

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND NINETY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 4 March 2008, at 3.05 p.m.

President:

Mr. Ahmet ÜZÜMCÜ

(Turkey)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1097th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. This afternoon the Conference will be addressed by Deputy Foreign Ministers from Turkey, Japan and Ukraine. As our first speaker, I would like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Rafet Akgünay, Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey. Excellency, you have the floor.

Mr. AKGÜNAY (Turkey): It gives me great pleasure to address the Conference on Disarmament at a time when Turkey is the rotating President of this august body.

We live in a world where security has become indivisible. We all benefit from a secure environment and suffer when it is absent. On the other hand, we cannot argue that more arms would bring more security; and there lies the virtue of disarmament.

We therefore need to build consensus on measures to meet challenges or common threats. Our ability to respond efficiently to the most pressing threats to international peace and security depends heavily on how we make best use of multilateral forums, including the Conference on Disarmament. As the world's single negotiating forum for multilateral disarmament, the Conference assumes a central role in our common efforts to ensure a safer world for future generations.

Past achievements are a testimony to the expertise, knowledge and wisdom which have always been present in this historic chamber of the League of Nations. It is now time to reactivate this great potential. There are many reasons to be optimistic. Considerable momentum has been created, and there is an ever-growing desire not to lose it. There is an urgent need to reach agreement on a programme of work. Today, I am renewing once more Ankara's unequivocal commitment and determination to break the deadlock.

Now I would like to elaborate on different topics in your agenda from our national perspective.

Located in a region of particular concern with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Turkey monitors with vigilance the developments in this field and takes part in the collective efforts aimed at devising measures to reverse this alarming trend.

Turkey's security policy excludes the production and use of all kinds of WMD. We advocate global, overall disarmament and support all efforts in the field of sustaining international security through multilateral arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Turkey is a party to all international non-proliferation instruments and export control regimes and wishes to see the universalization, effective implementation and further strengthening of them.

On nuclear issues, Turkey regards the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the core of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We are fully committed to the implementation of the NPT in all its three mutually reinforcing pillars, that is, non-proliferation, disarmament and

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peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The integrity and credibility of the NPT regime require renewed commitment and equal treatment of these three pillars. We shall continue to promote issues of key importance for the sustainability of the NPT in the long term. These include universalization of the Treaty, strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards system, reinforcement of export controls and the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

Turkey is therefore dedicated to full compliance with the NPT, the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and with the Additional Protocols. We consider those Agreements and Additional Protocols as the current IAEA verification standard. We will continue to work constructively towards a substantive outcome for the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Indispensable within the NPT regime, we welcome the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones, freely arrived at. We support the establishment of an effectively verifiable zone free of WMDs and their means of delivery in the Middle East, and encourage all efforts for developing a common regional understanding on this project, with the participation of all parties concerned.

We believe that the Conference on Disarmament has a major role in nuclear issues. Turkey is encouraged by the substantive discussions which are currently taking place and wishes to further build on this momentum. We shall spare no effort to allow the Conference on Disarmament to resume its negotiating role in 2008 on a fissile material cut-off treaty, as well as parallel advances on negative security assurances, nuclear disarmament and prevention of an arms race in outer space. This body was able to conclude the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, one of the indispensable components of the NPT regime, and can finalize further instruments in this respect.

On the other categories of WMD, we treat the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) as the two other key components of the global system against the proliferation of WMD. We must maintain our efforts to promote their universalization and effective implementation.

On the equally worrying issue of delivery vehicles of WMD, Turkey is concerned with the progressive increase in the range and accuracy of ballistic missiles. In this context, we value very much the Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC) against ballistic missile proliferation, which constitutes a practical step towards an internationally accepted legal framework in this field. We wish to see the universalization of the HCOC.

Needless to say, the use of outer space and space-based research should be exclusively for peaceful purposes. Accordingly, we encourage views and proposals on strengthening the existing international legal framework directed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

Proliferation of WMD and their delivery means becomes all the more worrying in the context of terrorism. While we condemn terrorism in all its forms, which is a crime against humanity and which cannot be justified under any pretext, we need to remain vigilant about the

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risk of the acquisition by terrorists of WMD and delivery vehicles. Therefore, we are committed to combating all forms of terrorism, including possible heinous acts involving nuclear and radioactive material.

On conventional weapons, we are of the view that their proliferation is also a global concern. The excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to peace and security, as well as to the social and economic development of many countries. There is also a close relationship between the illicit trade in those arms and terrorism. Turkey will continue to actively contribute to all efforts within the United Nations and other forums to foster international cooperation and the establishment of effective norms and rules, with a view to combating and eradicating the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects. Turkey remains committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the United Nations Programme of Action on SALWs.

Cognizant of the damage small arms inflict on peace and security worldwide, Turkey will continue to support the conclusion of an arms trade treaty which aims to halt the unregulated and uncontrolled trade of arms worldwide and establish common standards for the global trade in conventional arms.

The proliferation and unauthorized use of man-portable air defence systems is another serious concern. Turkey maintains the view that the international community should act decisively to improve stockpile security and strengthen export controls in countries that import and manufacture MANPADS. With this understanding, Turkey has co-sponsored the resolution on MANPADS in the First Committee.

On indiscriminate and excessively injurious weapons, I should like to underline briefly our commitment to ending the humanitarian suffering caused by these weapons. With this aim in mind, Turkey has joined both the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on "Certain Conventional Weapons". We have also been actively contributing to international efforts to limit the humanitarian suffering caused by the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions, and therefore we participate in the work undertaken both within the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention and within the "Oslo process". Such steps are fully in line with Turkey's commitment to arms control and disarmament in general and the prohibition or restriction of weapons which may cause unnecessary suffering in particular.

My statement would not be complete without mentioning our support for the United Nations register system for conventional weapons. This tool in hand is a very useful mechanism complementing our work in this field.

In concluding, I would like to remind you of your President's final remarks in his inaugural speech two weeks ago. Ambassador Üzümcü suggested political will as the sword to untie the Gordian knot which you are confronted with. Making full use of the capacity of the Conference will not only yield beneficial results for arms control and disarmament, but will also open new vistas for multilateralism.

The PRESIDENT: I want to thank Deputy Foreign Minister Akgünay on behalf of the Conference for his comprehensive statement addressing different aspects of disarmament and Turkey's priorities as well as his words of encouragement to the Conference. I shall now suspend the meeting for a couple of minutes so that I can escort the Deputy Foreign Minister.

The meeting was suspended at 3.20 p.m. and resumed at 3.25 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the Conference and on my own, I would like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Yasuhide Nakayama, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. Excellency, you have the floor.

Mr. NAKAYAMA (Japan): On behalf of Japan, it is my great pleasure to address the Conference on Disarmament. I am convinced that it befits my country to speak for peace, as Japan has suffered the devastation of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings and has not engaged in any battle with a single country ever since the end of World War II. Japan knows the meaning of peace through the lessons of its own history. The Fakuda Cabinet has expressed both at home and abroad its will that Japan is going to contribute to the international community as a "peace-fostering nation".

The CD is the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum; nonetheless, the CD has been in a deadlock for over a decade. Japan considers this an extremely regrettable situation. Last year, the CD conducted important substantive discussions on all its agenda items, in particular the four core issues, and then the six Presidents of 2007 produced proposal L.1. We believe L.1, along with the complementary documents, constitutes a pragmatic compromise. This package objectively reflects the current conditions with the CD. Japan calls on all the member States to reach agreement on L.1 in order to break the ongoing impasse in the CD and thereby contribute to the improvement of the international security environment. In this regard, I would like to express my appreciation to the United Nations Secretary-General for his strong words of encouragement at this year's opening plenary. The Secretary-General renewed his call for the CD to move forward in the spirit of compromise to seize the historic opportunity emanating from the draft Presidential decision.

As the only country to have experienced the destructive effects of atomic bombings, Japan seeks a peaceful world free from nuclear weapons to enhance international security. To this end, it is vital for the whole world to share the vision of "a world free of nuclear weapons" by overcoming the differences in position of the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States. With such a vision, our annual United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons" is consistently adopted by an overwhelming majority. This resolution demonstrates my country's belief that we should build upon practical and concrete measures for nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Japan appreciates there has recently been a surge in debate on practical measures toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

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In this context, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of the international community collectively tackling the challenges the NPT regime is facing. A grave challenge is the danger of NPT non-nuclear-weapon States secretly developing nuclear weapons under the cover of the right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Similarly, the universalization of the NPT is also a challenge. For the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Japan greatly hopes that further meaningful and substantive discussions will be conducted at the second session of the Preparatory Committee. These discussions should be based on the outcomes of the first Preparatory Committee, chaired by Ambassador Amano of Japan.

I should emphasize the necessity of all the nuclear-weapon States fulfilling their strong commitment to article VI (nuclear disarmament). While welcoming the nuclear disarmament efforts of the United States and the Russian Federation, including the significant reduction in the United States nuclear weapons stockpile, Japan hopes for a successor arrangement to START. We also call for greater transparency by all the nuclear-weapon States in their nuclear disarmament efforts. In this connection, we welcome the recent high-level presentations by some of the nuclear-weapon States on their efforts. Furthermore, we believe it is important for the nuclear-weapon States to apply the principles of irreversibility and verifiability to their nuclear disarmament measures.

The early entry into force of the CTBT is also crucial. The ratification of the CTBT by Colombia in particular was encouraging, as the number of annex 2 countries that have yet to ratify the CTBT has now entered single digits. Japan will continue to call for the ratification of the CTBT by all countries, and expects that the moratorium on nuclear test explosions will be maintained pending the Treaty's entry into force. Japan will also continue to assist the preparation of the verification regime.

Moreover, the early start of negotiations in the CD on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices (FMCT) is vital. An FMCT would be a significant nuclear disarmament measure, since it would cap the amount of nuclear weapons. The Final Documents of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences affirmed the necessity of an FMCT. In the work of the CD in 2006 and 2007, it became even more apparent that an FMCT was sufficiently ripe for the commencement of negotiations. Japan strongly appeals to all countries that negotiations on an FMCT should commence without delay. Furthermore, we urge all the nuclear-weapon States and non-NPT States parties to declare a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices pending the entry into force of a treaty.

Japan is making active efforts towards the peaceful use of outer space. With the view that an arms race in outer space should be prevented, Japan has been engaged in the discussions on this issue within the CD and other international forums. On 12 February this year, His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, presented a joint Russian-Chinese draft "Treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space" (PPWT) to the CD. Japan is ready to examine and discuss all the various issues surrounding the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including the draft PPWT.

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Japan supports the basic concept of negative security assurances. Since it is the nuclear-weapon States that grant NSAs, it is necessary for us to build common understanding among the nuclear and the non-nuclear-weapon States to advance discussions on this issue. Last year's discussions on NSAs showed significant differences in position regarding how to address this issue. Therefore, further discussions to narrow those differences are meaningful.

This year Japan holds the presidency of the G-8, and will host the G-8 summit in Hokkaido Toyako in July. The summit will raise the issue of the non-proliferation of WMDs. Japan looks forward to a strong G-8 message toward strengthening the international non-proliferation regime.

Additionally, Japan will be hosting the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, which we call "TICAD IV", this year. As peace is a fundamental basis for development, Japan has consistently focused on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of countries. Disarmament is important to establishing peace. As the United Nations Secretary-General pointed out, resources can be freed from spending on armaments and instead be used for economic development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As a final note, Japan is energetically cooperating for the maintenance, rehabilitation and construction of a peaceful world, and aims to be a "peace-fostering nation".

The PRESIDENT: I want to thank Vice-Minister Nakayama for his important speech and for sharing with us the position of Japan regarding different aspects of disarmament, as well as for his words of support for the Conference on Disarmament. I shall now suspend the meeting for a couple of minutes so that I can escort the Vice-Minister.

The meeting was suspended at 3.35 p.m. and resumed at 3.40 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the Conference and on my own, I would like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Volodymyr Handogiy, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and an old friend. Excellency, you have the floor.

Mr. HANDOGIY (Ukraine): First of all, let me express my delegation's full support for the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

We are convinced that the Conference on Disarmament should continue to respond adequately to the legitimate expectations of the international community. We cannot but acknowledge that some items on the Conference's agenda have been taken up in other forums. However, we also have to remember that the CD remains the sole multilateral forum at the disposal of the international community for disarmament negotiations.

Ukraine strongly hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will manage to face the growing challenges, reach agreement on its programme of work and address all the substantive

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issues contained therein. As ever before, we all need to restate our commitments to multilateralism as a core principle in negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, with a view to maintaining and strengthening appropriate universal norms and enlarging their scope.

In today's global security environment, the strengthening of international legal norms and political instruments to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery means, as well as the broad range of arms control issues, remain a top priority.

Ukraine is open to a constructive dialogue aimed at breaking the current impasse and getting the CD back to effective work.

The existing concerns over threats to international security caused by recent developments around the world have sharpened attention to the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The statement of the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon delivered at the opening of the 2008 CD session is conclusive evidence of that fact. Ukraine fully shares the assessments and aspirations expressed by the Secretary-General, in particular with regard to the proposal of the six Presidents of the 2007 annual session.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, together with international terrorism, remain a threat to international peace and security. Today's risks and challenges are much more diverse and multifaceted than decades ago, since they include a real possibility to use WMD or respective materials as a weapon of terror.

Ukraine fully meets its obligations under the relevant international treaties, conventions and multilaterally agreed arrangements and considers the achievement of their overall implementation and compliance to be a priority in its foreign policy. At the same time we believe that the efficiency of existing multilateral mechanisms in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation has decreased in the last years.

We strongly support all efforts aimed to increase the efficiency of existing disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation machinery. This will undoubtedly contribute to the further reinforcement of global peace and stability.

I would also like to mention here our participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative and, as a recipient country, in the G-8 initiative "Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction". We are confident that the implementation of both initiatives would further enhance international security and safety.

The problems posed by the weapons of mass destruction produced and stockpiled during the cold war continue to represent a serious threat to global security. The possible use of WMD by terrorists raises the seriousness of the terrorism threat to a new level, a danger that cannot be ignored.

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I would like to recall that Ukraine is an active member of all existing export control and non-proliferation regimes, in particular the Missile Technology Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group.

We maintain strict control over the export of military equipment and related dual-use items and do not export any to areas of conflict.

Recently, at the United Nations, the majority of the world's governments made a first step towards a global arms trade treaty to prevent international arms transfers, which fuel conflicts and human rights violations.

Ukraine welcomes establishing common standards in the international arms trade sphere. While respecting all the obligations taken by Ukraine under international treaties which regulate the issue of conventional arms, we continue to back the idea of establishing a legal basis for comprehensive measures to be taken in the sphere of import, export and transfer of such weapons.

Ukraine noted with satisfaction that in the approved 2008 CD agenda, as well as in the statements of the Conference's participants, special attention has been given to the issues related to nuclear threat reduction by banning the production of fissile materials.

In this context, we would like to reiterate our position regarding the issue of the fissile material cut-off treaty, which deserves special attention.

Well known is the fact that Ukraine used to possess the world's third largest nuclear arsenal. Having abandoned it, Ukraine joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the capacity of a country which does not produce its own nuclear fuel, but uses nuclear technologies to operate 15 nuclear reactors for electric power production. Today Ukraine welcomes the numerous discussions in Geneva on this issue, and in particular the fact that no objection has been made to the principle of FMCT negotiations.

In our opinion, negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty should be the first priority for the Conference on Disarmament.

The proliferation of modern technologies in the world, along with the imperfection of the current system of international legal regulation in the sphere of fissile material production, creates real threats of a regional and global character, including international terrorism.

In this context, the growing and unpredictable threat posed by terrorists and the efforts to curb proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems gain additional importance.

We are confident that banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices will sharply limit the chances of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, falling into the hands of terrorists.

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Ukraine strictly adheres to relevant principles of international law possessing significant potential for the development of space programmes, including launches of space carriers. In accordance with the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, Ukraine demonstrates transparency in its space activity.

During the sixty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly, Ukraine supported resolution A/RES/62/20 on “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”, contributing to the strengthening of international security and strategic stability in the world.

Reiterating our position on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the peaceful use of space, Ukraine stands for the beginning of substantial discussion on these issues in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. In particular, we see the need to focus on the determination of the following issues: directions to provide greater transparency of the space programme; directions to expand the scope of information about space objects in orbit; and directions related to the rules of behaviour while performing activities in space, including the establishment of a code of conduct.

Ukraine welcomes the joint efforts of the Russian Federation and China aimed at the submission to the Conference on Disarmament of a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We are convinced that this initiative will contribute to concrete and substantive discussions on the issues of strengthening security in outer space.

The year 2008 provides unique opportunities for Ukraine as well as for all countries to reconfirm their traditional support for disarmament matters, arms control and nuclear non-proliferation.

It is indeed a great honour and responsibility for Ukraine to hold the post of one of the six Presidents of the CD in 2008, as well as the chairmanship of the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference 2010, which will take place in Geneva soon.

We believe that the considerable potential of the CD needs to be activated as soon as possible to prove an effective and timely response by the international community to global threats.

Ukraine has noted with satisfaction that as a result of joint efforts during the years 2006 and, in particular, 2007, six Presidents have succeeded in submitting document L.1, which was later complemented by documents CRP.5 and CRP.6 as the programme of work of the Conference.

Nowadays, Ukraine is ready to start fulfilling this programme and believes that a decision acceptable to all members of the Conference on Disarmament could be approved by the end of the 2008 annual session.

The PRESIDENT: I want to thank you, Mr. Deputy Minister, for your important speech as well as for your words of encouragement to the Conference. I shall now suspend the meeting for a couple of minutes in order to escort the First Deputy Minister of Ukraine.

The meeting was suspended at 3.55 p.m. and resumed at 3.57 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I have no more speakers on my list. Does any delegation wish to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case. This concludes our business for today.

The next formal meeting of the Conference will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, 5 March, at noon.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.