is about an EU statement on an FMCT.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate Ambassador Strømme of Norway and Ambassador Trezza of Italy on the assumption of their posts of coordinators, respectively, for item 1 and item 2 of our agenda. The EU would like to assure you, Madam President, as well as all coordinators, of our full support in your efforts to guide and lead our work.

(Mr. Brasack, Germany)

The CD has been debating the issue of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT) for a long time, with a particular intensification of its deliberations during last year's structured and focused debates.

The EU continues to attach clear priority to the negotiation, at the Conference on Disarmament, of an FMCT as a means to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and thus international security, as the EU said in the CD on 30 March 2006 and 26 May 2006 and at the First Committee of the sixty-first United Nations General Assembly on 10 October 2006. This was also made clear in the Common Position adopted by the EU relating to the NPT Review Conference on 25 April 2005, and by which the EU stands.

The EU is convinced that an FMCT, by banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, will strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and will constitute a significant achievement in nuclear disarmament efforts in accordance with article VI of the NPT. Logically, an FMCT constitutes the next multilateral instrument to be negotiated in the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament field. An FMCT would have beneficial consequences beyond those that pertain to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, including reducing the risk of theft or diversion to terrorist groups or activities. This consideration is increasingly pertinent in today's security environment.

The EU would like to see an early commencement of negotiations on an FMCT. In advance of such negotiations, however, there is an opportunity to discuss some of the issues that will inevitably be of greatest interest. This would help to prepare us for the negotiations that we hope will follow.

The EU supports the outline proposed by the coordinator. The EU and its member States will actively participate in the work. We acknowledge that CD members might have differing views on some of these individual issues; we should nevertheless address all relevant questions, and we should do so openly, constructively and with the necessary sense of realism.

In addition to the outline proposed by the coordinator, we would like to suggest also treating the following issues: review and amendment, and eligibility for signature and arrangements for accession after entry into force.

We are encouraged by the new momentum on starting the FMCT negotiations that developed in the CD last year and call on all parties to make this possible. We welcome the fact that the United States has contributed to this momentum through the submission of a draft treaty and a draft mandate. Contributing to the momentum last year was the active participation of delegations during the FMCT focused, structured debate, the presence of experts, the presentation of papers and the participation of IAEA. We need to build on these achievements.

It is our responsibility to increase this momentum in the CD, generated by this year's P-6 proposal for an organizational framework, with a view to agreeing on a negotiation mandate without delay.

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Starting negotiations on an FMCT and thus getting the Conference on Disarmament back to substantive work would also be a clear signal that the CD is back to fulfilling its function as the single multilateral forum at the disposal of the international community for disarmament negotiations. Such an effective forum is all the more important against the backdrop of the security challenges that we are facing today. In addition, starting negotiations on an FMCT would clearly also have a significant positive impact on the next NPT review process, which starts at the end of April with the first session of the Preparatory Committee in Vienna.

The EU continues to call for the immediate commencement of negotiations as well as the early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, universally applicable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, without preconditions, and bearing in mind the Special Coordinator's report and the mandate contained therein.

Pending the entry into force of an FMCT, the EU calls on all States to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such moratoria would significantly contribute to regional and international security. Furthermore, they would facilitate negotiations on an FMCT. We welcome the action of those four States which have decreed such moratoria and urge others to follow suit.

The EU is encouraged by the current efforts in the CD, which should help break the stalemate that has lasted nearly a decade and prevented the CD from taking forward meaningful work. Logically, an FMCT constitutes the next multilateral instrument to be negotiated in the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament field, and it is overdue.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Germany, speaking on behalf of the EU, for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Sameh Shoukry.

Mr. SHOUKRY (Egypt): Madam President, since this is the first time I personally address the Conference during this session, it gives me great pleasure to extend my congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I would like to assure you and all the Presidents of the Conference of my delegation's full support during the year as you embark on a difficult mission to revive the Conference and commence its substantive work. Egypt welcomes the adoption of the agenda of the Conference on 24 January, and we assure you of our readiness to engage constructively during the deliberations.

Nuclear disarmament remains Egypt's top priority in the Conference on Disarmament. As a major pillar of our foreign policy, we have consistently dedicated a substantial portion of our energy and commitment to nuclear disarmament, emanating from a long-standing and solid belief that nuclear weapons, with all the destructive power they possess, can only terrorize and intimidate nations, never build regional confidence nor international peace. At a time when the international community faces serious security concerns, the need for accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments is becoming ever more pressing. It is for this reason that we strongly believe that nuclear disarmament must remain at the forefront of the Conference's work in its new session.

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

Egypt is extremely disturbed due to the current regrettable lack of substantial progress to implement article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which calls on the parties to the NPT to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament. It is lamentable that after 39 years of the NPT's existence, nuclear arsenals remain at levels capable of global annihilation. At the same time, the nuclear-weapon States continue to advocate their doctrine of nuclear deterrence, thereby negating any real intention to strive towards complete nuclear disarmament. The emphasis on arms control and the bilateral efforts, which at the time were hailed as achievements, cannot be regarded as an alternative to the implementation of the commitments contained in article VI. This is even more so the case as the nuclear-weapon States continue to seemingly reflect a lack of keenness towards substantially reducing their nuclear arsenals with the overall objective of eliminating them completely and thereby getting rid of the world's most lethal weapon. Such lack of enthusiasm can only cultivate a culture of general disregard for the principles that govern the treaty. Once again, we call upon the nuclear-weapon States to take serious, immediate steps to fulfil their obligations under article VI of the NPT in order to constructively contribute towards strengthening the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We also reaffirm our support for the G-21's proposals, as contained in documents CD/1570 and CD/1571 on the programme of work and the draft decision and mandate for the establishment of an ad hoc committee under agenda item 1 to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Its three pillars, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, constitute an important foundation in maintaining international peace and security. It is imperative that we all stand collectively to uphold its principles and seek to achieve its noble objectives, particularly at a time when we regrettably witness efforts to gradually erode its credibility. Clearly, the NPT is undermined not only by those who consistently refuse to join it, but also by its very States parties, whether through lack of adherence to its provisions or simple complacency in striving to achieve its universality. Consequently, we call on all States parties to spare no effort to achieve the universality of the NPT and urge States which are not members of the treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions. The universality of the NPT is the only guarantee to preserve the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Moreover, we are detecting the negative effects of attempts by some of the States party to the NPT to depart from already agreed commitments approved during previous NPT review conferences, particularly the commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 review conferences. We would like to express our disappointment and regret for the laxity of compliance and implementation of the pledges made in those two conferences and believe that the continued insistence to disregard previous commitments can only pave the way for dire consequences.

The 2000 Review Conference was a significant milestone in our endeavours towards nuclear disarmament. Its Final Document established concrete obligations for States parties to ensure the successful completion of the Treaty's objectives, including the nuclear-weapon

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

States' unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, outlining the 13 practical steps necessary to implement article VI of the NPT. We would like to reiterate the centrality of the 13 practical steps, which in our view represent an internationally endorsed road map to fulfil the obligations of nuclear disarmament. It is our expectation that the nuclear-weapon States implement the very steps that they endorsed at the 2000 Review Conference. To do otherwise would signal a disregard of the review process and the obligations of the treaty itself.

It is also unfortunate that some States continue to intentionally overlook and deliberately disregard the crucial reality that the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 was intrinsically linked to the decisions and resolution adopted at the 1995 Review Conference, thereby facilitating the indefinite extension of the NPT by consensus. Twelve years after this landmark event, commitments undertaken there are far from implemented. We must faithfully strive to rectify this situation before its adverse effects further contribute towards the erosion of the credibility of the treaty and its future relevance.

In this regard, Egypt has placed great importance on the Middle East resolution co-sponsored by the three depositaries of the Treaty and adopted by consensus in 1995. The resolution testifies to the fact that the situation in the region warrants exceptional consideration. Since the adoption of the resolution, we have not registered any truly active and tangible efforts of the international community, particularly from those States which have a particular, responsibility towards preserving international peace and security, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Israel, the first country in the Middle East to initiate an aggressive nuclear programme, remains the sole country in the region that refuses to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, rejects international inspection of its nuclear facilities and refuses to place these facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards. It is increasingly important for the international community to realize that Israel's continued refusal to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and its professed nuclear-weapons capability represent a direct challenge and threat to the credibility of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Treaty. This, as other threats, must be dealt with decisively and with the same degree of commitment so as to reverse the rightful impression of selective and discriminatory policies.

Egypt will not subscribe to the reverse of logic that Israel and its few supporters attempt to propagate, claiming that peace and stability in the Middle East is a prerequisite for tackling the issue of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. Such logic can only provide justification for the proliferation in every instance of international tension and conflict. Israel's nuclear capability has not solved its security predicament. It simply serves as a major catalyst for an arms race in the Middle East and the increased threat of nuclear proliferation.

As we soon embark on a new review cycle of the NPT commencing in late April of this year in Vienna, we would like to assure member States that Egypt will relentlessly persist in upholding and implementing previous agreed commitments, particularly those approved in 1995 and 2000. It is imperative that the NPT Review Conference 2010 should build on its past and not deviate from it. We must continue to be guided by the conviction that these commitments

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

represent a solid road map in strengthening our disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Our support and assistance in achieving the interests of others will be highly dependent on the reciprocal, equivalent support and understanding we receive from others towards our own interests.

I wish to conclude by expressing our sincere hope that the current session of the CD is ready to shoulder its responsibilities as the only international multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament in taking substantive steps towards achieving one of its primary objectives; that is, nuclear disarmament. We currently live in a volatile, unstable world and the eradication of these destructive weapons is more pressing than ever. I reiterate that the delegation of Egypt will spare no effort to support any serious attempts towards achieving this objective.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ms. Tehmina Janjua.

Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan): Madam President, it is with great pleasure that I would like to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. The speed with which we have started the work of the CD this year is the result of meticulous planning by you, your delegation and the P-6.

We look forward to discussions in the intense period of activity in the next few weeks by the coordinators appointed by the P-6. We hope that this process will help achieve consensus on the CD's programme of work.

We also hope that the level of interest in the first item on nuclear disarmament, to be considered today in informal discussions, will be as high as in the other items to be considered later. After all, we are in the Conference on Disarmament. The CD was conceived to pursue the disarmament agenda, to avert nuclear war and to seek measures for the security of all peoples.

The question of nuclear disarmament has been discussed at length in the CD, in the context of the NPT and has also been the subject of an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice. Last year's comprehensive debate in the CD on nuclear disarmament brought forth some new proposals. The preamble of the NPT and its article VI reflect the commitment of the international community to take effective measures for nuclear disarmament and to pursue negotiations in good faith in this regard. The objective identified in the NPT is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Nuclear disarmament should therefore remain the priority issue for the CD.

Some progress has been made in nuclear disarmament. Yet concerns remain regarding: (a) the impression that with the indefinite extension of the NPT, most nuclear-weapon States presume a permanent right to retain nuclear weapons; (b) there are still too many nuclear weapons, with the bulk of them possessed by very few nations; (c) new and sophisticated devices are being developed or experimented; and (d) increasing emphasis on nuclear weapons in security doctrines undercuts the logic of disarmament.

(Ms. Janjua, Pakistan)

The G-21 has put forward its views as contained in CD/1570 and CD/1571, proposing the mechanism for addressing nuclear disarmament in order to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention. The CD needs to seriously revisit this proposal.

In this context, the following security and political considerations need to be taken into account: nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should be pursued simultaneously and not sequentially. Credible steps by the nuclear-weapon States within a reasonable time frame are essential to restoring a genuine balance between disarmament and non-proliferation.

The concepts of “nuclear supremacy” or the prominence of nuclear weapons in security doctrines set off a destabilizing chain reaction and conventional arms race at the global and regional levels. Such concepts and their actualization increase the risk of accidental unauthorized or deliberate use of nuclear weapons.

Discrimination and asymmetric possession of WMDs would undermine non-proliferation or regional and global stability. In our region, parity is a guarantee for strategic restraint and regional stability.

The new threat of terrorists acquiring WMDs can be addressed effectively through collective and cooperative measures and specifically through general and complete disarmament.

Cooperation in the field of nuclear energy must continue to get international support under globally agreed conditions. This was part of the NPT bargain.

These points are ripe for consideration by an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament.

Pakistan is a nuclear-weapon State not by choice but in response to developments in the region. This difficult decision was taken for strategic stability in the region. We remain committed to the principles of general and complete nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

We look forward to the discussions this afternoon and later in the week to be led by Ambassador Wegger Strømme of Norway. We have great confidence in his commitment and ability to extract concrete ideas and suggestions for further work on nuclear disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Mr. Beleván.

Mr. BELEVAN (Peru) (spoke in Spanish): Madam President, as I am taking the floor for the first time since you took the Chair, allow me first to express the appreciation and support of my delegation for the efforts you have undertaken, together with the other Presidents for 2007 (the P-6), to ensure that the Conference moves further forward along the road to adoption of a programme of work. My delegation also wishes to reiterate its concern at our inability to reach agreement to overcome the difficulties facing the Conference for the past 10 years and adopt a

(Mr. Beleván, Peru)

programme of work. We understand that the timetable of activities proposed by the P-6 and accepted by all the members of the Conference seeks in 2007 to identify in a clear manner the subjects that are ready for progress towards a more intense stage of work with more clearly defined objectives. Peru will work to contribute, without raising procedural obstacles, to shaping an agreement that makes it possible to begin the substantive work of the Conference. In that sense the coordinators' duties are essential in identifying those areas in which we can progress beyond mere consultations or exchanges of information. Consequently, Madam President, I wish through you to congratulate the distinguished Ambassadors of Norway, Italy, Canada, Brazil, Bulgaria, Indonesia and the United Kingdom on the task that has been entrusted to them by the P-6. They can be sure they can count on the support of my delegation. In this connection it should be pointed out that at the end of the exercise that we shall pursue during this first part of the 2007 session, each subject should be evaluated on its own merits, taking into account the concrete proposals presented at the time it is discussed.

On this occasion, and since this is the only formal plenary meeting this week, my delegation would like to make some general remarks on the two central subjects of our informal sessions programmed for the next four days, namely, cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, and prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters. The delegation of Peru shares the opinion of many members of the Conference on the need to move forward on nuclear disarmament, one of the major issues which must be considered in accordance with the agenda we approved at the beginning of this exercise. Nonetheless, my delegation considers that the incremental approach is the most appropriate solution for restarting in a concrete manner the substantive work which will enable us to arrive at realistic solutions to the problems posed by developments on the international scene in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation - two mutually reinforcing sides of the same coin. In this regard, Peru still considers the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to be the cornerstone to avoid proliferation and achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament. We deeply regret that the States parties were not able to agree on a final document at their last Review Conference; we would have liked to see a reflection of the interesting debates that took place during the meeting. However, we consider that this outcome does not call into question the importance or the survival of the treaty itself. At the same time, we deplore the modernization of the existing nuclear arsenals of the Powers recognized by this international instrument, just as we reiterate our rejection of any development of this type of weapon by the remaining members of the international community. We also condemn the development and transfer of technologies for the delivery of weapons of mass destruction, without which they would have no value.

Peru, as a proponent of the negotiation and subsequent adoption of the Treaty of Tlatelolco for the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, considers the consolidation of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as the creation of new zones, to be of the greatest importance. This would make it possible to gradually reduce the possibility of their use.

At the same time, I wish to reiterate my country's interest in the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which we hope may contribute to the progressive reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Beleván, Peru)

In relation to the second item on the agreed timetable of activities, my delegation reiterates its flexibility on the establishment of a subsidiary body of the Conference to consider the important issue related to the negotiation of a treaty on fissile material, without any preconditions - clearly on the understanding that any subject raised by delegations in any way will be duly dealt with. Any future legally binding international instrument related to fissile material will necessarily have to fulfil the twin purposes of disarmament and non-proliferation; this will make it possible to attend to the security priorities of the whole international community. We hope that following this exercise we are beginning this afternoon, we shall be able to agree on a programme of work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Peru for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Mr. Hiraishi.

Mr. HIRAISHI (Japan): As the only nation to have experienced the devastation of nuclear attack, Japan has placed the greatest importance on nuclear disarmament. The position of the Japanese Government is clearly reflected in its annual sponsorship of the United Nations resolution, "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", which was adopted by 167 countries last year.

Each of the parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is encouraged under article VI to take further steps leading to nuclear disarmament, including deeper cuts in all types of nuclear weapons. In this connection, Japan welcomes the steady progress made by the Russian Federation and the United States, as well as the other nuclear-weapon States, on the achievement of this goal. However, while an estimated 27,000 nuclear weapons still remain in existence, the necessity for greater, tangible efforts to reduce the number of weapons appears obvious. We urge both the Russian Federation and the United States to fully implement the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (the Moscow Treaty), and to undertake cutbacks, irreversibly and verifiably, beyond those provided for in the Treaty. In this light, we are paying close attention to the bilateral talks between the Russian Federation and the United States on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Also, it is imperative that these efforts to reduce nuclear arms proceed transparently. Japan in this regard welcomed the detailed presentations made in the CD last year by the Russian Federation, the United States and other nuclear-weapon States on their nuclear disarmament efforts. We hope all the nuclear-weapon States make specific presentations on their additional progress towards nuclear disarmament during this year's discussions. In this regard, we appreciate very much the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States earlier this morning.

The nuclear-weapon States should also further reduce the operational status of nuclear-weapon systems in ways that promote international stability and security. Diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies is essential to minimizing the risk that these weapons will ever be used, and facilitates the process of their total elimination.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in recent years has faced a number of serious challenges; nevertheless, the significance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the nuclear

(Mr. Hiraishi, Japan)

disarmament and non-proliferation regime remains unchanged. In order to guide the 2010 NPT Review Conference to a successful outcome, it is critical that this year's first preparatory meeting is constructive. We would also like to take the opportunity within this particular CD session to reiterate the importance of universalizing the NPT. We strongly urge those countries not party to the Treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States without delay or preconditions.

Furthermore, the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is crucial as a step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Those countries that have yet to sign or ratify the Treaty should do so at the earliest possible date, and until the CTBT enters into force, we call for the continued observance of the moratorium on nuclear test explosions. In September last year Japan, in conjunction with Australia, Canada, Finland and the Netherlands, convened a CTBT Friends Foreign Minister Meeting in New York. The endorsement of that meeting's Joint Ministerial Statement by 70 countries proves the steadfast support for the CTBT. Additionally, in January this year the Japanese Government invited from Colombia, which has yet to ratify the CTBT, a delegation from the Colombian Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, including its Chairperson. During their visit, the Colombian delegation conducted talks with Japanese officials associated with the CTBT and toured monitoring facilities. This visit was very significant since Colombia's political will to overcome the issue of ratification was confirmed. With a view towards the fifth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in September this year, Japan is maintaining the momentum for the Treaty's early entry into force and taking every opportunity to encourage the countries that have yet to ratify it.

From the perspective of promoting these aforesaid disarmament efforts, Japan, along with the international community, strongly condemns the nuclear test proclaimed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 October 2006.

The Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme and the G-8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction are also of continued significance to the promotion of nuclear disarmament, along with non-proliferation. Within the framework of the G-8 Global Partnership, Japan assisted the Russian Government to dismantle a decommissioned nuclear submarine in the Russian Far East. Subsequently, Japan and Russia have signed an agreement to dismantle an additional five submarines.

At this stage, I would like to briefly focus our attention on the subject of disarmament and non-proliferation education. As part of our long-term efforts toward nuclear disarmament, Japan has attached great importance to disarmament and non-proliferation education. Based on the 2002 United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education, Japan has been engaged in various activities, for instance, publishing a handbook entitled "Japan's Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy", holding seminars on disarmament education and hosting disarmament educators, as well as the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme. Under the Disarmament Fellowship Programme, we have invited more than 620 young diplomats from around the world to visit Japan. We encourage each country to continue its

(Mr. Hiraishi, Japan)

own efforts in disarmament education. Furthermore, Japan highly values the work of civil society in disarmament and non-proliferation education and intends to continue its close cooperation with their activities.

Finally, I would like to re-emphasize my delegation's conviction that the main priority of the CD this year is the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (an FMCT), which will be discussed under agenda item 2, since presently it is the most realistic multilateral nuclear disarmament measure. It has been argued, both inside and outside this Conference, that an FMCT not covering existing stocks is merely a non-proliferation measure. In order to eliminate nuclear weapons, however, it is absolutely imperative that we end their production and halt the nuclear arms race. Moreover, while the CTBT institutes a qualitative cap, an FMCT will institute a quantitative cap to the production of nuclear weapons. Thus, an FMCT is primarily a measure for nuclear disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Loshchinin.

Mr. LOSHCHININ (Russian Federation) (spoke in Russian): Mr President, the Russian delegation has already had an opportunity to express its profound satisfaction at the fact that you are guiding the work of the Conference, but I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that we are ready to work together with you to achieve success and the goals which have been set for the Conference.

Concerning the current issue of the agenda, I would like to assure you once again that Russia is true to its obligations under article VI of the NPT, its obligations under agreements with the United States of America and its own unilateral initiatives in respect of nuclear disarmament. We show this in practice, and it must be said that with the end of the cold war and the change in the nature of Russian-American relations, the threat of nuclear war has significantly diminished and the bilateral arms race is now a thing of the past.

On the whole, it must be acknowledged, there are fewer and fewer nuclear weapons in the world every year. The distinguished representative of the United States, Ambassador Rocca, has presented specific figures today on nuclear disarmament carried out jointly with Russia. I will not repeat facts with which you are all familiar, and indeed, last year we submitted a large amount of detailed information on nuclear disarmament measures being taken by Russia. We also intend to be very active and to provide more detailed information as well as our position on all the basic aspects of the problem of cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament in the informal plenary meetings.

I would just like to make the following point at the moment. We all understand that non-proliferation has a very direct relationship with the issue of cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. An important measure to ensure compliance with the non-proliferation regime could be a treaty to prohibit the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. We believe that any such treaty could promote nuclear disarmament. Russia has no objection to the beginning of negotiations on an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Loshchinin, Russian Federation)

The process of and prospects for reductions in nuclear weapons are closely linked with the implementation of key agreements on arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation. Of course, these processes are influenced by various aspects of contemporary international life, including growth in the financing of military preparations in a number of countries and the appearance of new weapons systems. Certainly, the deployment of weapons in outer space would be an extremely destabilizing factor, including through the prism of nuclear disarmament. It would have serious consequences for the entire process of disarmament, arms control and international security. The Conference on Disarmament can prevent this scenario from being realized if it closes the existing gaps in international space law by means of a new treaty on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects.

We are told "There are no weapons in space, so there is nothing to talk about". That is a short-sighted policy. We were assured at one time that the expansion of NATO to the east would not be accompanied by the transfer of military infrastructure there. The reality is different. Everything is far from corresponding to what was declared.

Today, attempts are being made to convince us that plans for deploying antimissile and radar systems within a strategic antimissile defence system in some Central European countries are directed against whoever you like, even against individual terrorists, but not against Russia. Fine words, but ...

This is a very serious issue, and we are obliged to draw the appropriate conclusions. Concerning the intention to deploy strategic antimissile systems next to Russia's frontiers, as President Vladimir Putin stated quite recently, Russia's response will be asymmetrical but effective - very effective. Of course, we would very much like to avoid such a turn of events, but the key is in the hands of our partners.

I would like to emphasize: we consider that the time of the cold war is behind us, and we believe that all issues can and must be resolved through negotiations and consultations, taking into account, of course, the national security interests of all sides. And here I would like to note that we fully agree with what was said by the Ambassador of the United States of America, Ms. Rocca. I would like to quote her: "The objective of all States should be to create an environment in which it is no longer necessary for anyone to rely upon nuclear weapons for security." I agree wholeheartedly.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his statement and the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mr. Han Sung Il.

Mr. HAN (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to comment briefly on what was mentioned by the delegate of Japan just before on the nuclear tests done by my country last year.

(Mr. Han, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is firmly committed to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, as we have several times reiterated in the past.

Concerning the nuclear test, the possession of the nuclear weapon by my country is a sovereign right. We are not a member State of the NPT, and what is clear is that we - as one distinguished delegate of one country this morning has clearly mentioned, it is not our choice. We are forced to come out from the NPT and declare that we possess the nuclear weapon by the test last year against the growing threat - pre-emptive military and nuclear attack - threat by a nuclear super-Power against my country.

I would like to recommend to the delegate of Japan that the nuclear weapon of my country is not threatening to neighbouring countries, including Japan. We never threaten. This is a nuclear deterrent against a military and nuclear attack by a nuclear Power against my country in the future.

I would like to stress once again that we will do our best to liquidate all nuclear weapons in the world - of course, the ones in nuclear super-Powers and the rest of the world.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement.

I have no more speakers on my list for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? That does not seem to be the case.

I would now like to invite the Conference to take a decision on the additional request for participation in our work by a State not member of the Conference. The request is contained in CD/WP.544/Add.3, and was received from Madagascar.

May I take it that the Conference decides to invite Madagascar to participate in the work of the Conference, according to its rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Looking back briefly since commencing the 2007 session of the Conference on Disarmament, we have not only adopted our agenda during the first week of the session, but we also set in place the organizational framework that will guide our deliberations throughout the year. Furthermore, we have coordinators who, under the authority of the 2007 Presidents, will chair informal meetings on the items on the agenda in accordance with the indicative timetable of meetings that has been distributed to all CD members by the secretariat.

In the above regard, I believe that we have managed to set the stage for progress to be achieved during this year's CD session. This would not have been possible without your cooperation, and I wish to express my appreciation to all of you for your assistance and for the flexibility that you have exhibited thus far.

(The President)

On behalf of all the other 2007 CD Presidents, I invite all delegations to actively participate in, and make the most of, the informal meetings that will be chaired by the coordinators on the various agenda items.

As you are aware, the first informal meeting on agenda item 1 will commence this afternoon at 3 p.m., under the chairpersonship of Ambassador Strømme, whilst Ambassador Trezza will chair the first informal meeting on agenda item 2 on Thursday, 8 February 2007, at 10 a.m. I wish Ambassadors Strømme and Trezza, as well as all their fellow coordinators, every success with their endeavours.

The progress that can be achieved in the CD depends on its members. I therefore encourage all delegations to keep an open mind and to make the best possible use of the opportunities that exist to move the work of the Conference forward.

Regarding the forthcoming informal meetings, I have been informed by Ambassador Wibisono that due to other official duties that will require his presence outside of Switzerland, he will unfortunately not be able to chair the informal meetings under agenda item 6 on a "Comprehensive programme of disarmament" during the second half of week 5, that is to say, 22 and 23 February 2007. Therefore, these informal meetings will be chaired by Indonesia's Deputy Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Pujo.

I have been informed by the delegation of the United Kingdom that Dr. Kim Howells, the United Kingdom's Minister with responsibility for arms control and disarmament issues, will visit Geneva on 22 February 2007. In order to allow Minister Howells to address the Conference, I have requested the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements for a formal plenary meeting to be convened at 10 a.m. sharp on Thursday, 22 February 2007. The informal meeting on agenda item 6, as listed in the indicative timetable contained in document CD/2007/CRP.3, dated 2 February 2007, will follow immediately after the adjournment of the formal plenary meeting on 22 February.

I would also like to announce that due to official commitments that require my presence in South Africa, I will not be able to preside over the CD during week 4, that is, 12-16 February 2007. In terms of rule 10 of the CD's rules of procedure, my deputy for disarmament, Mr. Johann Kellerman, will stand in for me.

This concludes our business for today at this formal plenary meeting. Our next formal plenary meeting will be on Tuesday, 13 February 2007, at 10 a.m.

This plenary meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.