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# Conference on Disarmament

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English

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## Final record of the one thousand one hundred and eighty-first plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 3 June 2010, at 3.15 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Alex Van Meeuwen.....(Belgium)

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I declare open the 1181st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the start of this meeting I should like, if you would allow me, to bid farewell to the colleagues who left the Conference during the intersessional period: Ambassador Portales of Chile, Ambassador Garzón of Colombia and Ambassador Ri of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. During the first part of this formal plenary meeting I have the honour, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, to introduce our two distinguished guests this morning, Ms. Gottemoeller, Assistant Secretary of State of the United States of America, and Ambassador Antonov of the Russian Federation.

As you know, our two guests were the principal negotiators of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) signed by their two countries in April of this year. I should like first of all to congratulate them on this major achievement in the field of disarmament and then give them the floor, as they have kindly offered to give us a broad briefing on the Treaty and then respond to any questions from delegations. You have the floor.

(*spoke in English*)

I will first give the floor, since there is an agreement on this as well, to Ambassador Antonov of the Russian Federation.

**Mr. Antonov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, colleagues, it is a great honour for me to be with you today in this hall of the Conference on Disarmament, especially as I spent more than four and a half years working on the Conference and never imagined that I would one day be sitting here on the podium, speaking to you, my distinguished colleagues, from this side.

I am very pleased that Ambassador Nazarkin is able to be with us today. He was the founder and main negotiator of the previous Treaty, which we and our American colleagues used as the basis for the new treaty: we took many elements from the previous Treaty – that unique treaty. So I should like — and I think that Rose will do so as well — to welcome Ambassador Nazarkin and wish him all the very best.

I cannot begin my statement, of course, without specifically acknowledging all those colleagues with whom we worked in New York for a whole month to produce the result we needed. We are very pleased that, after a 10-year interruption, the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (the NPT Review Conference) adopted a final document that spells out specific steps to be taken by the international community in the field of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. I am very glad — and I am sure that my colleague Rose Gottemoeller is, too — that in its final document the Review Conference approved and welcomed the Russian-American agreement on nuclear disarmament.

I should like now, if I may, to turn to the subject of the short briefing that my colleague Ms. Gottemoeller and I will be giving you today.

On 8 April 2010, in Prague, President Dmitry Anatolevich Medvedev of the Russian Federation and President Barack Obama of the United States of America signed a Treaty between their two countries on measures for the further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. This historic event was the culmination of a year of intense negotiations in which I had the honour to head the Russian delegation, the American negotiating team being headed by my colleague, Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller. I should like to take this opportunity to thank you once again, Rose, for your patience, your constructive approach, and for the extremely high level of professionalism displayed both by yourself and by your team throughout this marathon. Without those qualities, we should never have achieved such an impressive result in such a short time.

The new treaty was not written on a blank page. Its preparation drew fully on the 15 years of experience gained in implementing the START Treaty. The 1991 Treaty played a historic role in ensuring world peace, strategic stability and security. It served as a basis for the development of a qualitatively new atmosphere of trust, openness and predictability in the process of reducing strategic offensive arms that is now reflected in the new treaty.

Along with the Russian Federation and the United States of America, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine were also parties to the original START Treaty, whose historic role would not have been complete without the significant efforts to implement it made by Minsk, Astana and Kyiv. The responsible choice made by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in favour of an agreed removal of nuclear weapons from their territories and their accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as non-nuclear-weapon States have strengthened their security and had a positive influence on strategic stability in general.

Of course, many aspects of the old START Treaty which were linked to that era and to the different relationship that existed then between Russia and the United States required a fundamental review and had to be adapted to contemporary reality. We tried to retain everything of value, everything that truly worked from the previous Treaty. President Medvedev personally supervised the progress of negotiations and frequently was directly involved in decisions on the most complex issues, particularly during his regular meetings and telephone conversations with President Obama. In all, they were in touch about 15 times.

One of the fundamental principles of the new treaty is that of the equal and indivisible security of the parties. The Treaty is structured on a strict basis of parity. It provides that each party shall reduce and limit its strategic offensive arms so that by seven years after its entry into force and thereafter the aggregate numbers of weapons do not exceed 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers, 1,550 deployed warheads, and 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers and heavy bombers. This level fixes deployed and non-deployed launches as well as heavy bombers within the legal framework of the Treaty. This will make it possible to limit the parties' so-called breakout potential — that is, the possibility of a rapid build-up in the number of nuclear warheads deployed in crisis situations — and creates an additional incentive for the elimination or conversion of the strategic nuclear weapons subject to reduction.

The parties agreed to cut the total number of warheads by one third and the level of strategic delivery vehicles by more than half. I would remind you that there were 1,600 warheads under the START Treaty, with no limit at all on delivery vehicles. From the outset, the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States stipulated that the subject of the new treaty would be strategic offensive weapons.

I should like to point out that anti-missile defence systems are being discussed by our two countries in a different format. Nevertheless, the Treaty notes the link between strategic nuclear forces and anti-ballistic missiles (ABMs) and the growing importance of this interrelationship in the process of reducing strategic offensive weapons. Our position is based solely on the fact that strategic offensive arms will be cut to a level where each of the parties will be able to ensure its own security.

The scope of the Treaty covers all existing strategic systems — both those in use and those withdrawn from operational status — as well as any strategic nuclear forces in a non-nuclear configuration that may be produced. Monitoring is planned of nuclear submarines and heavy bombers converted to carry conventional weapons in order to guarantee that they are no longer capable of carrying nuclear weapons. If ICBMs and SLBMs are equipped

with conventional, i.e. non-nuclear, warheads, they will be included in the limit proposed in the Treaty for warheads and their means of delivery.

The Treaty provides for an effective verification mechanism that is adapted to modern realities. In order to ensure effective verification, each strategic nuclear weapon is given its own unique identifier – like a car licence plate consisting of letters and figures. The identifiers will make it possible to track missiles or heavy bombers throughout their whole life cycle, from production to elimination or conversion.

In contrast to the previous START Treaty, none of the limits in the new instrument require the use of telemetric information for monitoring. Nevertheless, an exchange of telemetric information on a set number of ICBM and SLBM launchers is planned to promote confidence-building and transparency.

The Treaty prohibits the basing of strategic offensive arms outside the national territory of the parties.

A special body, the Bilateral Consultative Committee, is being set up to discuss and deal with issues that may arise during Treaty implementation.

The whole package of agreement consists of the Treaty itself, the Protocol with agreed and unilateral declarations, and the technical annexes. This makes around 300 pages. The Treaty is a balanced document with a mutually acceptable balance of interests. Its conclusion constitutes a win for bilateral strategic relations and for international stability and security as a whole. We firmly believe that the signing of the Treaty will help to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and expand the process of nuclear disarmament, inter alia by making it a multilateral one.

And now I should like to ask my distinguished colleague, Ms. Rose Gottemoeller, to say a few additional words about the substance of the Treaty and perhaps provide more detail on any issues she thinks should be highlighted.

**Ms. Gottemoeller** (United States of America): Thank you and, if I may, I would ask if we could just go ahead to the next slide, please. Ambassador Antonov has already covered this, but you can reflect on it as I begin my comments, and I thank you very much for this opportunity to address you today. I want to thank the President and also the Secretary-General of the Conference for the opportunity to speak before you today and to report on our successful negotiation of the new strategic arms reduction treaty (START treaty).

I am reminded that I was in this room just a year ago today to speak to a plenary session of this organization. Sitting in this beautiful hall, I am feeling as if it has actually been more like 10 years since I was here last, but nevertheless it has been a very intensive, busy and productive year.

I also wanted to convey my thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Nazarkin. The foundation that was established by the START Treaty was a very important one, both in conceptual and, in a way, in moral terms, for the work that we were taking up in the negotiation of the new START treaty. I also worked very closely with his counterpart, Ambassador Linton Brooks, in preparation for the negotiations in Washington. So, thank you, and my appreciation for your contribution.

I must say that, after many, many hours spent together at the negotiating table here in Geneva with Ambassador Antonov and his Russian colleagues, I am feeling that it is a great opportunity to speak to you about the results of our work. I can also say that we are no less appreciative of the patience and the overall willingness of the Russian Federation to work hard during the 12 months that it took us to complete these negotiations. By the way, we began the negotiations on 24 April 2009 in Rome, and the last “i” was dotted and the

last “t” was crossed on 24 April 2010, just up the road from here at the United States Mission in Geneva. So it took exactly 12 months to negotiate our treaty.

In mid-March, the United States of America submitted the treaty ratification package to the United States Senate for advice and consent, and I know that the Russian Federation in the last week has submitted their package for treaty ratification to the State Duma and the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly.

But this treaty is not just about Washington and Moscow. It is about the entire world community, and that is what brings us here today. As you know, the United States and Russia control more than 90 per cent of the world’s nuclear arsenal, and we understand that the world looks to us for leadership in securing nuclear materials globally and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

Although not tied directly to the new START treaty, the data on nuclear weapon stockpiles recently released by the United States show how far the country has come in reducing the number of nuclear warheads in the stockpile, which has dropped from a maximum of 31,255 in 1967 to 5,113 as of September 2009.

Increasing transparency of global nuclear stockpiles is important for non-proliferation efforts and for the pursuit of follow-on reductions after the ratification and entry into force of the new START treaty. The new treaty sets the stage for engaging other nuclear powers in fulfilling the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and expanding opportunities for enhancing strategic stability.

As we say in the preamble to the treaty, we see it as providing new impetus to the step-by-step process of reducing and limiting nuclear arms with a view to expanding this process in the future to a multilateral approach. We will also seek to include non-strategic and non-deployed weapons in future reductions. Such steps would truly take nuclear arms control into a new era.

I would like to follow up on Ambassador Antonov’s presentation by addressing the question of how this treaty takes us beyond where we were with the START Treaty and the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (the Moscow Treaty). But first I should point out that our work on this treaty began on the strong foundation that was established not only by START and the Moscow Treaty, but also by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (the INF Treaty), as well, of course, as the NPT and its accompanying regime. Our many years of joint experience in implementing those treaties served as a guiding principle as we negotiated this new treaty and, indeed, many countries represented around this room participate in the implementation of all of these treaties, particularly the NPT.

But I would also like to underscore the special role of Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus in the implementation of the START Treaty. Their role was vital, and it is recognized in the preamble to the new START treaty as vital not only to the progress of the non-proliferation regime but also to nuclear arms reductions overall.

I would now like to make a few comparisons between the new START treaty and the Moscow Treaty and the START Treaty itself.

The new treaty establishes limits for United States and Russian nuclear forces that are significantly below the levels established by the START and Moscow treaties. It should be noted that what is counted under each treaty is different. While the START Treaty relied primarily on attribution rules for counting warheads and delivery vehicles, in the new START treaty we sought to count strategic offensive arms according to the number of warheads actually carried on delivery vehicles.

The one exception to this rule is for nuclear-capable heavy bombers. Rather than count these heavy bombers as zero warheads to reflect the fact that nuclear weapons are not

loaded on them on a day-in day-out basis, the sides agreed to an attribution rule of one warhead per nuclear-capable heavy bomber.

The new treaty will limit deployed strategic warheads to 1,550 per side, which is about 30 per cent below the maximum of 2,200 warheads permitted by the Moscow Treaty. The new treaty also has a limit of 700 undeployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), deployed sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and nuclear-capable heavy bombers. This limit is more than 50 per cent below the 1991 START Treaty limit of 1,600 deployed strategic delivery vehicles. In addition, there will be a separate limit of 800 on the total number of deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers and heavy bombers.

Ambassador Antonov has told you about the new START treaty verification regime, and I would now like to move forward with a comparison. START had a regime to verify its numerous and diverse treaty obligations and prohibitions. Those measures included 12 different types of on-site inspections, data exchanges, regular notifications and cooperative measures and an exchange of telemetric information, which was required under the START Treaty to verify technical missile parameters pertaining specifically to the obligations and requirements of the Treaty.

The Moscow Treaty has no verification regime of its own, but has instead relied upon the START verification regime to provide insight into each party's strategic forces. That is one of the reasons why it is so important now to proceed forward, in our view, with the ratification and entry into force of the new START treaty. The Moscow Treaty remains in force, but since the START Treaty went out of force on 4 December 2009, there has been no agreed verification regime between the United States and the Russian Federation in force. There is, of course, a very real verification regime that has been agreed upon in the context of the new treaty, and it includes on-site inspections, continuing data exchanges on weapon systems and facilities, regular notifications and data updates, and a requirement that a unique alphanumeric identifier be assigned to each ICMB, SLBM and heavy bomber.

I would like to make the point that, in fact, there are some important innovations in the new START treaty's verification regime. Under START, the unique identifiers were applied to mobile ICBMs, but under this treaty we will have unique identifiers on each and every ICBM, SLBM and heavy bomber. To promote openness and transparency, the parties will also conduct an annual exchange of telemetric information on up to five ICBM or SLBM launches, as chosen by the party conducting the launches.

I would like to talk for just a moment about the spirit in which these negotiations were conducted, a spirit that can best be defined as one of mutual respect. It was due to this spirit that our meetings were businesslike and productive; as Ambassador Antonov likes to say, business is business.

In my view it was no accident that we were able to complete this treaty quickly. The new START treaty reflects the determination of our two Governments to begin a new era in our security relations – one of greater openness and cooperation. The new START treaty will improve international security by reducing and limiting United States and Russian strategic nuclear forces, promoting strategic security by assuring transparency and predictability with regard to United States and Russian strategic nuclear forces, and advancing our collective nuclear non-proliferation goals. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary and guarantee the defence of our allies. But with this new treaty, we are setting the stage for future and further arms reductions.

The new START treaty continues a narrative begun near the end of the cold war that recognizes the need to eliminate the paralysing threat of nuclear war by reducing and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons.

I would like to conclude with the words of President Barack Obama, who, after signing the new treaty, described it as “an important milestone for nuclear security and non-proliferation and for United States-Russian relations” and those of President Dmitry Medvedev, who called it, very simply, “a win-win situation”.

In my view, this new treaty is a win-win situation not only for the United States and for the Russian Federation but for each and every country represented in this room. For the entire world community, it is also a win-win situation.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Thank you, first for your presentation and also for proposing to meet with delegations.

(The President *continued in English*)

I will now open the floor for questions and comments. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany.

**Mr. Hoffmann** (Germany): Mr. President, I would like to thank our two guests for making the effort to come to Geneva to provide such informative presentations.

Germany very much welcomes the conclusion of the new START treaty, first of all to get nuclear arms control on the road again, so to speak, after a decade of having been at a standstill. I also have to pay a compliment: the timing was just perfect. You managed somehow to finish your work just ahead of the NPT Review Conference in New York, and that was, I would say, certainly not without impact. I would think that the positive atmosphere which prevailed at the Review Conference also had to do with the fact that the environment was a positive one, and you certainly made a significant contribution to that, as you also did to the outcome document, which is of course more important than atmospherics. I have to say that I find it very laudable that you managed to conclude this treaty within one year, whereas, in the past, it took eight or nine years to conclude a treaty of that sort. And that gives us hope for the future. If you manage to do that in a single year, then one of course hopes that you will also manage to do more in the future, when the time is ripe, to get us ever closer to a world without nuclear weapons – a goal which we have just celebrated in New York.

Now, the NPT Review Conference document is aimed at addressing all types of nuclear weapons in future arms control and disarmament efforts, and we welcome that very much, not least because of the fact that, as you know, the German Government has a particular interest in addressing tactical nuclear weapons, and we will certainly make our contribution to advancing this objective. I have heard with appreciation that Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller also mentioned this subject in her presentation.

I would also, if I may, like to put a question to you, Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller, concerning the new START treaty, also with a view to getting a sense of what may be possible in the future in terms of reductions to come. Could you possibly give us an indication of how many warheads and delivery systems you will actually destroy as a result of the new limits? I ask this because the reference point in all these presentations is always START I, or the Moscow Treaty, but I am not quite sure whether the limits which were set then matched the actual holdings, and I would be quite interested, and I assume others as well, to learn what sort of material impact the new limitations will have in terms of actual destruction compared to present holdings.

**The President**: Thank you very much. I recognize the distinguished representative of Indonesia.

**Mr. Percaya** (Indonesia): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to thank you for convening this meeting for the very informative briefing given by the two excellent negotiators from the United States and Russia.

Speaking on behalf of Indonesia, we also welcome the signing of the new START treaty, although we would expect to see greater reductions of nuclear warheads than we do as it stands now. We do believe that this is one of the more important steps that need to be taken.

In this regard, I have two questions. The first is: have you foreseen the most difficult stage, when it comes to implementation, apart from monitoring or transparency and that kind of follow-up? And secondly: how does the new START treaty fit into the context of the effort to establish a world free of nuclear weapons?

**Ms. Gottemoeller** (United States of America): Thank you very much for these questions. I will try to provide an initial response and can then perhaps lay the groundwork for some elaboration by my colleague, Ambassador Antonov.

I would actually like to begin with the very excellent question from the representative of Indonesia, regarding where the new START treaty is on the continuum towards a world free of nuclear weapons, towards complete nuclear disarmament, because that will allow me then to take up the question that the German Ambassador raised regarding the actual elimination and destruction of arms under this treaty. So I will handle both of those issues.

The new START treaty has been seen, from its very outset, as a transitional treaty or a bridge between the START Treaty, which we all understood would be going out of force at the end of 2009, and deeper reduction negotiations leading towards a world free of nuclear weapons. This is why President Obama, when he spoke in Prague in April 2009, referred very clearly to the new START treaty — or the “follow-on”, as we called it during the negotiating process itself — as a bridge or transitional treaty. So it is very much in that realm and, as such, I think it will establish a very firm baseline for further reductions. I will return to that point in a moment. But it will also provide the very real kind of predictability that we need in order to go lower, and that predictability is inherent in the verification regime that will be put in place under this treaty once it enters into force. So, predictability and mutual confidence are, of course, very necessary factors for continuing reductions and for moving lower.

As we move in that direction, we are actually going to be taking on much more challenging tasks in the nuclear arms reduction arena. The Ambassador of Germany asked how many warheads and delivery vehicles will be eliminated under this treaty. Like the arms reduction treaties of the past, beginning with the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty of 1972, this treaty does not call for the actual elimination of warheads. The systems to be eliminated are the delivery vehicles: ICBMs, SLBMs, bombers. This is because these systems are the ones that have always been visible by national technical means. They are easy to monitor, and it is relatively easy to verify their elimination. Future stages of nuclear arms reduction — and this is what is so significant about the calls made by President Obama to move towards the elimination of arms in future treaties and towards reductions of non-deployed nuclear warheads — will entail a much more challenging and complicated verification task. So the warheads that are removed from nuclear delivery vehicles under this treaty will go into an elimination queue. In many cases, some will be stored. But it is not part of the overall agreed regime of the treaty, and that process will not be monitored or verified.

In terms of the delivery vehicles to be destroyed under this treaty, there are, I would say, two general categories. The first general category is what we called “phantom systems” during the negotiation of the treaty. These are systems under START and the Moscow Treaty that came out of deployment and, then, because of the way those treaties were constructed, did not really have to be eliminated. So there are several hundred phantom systems, particularly bomber platforms, that will be eliminated under this treaty. In



addition, there will be some hundred, perhaps a few more, delivery vehicles that will be eliminated under the treaty itself in order to keep us below the deployed and non-deployed launcher limits. Those numbers are now being determined; I want to emphasize that there is still some analysis to be done in this regard, because both countries have seven years to implement the reductions called for under this treaty. This treaty will have a total duration of 10 years and, within that 10-year period, we have 7 years to decide exactly how the various delivery vehicles — the missiles and the bombers — will be eliminated. So it gives us a little bit of time to figure out exactly how we will go about it. I would say that there will be several hundred delivery vehicles eliminated on both sides.

**Mr. Antonov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In answering the distinguished Ambassadors of Indonesia and Germany, I shall try to take Rose Gottemoeller's explanation further and respond more broadly to the questions, particularly those of the Ambassador of Germany, and then, of course, I shall try to answer the most burning question that he has asked both outside this hall and here today, about tactical nuclear weapons.

In response to the question from the Ambassador of Germany as to whether we can say what direction our work will take now, I would say that Rose and I are working with our parliaments for immediate ratification of the Treaty. I will not hide the fact that we are watching very carefully to see how the process is going: the American side is watching the Russian Federation, and we are watching to see how things are going in the United States. You know that we had an unfortunate experience, after the START II Treaty was signed. It was actually ratified by the Russian Federation 10 years ago, but it was not ratified by the United States, and so it never entered into force. So when we speak today about our plans for the future, the most important task, as I see it, for both the United States of America and the Russian Federation, is to ensure the successful ratification of the Treaty by our two parliaments.

That is a very difficult task, and I think that Rose can tell you how things are going in the Senate and what the prospects for ratification are there. I can tell you that we submitted a package of documents to the State Duma a week ago; closed hearings have begun, and a lot of questions are being asked – serious, complicated questions. We have a very demanding, difficult discussion before us in the State Duma – the entire Russian negotiating team has been invited there to explain the most serious issues that we discussed during the negotiations. One very interesting point is that Rose and I compared the issues that interest the Senators and those that interest the Deputies of the State Duma. And it would seem that they are the same. So I will repeat them, and if Rose thinks it necessary, she will add to the list.

Firstly: naturally, our Deputies in the Duma in Russia are not pleased that the Treaty does not set any limits on the development of the American ABM system. Some of them see this as a failure on the part of the Russian negotiating team. But I should like to say, in my own defence, of course, and in defence of my colleagues as well, that the main focus of the talks was on reductions in strategic offensive weapons. That was what our Presidents agreed on 1 April 2009. We conducted our negotiations on the basis of the presidential instructions.

Another problem, and one that is of great concern to the Deputies in the Duma and, if I have understood properly, to the Senators, too, is strategic nuclear forces in a non-nuclear configuration.

The third issue of concern to our representatives is reflected in the many serious and complex questions they have been asking about the planned cooperation in exchanging telemetric information.

And, lastly, not wishing to tire you, I would just mention the issue of verification, which is being looked at very closely both in the United States Senate and in the Russian Federation.

In saying this, I am not simply listing the problems we have to deal with, I also want to say that we, and particularly the Russian negotiating team, nevertheless think that we do have a good chance of getting enough votes in the State Duma and the Federation Council for ratification of the Treaty, and we are very much counting on the ratification process taking place in parallel, at the same time, as our Presidents have discussed. It is very important that the American Senators and the Russian Deputies should be in close contact with each other, hold the necessary consultations and work to get a better grasp of the essence of the Russian-American agreements.

And so, having said all this, I want to tell you that, as a result of the Russian-American negotiations, it has suddenly become apparent that there are a number of issues in the area of strategic security and nuclear disarmament that call for dialogue between the United States and the Russian Federation in the future. These are the issues I mentioned. And therefore, coming back to the question raised by the distinguished Ambassador of Germany as to where we are heading – it is on these very issues that we need to have more discussions. I would add one more problem that we have today, a question that we on the Russian side take very seriously: the imbalance in conventional weapons. I very much hope that we will see serious discussions on this issue in Europe in the near future, and I expect negotiations to start literally in the next few days; the preconditions are there. So that is another answer to the question of what we are going to do now. But that in no way means that we are not going to continue negotiating nuclear disarmament issues with the United States and other nuclear Powers.

Now I should like to answer the distinguished Ambassador of Germany a little more broadly on the subject of tactical nuclear weapons. Our negotiations during the NPT review process were not very successful, and I am very pleased that you have raised the question here today. I shall try to give you an answer. It shouldn't take me more than three or four minutes, but I think that the question is of interest to other people, too, and not just to other States, but also to the developing countries that raised the question of further cuts in all types of nuclear weapons at the Review Conference.

Why did I approach this problem so cautiously during the NPT review process? Because as yet there is no clear definition here. I actually had a similar discussion in the context of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) yesterday. Yesterday there was a proposal in NATO to begin negotiations on short-range nuclear weapons. It is not at all clear what they are, but everyone supposed that they were something non-strategic. So we looked carefully at the defence policies of different States, and we found that the different policies and doctrines use different names – such as tactical, pre-strategic, sub-strategic ... . And so we come up against the question: what are we taking about?

I can give you another example to help you understand the issue. The new Russian-American START Treaty considers nuclear air-to-surface missiles and nuclear bombs to be strategic weapons. Yet in many cases, these systems can be used as tactical weapons.

What, then, am I suggesting? What am I talking about? Perhaps the time has come for the “nuclear five” to sit down and discuss: just what is a nuclear weapon? What is a pre-strategic system? Because all the definitions we have today were agreed in the context of the Russian-American dialogue and are valid exclusively in the context of one specific agreement or another.

But the main prerequisite for a serious discussion on this issue — and I want to point out again that it must be a serious discussion — is of course a decision by the European States members of NATO on the elimination of the nuclear weapons that are on their

territory. I am speaking of the non-nuclear-weapon States. I would further say that the Russian Federation considers that military facilities in non-nuclear-weapon States that can be used for nuclear weapons should be destroyed. The Russian Federation considers that we must refuse the concept of joint management of nuclear weapons, so-called “nuclear sharing”. That concept has, moreover, been discussed at length in the context of our review process, and we are prepared to continue discussing all these issues.

I say quite honestly that I was surprised during the review process when some countries insisted on negotiations on non-strategic systems, while on the other hand these same countries (non-nuclear-weapon countries) said that they were in favour of retaining nuclear weapons on their territory and were against the destruction and elimination of military nuclear facilities. In this connection, I want to say that we are watching very carefully to see how the discussions on this issue go within NATO. We are watching closely and are counting on a positive resolution of this problem within the framework of NATO.

But that is not all. I also want to say that when we discuss these issues we must not, of course, forget that, as I said before, the existing imbalance in conventional weapons.

At the same time, I want to assure you of our readiness to hold talks on the issue, including within the framework of a discussion on possible transparency and confidence-building measures and, subsequently, the development of specific proposals for the reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons.

Everything I want to say can be summed up as follows: it is a whole series of issues that we must resolve together. It is not possible today to take some small issue out of the general context and say, let's solve this one. I would remind my distinguished colleagues — and you are well aware of this without me telling you — that when we agreed to the nuclear disarmament programme at the Review Conference, we stressed the need for it to be implemented in conditions of enhanced security — it was the Brazilian delegation that made the proposal — and the very important principle of undiminished security for all. Disarmament does not exist in a vacuum. Disarmament — and we are strongly convinced of this — should lead to greater security for every State.

The Russian Federation took the decision to elaborate a new treaty with the United States of America because it realized that the situation had changed, first and foremost in terms of its relations with the United States, allowing us to move forward on the path to a radical reduction of nuclear weapons. I will give you just one figure. In the past, under the old Treaty, we were allowed to have 1,600 delivery vehicles. We have now agreed on cuts, and in seven years' time we will have 700 delivery vehicles. The most important figure, as Rose Gottemoeller mentioned, is that we may have no more than 800 deployed and non-deployed delivery vehicles. Quite simply, especially for those of you who do not work in this area, I would say that this means that submarines, heavy bombers and silos that are not being used at the moment will all have to be destroyed, eliminated, and that we will have to get down to those figures within seven years. The figure of 800 is very ambitious, and we will need many billions to get there. And I want to tell you, although I am sure you already know, that disarmament — in any case for us and I am sure for my colleagues from the United States of America as well — will cost a lot more than armament does. But we have taken the decision, our Presidents have approved this political decision, and we will fulfil our obligations under the Treaty.

**Ms. Gottemoeller** (United States of America): The final comment of my colleague, Ambassador Antonov, reminded me that we had not actually answered one question from the Ambassador of Indonesia. That question was with regard to what the most difficult task in the implementation of the new treaty will be.

I do agree that the elimination process can be extraordinarily expensive, and that is one reason why there are these so-called phantom systems (Ambassador Antonov mentioned, for example, silos that no longer have missiles inside them) left over from the implementation of the START Treaty. There was a requirement to eliminate them under that treaty, and they are just sitting there because it costs money to eliminate them. So now those systems will have to be eliminated. But to be quite honest, and in direct answer to your question, I would say that the implementation of this treaty is a well-worn path. We understand, thanks to the implementation of the START Treaty, how to eliminate these systems, how to mutually verify the process, and how to have mutual confidence in the process. So I am quite certain that, once it enters into force, we will implement this treaty in a fairly smooth manner. There will probably be some bumps along the way. We will, in our case, have to convince our Congress to allocate the money for elimination and so forth. But the path towards full implementation of the treaty will be fairly smooth. The more complicated tasks are the ones that I spoke about for the future, and in that sense I agree with my colleague, Ambassador Antonov. We have some homework to do in thinking about the next stage of further reductions: how will we go about verifying the elimination of non-deployed systems, such as warheads held in storage facilities? These are very complicated technical tasks and, in some cases, a great deal of work will be required in order to develop the means, methods and procedures, as well as technologies, needed to accomplish them. Nevertheless, we are certainly resolved to begin to undertake them.

The second thing I would say with regard to the implementation of future treaties has to do with non-strategic nuclear weapons. At this point, I would just like to remark on the processes taking place inside NATO. We were just in Brussels yesterday to brief the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) at NATO. I think it is important to bear in mind that NATO has its own processes going on, and these include the process of reviewing strategic concepts under the NATO aegis. We understand that, in moving on to future stages involving non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe itself, it will be very, very important to proceed in step with NATO as it works to review and further develop its own strategic concepts.

So this is only to say that, for future treaties, I believe that it will be a new situation, as President Obama himself already said when he observed that we will be moving into an entirely new era in the strategic and nuclear arms reduction process.

I would like to leave you with that thought in terms of the implementation of the treaty currently under ratification. I feel quite confident that we can accomplish it without too much difficulty.

**The President:** Thank you. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Sweden.

**Mr. Hellgren** (Sweden): Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you to the two honourable guests, to whom we extend our sincere congratulations and appreciation, primarily for the treaty, of course, but also for your having taken the time to brief us on this important subject.

When I asked for the floor, I wanted to ask a few questions, but actually you have covered many of them in your later remarks. In reaction to Ambassador Antonov's detailed explanation on the issue of non-strategic nuclear weapons, I just want to add, from a non-nuclear-weapon State's perspective, that we have never really been convinced of the need to divide nuclear weapons into different categories based on either range or explosive power. We are still convinced that, in today's world, any use of a nuclear weapon would have strategic implications, and we very much look forward to having those cold war separations of nuclear weapons into different categories abandoned in the next phases.

As for the new START treaty, we fully agree that the most important and immediate step is to support the process in any way we can, as we are not directly involved in its ratification or entry into force. That is the immediate goal, and we should all welcome its achievement when that happens. In the medium term, you have both said that the next phases will probably be even more challenging than the one-year process that you have recently completed. I note that you said that this is a transitional treaty, that it has a 10-year duration and that the next phases of this process will at some point be taken into a more multilateral framework. This is very welcome, and I think that, since you indicated that the next phases are going to be more complicated, the earlier that this process can start, the better.

I would be remiss if I did not ask if you see any potential role for the Conference on Disarmament in the phases that are to come and for the application in the medium term of our work towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Khabbaz Hamoui** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to welcome Ambassador Gottemoeller and Ambassador Antonov and thank them for their excellent statements. My country, like any other country, welcomes this treaty; even if the treaty that was concluded does not fully reflect our hopes and dreams, namely, the final and complete elimination of nuclear weapons, it is nevertheless an excellent step forward that gives us great hope for the future.

My question to our two guests might appear very simple. I should like to ask whether, during these discussions, you have thought about how to eliminate this vast quantity of nuclear warheads, bombers or submarines. My question is not about cost, as Ambassador Antonov said, but about protecting the environment, health and security. Will each party work alone, or will you work together to that end?

**The President**: Thank you. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ireland.

**Mr. O'Shea** (Ireland): Mr. President, I thank our two distinguished guests for coming to talk to us. It is very good to see them here with us in Geneva after our work in New York.

First of all, I would like to take advantage of the fact that I am following my Swedish colleague to subscribe to his remarks about seeing nuclear weapons as constituting a single category and to support the eventual elimination of all sorts of nuclear weapons.

I would like to ask a question of Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller regarding a point that she made in her presentation when she said that, because the START Treaty relied on the verification provisions of START, which is no longer in force, there is now no agreed verification system in force between the parties. Would you, Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller, be able to tell us whether there are any voluntary or temporary verification procedures in place pending ratification of the new START treaty, or are we in a situation where there are no verification measures being applied whatsoever?

**The President**: Are there any other requests to take the floor?

**Mr. Antonov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Thank you very much for your very interesting questions. I understand the concerns of the many States whose representatives have spoken today, and those of States that did not as well: on the need for a rapid process of nuclear disarmament, its final aim being not only to create the conditions for a world free of nuclear arms but also to rid the planet of that type of weapon of mass destruction entirely. I should like to remind you that in March of last year, President Dmitry

Medvedev of the Russian Federation extended greetings to Conference participants and expressed our country's readiness — indeed, not only its readiness but also its intention — to pursue a policy aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons. I should therefore like to assure my colleagues from Sweden and Ireland that there are no exceptions, and the Russian side is not seeking to eliminate only part of our nuclear arsenal while retaining another part for some particular occasion. I want to confirm and assure you that in our talks with the United States of America, in discussions held among the “nuclear five”, in the multilateral context of the NPT review process and here in the Conference, we are talking today about eliminating all types and forms of nuclear weapons so that our world may be free of this type of weapon of mass destruction.

Now, if I may turn to the question from the distinguished Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic, I understand your comment and thank you nevertheless for your assessment of the results we were able to achieve with our distinguished American colleagues, but I want to emphasize our position: the Russian Federation is against illusory projects of the future; we are in favour of activities that are specific, clear and understandable. We are committed to the gradual and ongoing elimination of all types of nuclear weapons. At present we have reached agreement with the United States on some major reductions, and we will encounter substantial budgetary difficulties in meeting our obligations under the Treaty. However, I assure you that everything has been calculated, the additional money will be found, and that we will meet all our obligations. You are absolutely right when you speak of the importance of the environment and security. I can tell you that all these issues will be discussed very seriously and solutions will be found as the weapons are destroyed. As my colleague said, “there are phantoms”, in terms of both heavy bombers and nuclear submarines. These issues are the focus of attention, not only for our central authorities but in the regions, towns, provinces and territories where the destruction is being carried out. Actually, when the previous Treaty was being implemented, we had a very satisfactory and effective programme of cooperation, and we are grateful to the United States for its help, as we are to the other States that helped us fulfil our obligations. At this stage we can say without reservation that we will do everything ourselves. We have the capacity, we can meet our international obligations for the reduction of strategic offensive weapons independently, and, as I have already said today, we will do so.

This Treaty is not the last of its kind. As I said, what we need now is time to figure out what kind of treaty we have signed, what kind of agreements we have struck. I said that we need to ratify the Treaty, we need to begin implementing it and, finally, to determine whether it has any shortcomings, whether there are any problems in the text or in the essence of the Treaty. All these issues will be discussed in the Bilateral Consultative Commission, which is to begin its work very soon. And it is certainly time for us to sit down together with the United States of America to identify the subject of the next treaty and start new talks.

I should like to draw your attention to one provision in the new treaty. Specifically, it states that the Treaty will be in force for 10 years but that if we agree with our American colleagues on a new treaty, on new reductions, then the new treaty will naturally replace the current one. Actually, with the signing of this treaty, the Moscow Treaty ceased to have effect, meaning that the substance of the agreement — the new Russian agreements — covers all the issues in the Moscow Treaty which, incidentally, could have been extended had we not had the new treaty.

There was a very interesting question about the role of the Conference on Disarmament. I want to be very cautious in what I say. I spoke about this openly and in public during the review process. I have great respect for my colleagues who work on the Conference on Disarmament. I know most of the Ambassadors; they are highly educated, extremely professional and distinguished people, and it is they who have something to

teach me, rather than I who can advise them as to the course to take. But it seems to me that ever since the NPT Review Conference I do not need to invent anything. There was unanimous support for the decision on the need to begin the work of the Conference on Disarmament, to begin talks on banning the production of weapons-grade fissile materials. I am sure that the positive atmosphere that prevailed at the Review Conference will carry over to the Conference on Disarmament, and I am firmly convinced that we will soon take the wise and correct decision to begin work on all aspects of the Conference's programme of work, it being understood that talks will begin on the topic that everyone is talking about at the moment, namely, a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT).

**Ms. Gottemoeller** (United States of America): I will quickly answer two very practical, I would say pragmatic, questions that were asked and then come around to the question raised about the role of this prestigious body.

First of all, I want to address the question from the representative of Ireland regarding what measures are under way at the present time. I was correct to say that there is currently no agreed verification regime in force between the Russian Federation and the United States of America, with START going out of force on 4 December. However, one very important aspect of the new treaty is that, upon its signature, certain measures are to be provisionally applied. Consequently, we have begun to apply certain provisions of the treaty that are very important in helping us to understand what is going on within the strategic forces; this is particularly true of notifications. We are notifying each other of some activities through our respective nuclear risk reduction centres. I understand from my colleagues in Washington that we have just received the first notification from the Russian side under this agreement for the provisional application of certain measures of the treaty.

So some important steps are being taken, but there are others that cannot be taken until the new treaty enters into force. For example, on-site inspections require certain legal guarantees from both countries. We cannot have our inspector on the ground in the Russian Federation without certain privileges and immunities, and the Russians certainly feel that way about having their inspectors on United States territory. These kinds of privileges and immunities flow from the legal regime of the treaty once it is in force. That is one of the reasons why we are working so hard to ratify it on a priority basis: so that it may be brought into force at the earliest possible time.

The question raised by the distinguished representative of Syria was indeed, I thought, a very good question. Ambassador Antonov has already answered it in large measure by taking note of the close cooperation seen among the G-8 during recent years in connection with the elimination of the systems that were taken out of operational status under the START Treaty — ICBMs, SLBMs, submarines themselves, bombers and so forth — under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme. That programme has been very successful over the years, and I think that it has given us some important lessons learned on precisely the issues you raised with regard to the careful consideration of environmental concerns as elimination procedures go forward and the importance of very close cooperation to avert any security concerns that could come out of an elimination process, such as onward selling of controlled items. I think that our cooperative work on elimination over recent years has raised everybody's awareness of the necessity of taking careful account of the environmental and security issues that you have raised.

Returning to the overall question of the role of this body in further efforts in this connection, I would say that, to my mind, the scope for action by this organization is very wide-ranging and includes the disarmament agenda, and we welcome the participation of this body in very important future activities as we move down the road. I support the comments made by Ambassador Antonov in speaking about the importance of looking, in the near term, at fissile material cut-off and of beginning negotiations in that regard. But there are other important areas as well. I think the agenda items are well understood, and

the United States of America is certainly willing to engage in discussions across the spectrum of agenda items of this organization.

Earlier, I mentioned being in this beautiful hall a year ago and talking about the kind of momentum that we would have as we moved forward into the NPT Review Conference. Now, when we have just come out of the NPT Review Conference, I see once again that we have a reinforced momentum. I believe that it is a very welcome thing to have that kind of consensus in the international community, and I hope that we may all benefit from it.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Conference, and on my own behalf, I should like to thank you, Ms. Gottemoeller and Mr. Antonov, for being here with us this afternoon. I should also like to thank you for the positive note you have brought to this room, which should serve as a source of inspiration for us all.

I will now suspend the session for five minutes to escort our guests to the door of the Council Chamber.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.*

**The President** (*spoke in French*): The plenary meeting is resumed. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil. You have the floor, sir.

**Mr. Macedo Soares** (Brazil): Mr. President, I wish to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament on behalf of Belgium. My delegation extends its full support to the success of your tenure in all activities conducted in fulfilment of the rules of procedure.

As we all know, during the May recess, the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Although not all member States of the Conference on Disarmament are parties to the NPT, the results of the Review Conference are of great significance to the Conference on Disarmament. The conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions set forth in the Final Document, adopted by consensus on 28 May, refer to the Conference on Disarmament in three different actions.

Action 6 reads, and I quote: "All States agree that the Conference on Disarmament should immediately establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament, within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work."

Action 7 reads, and I quote: "All States agree that the Conference on Disarmament should, within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work, immediately begin discussion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, to discuss substantially, without limitation, with a view to elaborating recommendations dealing with all aspects of this issue, not excluding an internationally legally binding instrument. The Review Conference invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene a high-level meeting in September 2010 in support of the work of the Conference on Disarmament."

Action 15 reads, and I quote: "All States agree that the Conference on Disarmament should, within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work, immediately begin negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the report of the Special Coordinator of 1995 (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein. Also in this respect, the Review Conference invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene a high-level meeting in September 2010 in support of the work of the Conference on Disarmament."

All members of the Conference on Disarmament which are also parties to the NPT joined the consensus around the texts I have just read. Consequently, all those States are



politically bound to seek, without delay and together with the entire membership of the Conference on Disarmament, the adoption of a programme of work that will allow those actions to be carried out. The delegation of Brazil shall deploy all efforts to reach this goal and expects that every delegation will support the adoption of such a programme of work.

In addition, I would like to point out the double invitation addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene a high-level meeting in September 2010 in support of the Conference on Disarmament. It is clear that participation in that high-level meeting will not be restricted either to the parties to the Treaty or to the members of the Conference on Disarmament. All States Members of the United Nations may participate in the high-level meeting.

In the remaining months of the current session of the Conference on Disarmament and before that high-level meeting is held in September, we have enough time to discuss and adopt a programme of work and to promptly start its implementation. This is the priority on which we must concentrate our efforts.

As with any other issue in international relations, we have to apply political will and skill, as well as undertaking the necessary work, in order to attain this result. It is self-evident that every member State here represented supports the Conference on Disarmament and wants it to yield positive outcomes. Hence, it is completely possible to overcome the present difficulties.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of Brazil for his statement and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Egypt, speaking on behalf of the Group of 21.

**Mr. Badr** (Egypt): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, to wish you every success during your presidency and to assure you, on behalf of my country and on behalf of the Group of 21, that we are willing and ready to exert every effort to help you in accomplishing your task.

My delegation has been asked by the Group of 21 to outline to the Conference the Group's position on the current state of our work. This position was communicated to you earlier but, in the spirit of transparency, we thought that we would share the same points with all the members of the Conference.

The G-21 is keen for the Conference to continue its work and, in that context, it is eager to see the adoption of a consensual, balanced and comprehensive programme of work as soon as possible. The G-21 stresses the importance of flexibility by all members of the Conference, while strictly adhering to its rules of procedure. To achieve consensus, the President must formally submit any proposal on how to move forward to the Conference for adoption. The G-21 suggests that the President should submit a proposal to the Conference to hold informal discussions on items of the agenda, in a manner similar to previous undertakings, while efforts continue to secure the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work by consensus.

The Group further stresses the need to maintain a constructive atmosphere in the Conference on Disarmament.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

**The President**: Thank you for your statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. RI Jang Gon** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mr. President, initially this presentation was going to be made by our new Ambassador, the Permanent Representative, but an unavoidable engagement made it impossible for him to be here today.

Mr. President, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea wishes on this occasion to draw the attention of member States to the grave situation now prevailing in the Korean Peninsula, caused by the South Korean regime in collaboration with its ally, the United States of America, over the sinking of the South Korean warship, the *Cheonan*.

The present situation in the Korean Peninsula is so grave that a war may break out at any moment.

The South Korean authorities, with the full backing of the United States, groundlessly linked the sinking of the warship from the beginning and finally announced arbitrary "results of investigation", asserting that the warship was sunk by a torpedo attack from a northern submarine.

At the same time, they are foolishly manoeuvring to bring about a "punishment" or "retaliation", and even seeking to apply additional "sanctions" against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through the United Nations Security Council. Now our sons and daughters in uniform and the entire population are on full alert and readiness to react promptly to any punishment or retaliation and to any sanctions infringing upon our State interests with various forms of tough measures, including all-out war.

As the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has already clarified, it has nothing to do with the cause of the sinking of the South Korean warship.

As all of you might well be aware, our entire people are making their utmost efforts to attain the goal of a powerful and prosperous country by the year 2012. For us, we need a peaceful environment more than ever before. From the common view that development presupposes a peaceful environment, anyone who can use logic cannot but have strong doubts about South Korea's claim to link the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the sinking of the warship.

It is none other than the South Korean authorities who desperately need to create a shocking incident like the sinking of the warship in order to ignite a campaign against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and check its progress. The "policy" of the South Korean regime is to deny reconciliation and unity, cooperation and exchange between the North and the South of Korea.

In line with this anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea policy, it has pursued its efforts to destroy the historic 15 June joint declaration and its practical programme and the 4 October declaration, which were welcomed and recognized at home and abroad as milestones for unity and reunification between the North and the South.

The "results of investigation" made by the South Korean regime are sheer fabrication based on assumptions, guesses and supposition.

Just let us reflect for a moment and compare the fabricated case of the South Korean warship and the very, very wanton attack in the Mediterranean Sea. Look at yesterday's voting results in the Human Rights Council. The United States of South Korea is openly supporting the deadly raid by Israeli troops on the Gaza-bound humanitarian aid flotilla. This is just one of the many, many examples of the actions of this peace-breaker.

Today there is no region in the world except the Korean Peninsula that has been in a state of war for half a century. The old armistice regime, a product of the cold war, still persists on the Korean Peninsula, resulting in an unstable situation of neither war nor peace.

It is the consistent stand of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that the objective is to build a lasting peace and realize the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In line with this stand, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea once again has made a proposal to the United States, the party to the armistice agreement, for an early

start to talks aimed at replacing the armistice agreement with a peace treaty this year, the sixtieth year since the outbreak of the Korean War. Conclusion of the peace treaty is a step forward towards creating a peaceful environment on the Korean Peninsula.

This is not an isolated issue. It is, rather, related to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The process of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, clarified in the 19 September Joint Statement adopted at the six-party talks in 2005, calls for totally eliminating substantial nuclear threats posed to the peninsula from the outside, in a verifiable manner, thereby turning the whole Korean Peninsula into a nuclear-free zone on that basis.

Denuclearization presupposes confidence-building. An early conclusion of a peace treaty in the Korean Peninsula, which is still in a state of ceasefire, would help build the confidence needed for denuclearization as early as possible. To conclude a peace treaty is the only reasonable and realistic way to achieve the successful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea believes that its statement today will help member States to have a correct understanding of the truth of the cause as well as of the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in favour of peace and stability in and around the Korean Peninsula.

**The President:** We try to urge members to address bilateral issues outside the Conference on Disarmament. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. RI Jang Gon** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I cannot understand how the President of the Conference could claim that this is a bilateral issue. The situation is so grave that it affects the whole region and, because of this manoeuvre, I thought that it was the right time for me to draw the attention of the member States to it. We have the right to say anything related to the security and stability of each country and the region around it. Thank you.

**The President:** I take note of your statement and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Pakistan.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to welcome the delegations of Russia and the United States for their briefing on their bilateral agreement on arms control. This is an important step in the right direction, but much more must be done on nuclear disarmament in a multilateral forum like the Conference on Disarmament in order to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. This briefing also testifies to the fact that agreements or, for that matter, disagreements, have an impact on the Conference's work.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who is unfortunately not with us, but I have requested the delegation to convey my greetings to him.

Today is the first plenary of the second part of the 2010 session of the Conference on Disarmament. This is an important phase of our work. The first and foremost task at hand is to seek consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the 2010 session. At the conclusion of the first part of the session, you indicated that you would continue your efforts in this regard. We would appreciate it if you could kindly share with us the status and direction of your efforts.

Let me now address the proposal to hold informal meetings and the relevant issues relating to the rules of procedure in this regard.

In the mean time, in your letter of 26 March 2010, you proposed that informal meetings on the issue of fissile materials be organized during the last week of your presidency. A revised version of your proposal was circulated on 19 April 2010, which envisaged four informal meetings on the issue of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. In this letter, you also indicated that the incoming President would hold more informal meetings under agenda items 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The revised proposal, like the original proposal, was flawed, as both contained language not agreed upon in the agenda of the Conference. Accordingly, we conveyed our reasoned objections in writing. We also sought clarifications on certain elements of the proposal and raised questions on other important issues. Your letter of 31 May 2010 has not answered the fundamental questions on the application of the rules of procedure to your proposal to hold informal meetings on topics on which there is no consensus in the Conference. Today's plenary offers a useful opportunity for all members to express their views on how to move forward in an inclusive and transparent manner.

Informal meetings form an important part of the Conference's work and, hence, application of the rules of procedure is essential. As you are fully aware, rule No. 19 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows, has left no ambiguity as to how a proposal on informal meetings is to be implemented.

I will now read you rule 19: "The work of the Conference shall be conducted in plenary meetings, as well as under any additional arrangements agreed by the Conference, such as informal meetings with or without experts."

It is also important to recall rule 18, which states that: "The Conference shall conduct its work and adopt its decisions by consensus."

Keeping in view the fact that there is no agreement in the Conference on your proposal, it is not possible to implement it. The rules do not permit it.

I would request you to indicate which rule(s) of the rules of procedure provide an authority or prerogative to the President to implement a proposal when there is no agreement in the Conference due to objections raised by its members.

The Conference on Disarmament has held informal meetings in the past. But it was done after thorough consultations by the incumbent President at the time with the Conference members and with the full agreement of the Conference. Conference Presidents have presented and implemented their proposals with regard to informal meetings when there was no opposition to their proposals. The meetings, once there was an agreement in the Conference, were held within clearly defined parameters and in a uniform manner. The incumbent President, in coordination with the incoming Presidents, presented a complete schedule of the proposed informal meetings. Those meetings were served by Coordinators, in their individual capacities, and their oral reports had no status.

I have with me — and I can share with you — the programme that was adopted at that time in terms of the formal discussions in 2008 and 2009, which clearly mentions the calendar in which and the sequence in which these issues were considered informally.

With regard to coordination with the incoming President, you indicated in your letter of 19 April 2010 that the succeeding Presidents have expressed their willingness to pursue the exercise of informal meetings. But, according to your speaking notes in your consultations with the Regional Coordinators held on 29 April 2010, you mentioned that it was your *assumption* that the incoming President would continue with the implementation of the proposed informal meetings. The Conference's work cannot be carried out on the basis of mere assumptions.

Let me say a bit about the rule of consensus.

The Conference's work has direct and serious implications for the security of its members. Therefore, the rule of consensus ensures that all members participate in the Conference's work on an equal footing and without any fear that some countries, due to their political clout and economic weight, will ignore the security interests of others. This rule has been fully respected in the past and must be respected now.

In the past, when the Conference's work could not be carried forward because one or two delegations were not able to join in a consensus on certain proposals, it was in accordance with the Conference's rules and so within the rights of Conference delegations to do so. It was frustrating, but other delegations respected these positions and demonstrated patience due to their respect for the rules of procedure.

Today, as in the past, all delegations have the right to use the rule of consensus to ensure that their security interests are not compromised in any manner. We expect the same level of respect for the rules and positions of others without being impatient. The countries that have relied on the rule of consensus in the past are also using it today in other multilateral forums in Geneva, where they deem fit to use it even on procedural matters.

Now I would like to address what I would like to term as the myth or artificial hype that has been created around the issue of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT).

Colleagues will recall that I outlined Pakistan's position on this issue in detail in my statement on 18 February early this year. Today I would like to comment on this artificial hype, which is being presented and pushed as a test of the Conference's relevance and credibility. This approach is factually incorrect, exaggerated and is being used to gain some short-term political mileage for the Governments of some States. This cannot be done at the cost of our security.

If you look objectively at the FMCT issue, all non-nuclear-weapon States under the NPT are legally obliged not to produce fissile material for nuclear-weapon purposes. For them, FMCT is already in place in legal terms. Five nuclear-weapon States under the NPT have formally declared or informally pursued moratoria on the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapon purposes. For them, FMCT is in place for all practical purposes. These countries declared moratoria after determining that the stocks of their fissile materials were sufficient to ensure their security as well as that of their allies. They did not do so in response to calls for FMCT negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. On the contrary, they blocked FMCT negotiations until they were in a position to declare or pursue national moratoria.

This means that FMCT is relevant only for countries outside the NPT. Out of those, two have special dispensations and arrangements, and will thus have no impact on their nuclear-weapon programmes. So FMCT is meant to target only one country: Pakistan. This is unacceptable to us, as we, like other members, have an equal right to define, determine and protect our national security interests.

The issue of discussions or negotiations on the FMCT issue is therefore extremely sensitive for Pakistan. In our view, your proposal for informal discussions focusing exclusively on FMCT is an attempt to start work on FMCT through the back door. We cannot agree to have the Conference misled in this way.

Just as FMCT is important to some member States, other issues on our agenda are equally important to other States, such as nuclear disarmament within a certain time frame, the prohibition of the use of the nuclear umbrella, legally binding instruments on outer space and negative security assurances.

If you, as the President of the Conference, are sensitive, respectful and supportive of the positions of some members, we have a right to expect you to be equally responsive to the security concerns of us all. A fair and just proposal relating to the work of the Conference will always open up the possibility of reaching a consensus through open, transparent and inclusive discussions. In this regard, we assure you and the incoming Presidents that we are open to looking at all proposals in order to make progress.

Mr. President, you will recall that in my letter of 20 April addressed to you, which I shared with all Conference members, I proposed to seek the agreement of the members to hold informal meetings on all agenda items, without any non-consensual text, along with a complete schedule of the proposed informal meetings. In the same letter, I posed the following questions to you: (1) who will chair informal meetings? and (2) will there be a report/outcome of the meetings, and what will be the status of any such report?

I have not received any response so far. You have also not clarified the point raised in my letter of 14 May 2010. If there is no consensus on the issue of FMCT itself, how is it possible even to consider holding debates on sub-themes, such as definitions, scope, verification and institutions?

Yesterday, in your consultations with the G-21, Egypt, in its capacity as Coordinator, conveyed the message of the Group, which, inter alia, reads as follows: "... The Group stresses the importance of flexibility of all parties of the Conference, while strictly abiding by the rules of procedure. The G-21 suggests to the President to submit a proposal to the Conference to hold informal discussions on all items of the agenda similar to previous undertakings, while efforts to continue to reach an agreement on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work are being made ...".

We fully endorse the G-21 statement which has just now been read out by the delegation of Egypt. I am prepared to put this proposal before my Government so that we can begin informal discussions on all agenda items. Therefore, we request that you present a comprehensive proposal to move forward on the issue of informal meetings in the framework of the Conference on all agenda items, with equal time allocation, as was done in the past.

**The President:** I thank you, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Philippines.

**Mr. Garcia (Philippines):** Mr. President, as this is the first time that the Philippines is taking the floor during the presidency of Belgium, allow me to convey our best wishes and assurances of our fullest support to you during your term at the helm of this Conference. In addition, we would like to join others in expressing our appreciation to the representatives of the United States and Russia for the briefing they have provided on their recent bilateral arms control agreement.

It is my great honour and privilege to convey the deep gratitude of the Philippines to the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and particularly to the members of the Geneva-based delegations and to the secretariat for their hard work, dedication and flexibility, which contributed to the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference held last month in New York. Our achievement at the Review Conference has assured the global community that there is indeed reason to continue hoping for the eventual realization of the vision of complete nuclear disarmament.

However, let me stress that the Philippine presidency was a success only because it was a team-presidency, relying on the toil and sacrifice of all nations who participated. Furthermore, we must not rest on our laurels. The Final Document of the Review Conference, arrived at through a hard-won consensus, calls for concrete action. I will, with

your kind indulgence, Mr. President, refer to some of the actions in which the Geneva disarmament community will take interest.

As was previously pointed out by our distinguished colleague from Brazil, the Review Conference has urged the Conference on Disarmament, among other things, to pursue its substantive work without further delay. Our Brazilian colleague has also discussed the points raised in the Final Document with respect to a subsidiary body on disarmament, on assurances, on a fissile material treaty, and on the September 2010 high-level meeting. To all of this, which we of course endorse, we wish to add the view that the success of the Review Conference arose from the fact that it was a transparent and inclusive process. In this connection, therefore, it is important, in our view, that the entirety of the Conference on Disarmament community, both members and observers, should be allowed to contribute to the work of the Conference in this regard. In due time, therefore, we may also revisit the case for an eventual expansion of Conference membership.

As regards the Middle East, the Review Conference affirmed the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and outlined practical steps to be taken towards its implementation. Among those steps is the convening of a conference in 2012 to be attended by all States of the region for the purpose of establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The Review Conference has requested “relevant international organizations to prepare background documentation for the 2012 Conference regarding modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, taking into account work previously undertaken and experience gained”. Furthermore, the Review Conference emphasized “the requirement of maintaining parallel progress, in substance and timing, in the process leading to achieving total and complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the region, nuclear, chemical and biological”. These are subject areas that are, of course, of interest to our Conference on Disarmament community here in Geneva.

On the matter of strengthening the NPT Review Process, the Review Conference has adopted key elements of proposals submitted by States parties in this connection. One of them is the establishment of a coordination and continuity mechanism among the past and incumbent Review Conference Presidents and Chairs. Another is the addition of a dedicated staff officer to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to support the NPT Review Cycle. The Review Conference also affirmed that improving the effectiveness of the strengthened review process is an ongoing responsibility of States parties. Accordingly, we in Geneva have a role to play in the improvement of this process. Let me also add in this regard that many delegations from Geneva helped to secure this particular consensual outcome.

Speaking from our other recent experiences, the Philippine presidency greatly benefited from the wisdom and guidance of past Presidents and Chairs, as well as from other experts assembled for us through the efforts of the James Martin Center for Non-Proliferation Studies (CNS) and supporting States parties in Annecy and Nyon earlier this year. We relied on the superhuman efforts of the UNODA secretariat in supporting the Review Conference and are astonished by the fact that up to now there has been no dedicated full-time officer or staff for the NPT in that body.

On disarmament education, the Review Conference underscored “the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education as a useful and effective means to advance the goals of the Treaty in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons” and encouraged all States to support the United Nations Secretary-General’s related report (A/57/124). In this connection, we must continue to support the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which also was of great assistance in helping us to prepare for the Review Conference, as well as other academic and research

institutes such as CNS, the Acronym Institute and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC), to name just a few.

On civil society, finally, I cannot emphasize enough the invaluable role played by all of civil society in contributing to the cause of disarmament in general and to the success of the Review Conference held last May in New York in particular. Geneva civil society was well represented in New York, and we commend it for the role it has played and its contributions.

The Philippines stands ready to participate fully in the work of the Conference on Disarmament and of the Geneva disarmament community for the realization of the actions set out in the NPT Review Conference Final Document. Let us all stand united and march together towards the fulfilment of the dream of a world free from nuclear weapons.

**The President:** I thank you, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Belarus.

**Mr. Khvostov** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to make a short statement, Mr. President, firstly to support your efforts as President and secondly to touch on a number of issues related mainly to the briefing we have just heard. I do so in order to ensure that my country's position is reflected in the Conference documents.

I should like, Mr. President, to express my support for your efforts to achieve a consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the Conference on the basis of the proposal before us. I am sure that the draft programme of work contained in document CD/WP.559 continues to provide a viable basis for reaching the agreement we need to begin the substantive work of the Conference.

I welcome your holding of consultations with the relevant delegations during the intersessional period, including consultations on the question of holding informal debates on the items on the Conference's agenda. I would suggest that if we do not have an agreed programme of work, we should, as in previous years, hold informal debates exclusively in the context of the Conference, respecting the principle of a balance between the four key items on the Conference's agenda. The main objective of such debates is to have an engaged exchange of views with the constructive involvement of all interested delegations.

On the occasion of the briefing by the representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America on the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms I should like to state that my country welcomes the signing of the Treaty by those two countries on 8 April 2010. We see this as a serious contribution to strengthening strategic security and stability in the world.

We support the intention of both sides to develop effective measures to further reduce offensive weapons, which may create the conditions to make the nuclear disarmament process irreversible and multilateral. Indeed, further successes in the direction of disarmament will depend to a large degree on the collective efforts of all interested members of the international community.

We note with pleasure that the Joint Statement of 4 December 2009 by the Russian Federation and the United States of America on the expiration of the START Treaty recognized the fundamental contribution of Belarus to the Treaty's successful implementation and confirmed the application, as of that date, of the guarantees given in the Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with the Accession of Belarus to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed in Budapest on 5 December 1994.



We assume that each of the Parties will guarantee respect for paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned Budapest memorandum; if not, the Joint Statement of 4 December 2009 would be politically meaningless.

We are pleased that the action plan contained in the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference that ended last week, which was adopted by consensus, requires nuclear States to fully respect their existing commitments with regard to security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

In the light of the experience Belarus has gained as a Party during implementation of the 1991 START Treaty and other international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements, we look forward to continued political dialogue and expert cooperation in this area.

**The President:** I thank you, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. IM Han-taek** (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, let me first of all express my thanks, together with the other delegates, to Assistant Secretary Rose Gottemoeller of the United States and Ambassador Anatoly Antonov of the Russian Federation. I would also like to express my congratulations on their joint achievement in this important area. Let me also join other delegates who spoke before me in congratulating the new Ambassador from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We believe that he can have a very positive impact on the forthcoming progress of the Conference's work.

Because there are no clear instructions about this matter, I do not know how to respond to the allegations made by the distinguished delegate from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but I am very much saddened, and I also believe that it is very unfortunate and disturbing to hear the distinguished delegate from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea denounce another member State without presenting any substantiating evidence. We believe it is only for propaganda purposes. We believe that the act which was committed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a clear breach of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as a grave violation of the armistice agreement which was concluded in 1953 between the relevant parties.

As for the attack, we have presented unavoidable and undeniable evidence after a week-long investigation was carried out by international teams. We believe that there is no doubt at all about the integrity of those investigation results and outcomes.

The Conference on Disarmament is at a critical juncture because we have been stalled for many years and, now, inspired by the positive outcome of the recent NPT Review Conference, we believe that it is time for all Conference members to move forward without opening any new additional issues which are not relevant to the work of the Conference. We do not want to escalate the issue which was raised by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea here, because we believe that the Conference is the only forum for disarmament negotiation and, particularly, as I said, that the entire membership should join in an all-out effort to break its deadlock. We do not want the Conference on Disarmament to turn into a political arena which will create another impediment to the smooth running of the Conference.

However, as I said earlier, as we do not have any clear instructions from our Government, I would like to make it crystal clear that we reserve the right to come back to these issues in detail at a proper time and when necessary.

Finally, I would like to ask you to rectify a factual error which was made yesterday in the Human Rights Council by the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with regard to our balloting record in relation to the aid flotilla.

**The President:** Once again, I would like to urge members to address bilateral issues outside the Conference on Disarmament.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States of America.

**Ms. Kennedy** (United States of America): Mr. President, I would like to echo the words of my distinguished colleagues from Pakistan and the Republic of Korea in welcoming the new representative from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I agree with you that the Conference on Disarmament is not perhaps the appropriate forum for regional issues. Because my own country was mentioned, however, I would like to say, briefly, that I do agree with the statement made today that the situation on the Korean Peninsula is very grave, but in all other respects I disagree with the statement that was made and reject those allegations against my country. I agree with my distinguished colleague from the Republic of Korea that the investigation that was carried out was scrupulous and painstaking, and we certainly accept without a doubt the results that clearly indicated where the blame lay.

Let me turn now to the business of the Conference on Disarmament and, again, thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership as well as that displayed by our colleague from Belarus and our incoming President from Brazil. Of course we are delighted to work with all of you. We thank you for your leadership and your unceasing efforts to pursue consensus on a programme of work, which I think we all agree is the most important thing we can do.

I also wanted to say that I found very much to agree with in the various statements that were made today on the work of the Conference. We are keen for the Conference to work. We believe flexibility should be shown by all parties, that there should be strict adherence to the rules of procedure, and that we should strive for a constructive atmosphere. I completely agree with my colleague and I hope that he, my good friend, Ambassador Akram, will agree that the Conference is a body of 65 completely equal Governments.

Having said that, however, we do believe that the President is acting within the rules of procedure in terms of suggesting agenda items taken from our agreed agenda from the beginning of the year; there was consensus on that agenda. So, if indeed he proposes discussions on agenda items 1 and 2 and if the succeeding Presidents agree to continue informal discussions on those agenda items, in speaking for my Government, I can say that we are equally happy to engage in those informal discussions, whether it be agenda items 1 and 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, whether it is FMCT, space, negative security assurances or the nuclear weapons convention. Whatever the case may be, we are delighted to participate in such informal discussions. Of course, we realize that there may be disagreements on the rules of procedure, but our belief is that the President is indeed acting within them in terms of various points, for example, the briefings today, which I assume were offered by the President within his prerogative in regard to subjects covered under agenda items 1 through 7.

We thus look forward to a full exchange of views in these informal discussions, whether regarding agenda items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7.

**The President:** Thank you, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Cuba.

**Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation has requested the floor to make a brief statement; we do not want to take up much of the time accorded to other delegations who are waiting to speak.

First of all, allow me to say how delighted my country is that the Conference is meeting again and devoting greater effort to reaching a consensus on our work.

That said, Mr. President, allow me to reiterate the importance that my country attaches to stepping up efforts to reach consensus on a programme of work. We also wish to say that such efforts and discussions should be undertaken in a transparent way and in strict adherence to the rules of procedure of this body.

Any programme of work eventually adopted by this Conference must be sufficiently comprehensive and balanced to take into account all the interests and priorities represented in this hall. In other words, Mr. President, no item should take precedence over another.

Lastly, Cuba reaffirms its readiness to continue working to reach a consensus on the programme of work and to move towards achieving the objectives of this forum.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. You have the floor, sir.

**Mr. Khabbaz Hamoui** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Thank you, Mr. President. I should first like to welcome His Excellency the Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to this Conference and wish him every success in his work. I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for your persistent and painstaking efforts to make progress in our work. We do not doubt your sincerity or your intentions, but we would note that the fruit is not yet ripe for the picking notwithstanding your sincere efforts and those of the six Presidents and all concerned.

Mr. President, our common goal is to arrive at a programme of work that satisfies all, that takes into account the wishes, concerns and security interests of all States and that is also based on our rules of procedure. We support your efforts, those of the six Presidents and those of all groups to achieve that goal.

Mr. President, I wish to emphasize our support for the statement made on behalf of the Group of 21 by the representative of Egypt. I would also like to address the following points. First, we must not confuse the substantive work of the Conference with the rules of procedure. The rules of procedure are the proper mechanism for safeguarding any decision that the Conference might issue. Moreover, they have been and remain an effective safeguard for all the instruments that the Conference on Disarmament has adopted in the past. Secondly, the rules of procedure of the Conference on Disarmament belong to the Conference. The Conference is competent to read and interpret its working procedures; it is in full control and is not subject to different mechanisms or interpretations by different parties. Even the Security Council can only make recommendations on disarmament issues, as Article 26 of the Charter stipulates. Thirdly, the Conference on Disarmament adopted an appropriate consultation mechanism four years ago in the form of the P-6. Even though it is not yet a formal mechanism for the work of the Conference, it proved useful when the Conference adopted the programme of work and named coordinators for the seven items. The seven delegations worked in different ways, but the mechanism proved useful to some extent.

With regard to informal meetings, we have no objection to adopting this method, provided that such meetings deal with the four Conference on Disarmament items and not merely with one item. We continue to differ with regard to giving precedence to one topic over another; the Group of 21 is of the view that the item on disarmament is the first priority, over which no other item has precedence.

In conclusion, Mr. President, my country's delegation will spare no effort to cooperate with the Presidents and delegations to make collective, constructive and consensual progress.

**The President:** Thank you. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Algeria.

**Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria): Mr. President, I will wait until the Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is present to congratulate him, but I would like, in the meantime, to express my gratitude to the United States and Russian delegations for having given us the opportunity to listen to Ambassadors Antonov and Gottemoeller on the achievement of the new START agreement. I would like to address, through them, our warm congratulations to the two countries concerned and to express the hope that this new step will indeed be followed by others, so that we can achieve a world free of nuclear weapons within our lifetime.

Secondly, I would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Cabactulan of the Philippines, who guided the Review Conference which took place in New York so skilfully and in which I had the privilege to participate. Because of his great modesty, like that of the Philippine Ambassador present here with us today, he attributed numerous virtues to many of us who were at times raising problems but, in fact, the Ambassador played a remarkable role, and the Philippines should be congratulated by all of us.

Thirdly, I would like to refer to our work here in the Conference now and to say that I associate myself with the statement made by Egypt in the name of the G-21. My delegation also understands the concerns of Pakistan, and we need to make sure that we have everybody on board because this is a consensus-driven organization. That having been said, I think that the Conference has a duty — I would say even an obligation — to keep up the positive momentum which we thought we had created last year, but which then subsided as we were overtaken by others in the field of disarmament. But there is positive momentum now, thanks to the initiatives that have come from several quarters — national Governments, bilateral agreements, the NPT Review Conference — and I think that we also have a responsibility to contribute to this momentum.

I would like to return to what the distinguished Ambassadors from the United States and Russia said about the new START agreement. They said that, whilst this was progress at the bilateral level between two key nuclear powers, it would have an impact on all of us because it diminishes the threat of conflict within this globalized world. *Mutatis mutandis*, I would say that this also applies, to a certain extent, to the tension on the Korean Peninsula. It is not entirely a bilateral issue. When peace is undermined, or if there is a threat of local conflict involving a nuclear power, it is an issue which is of concern to all of us, and I respectfully wish to mention, following the comments of the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, that some regional issues are of concern to the Conference on Disarmament; for example, a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East is an issue that we have often discussed here. I would therefore not rule out all regional issues from our discussions.

Allow me to return to the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament. I think that we have two series of obligations. We have our primary obligation to adopt a programme of work and achieve some progress. The Ambassador of Brazil read out some of the action points from the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference which incite us, encourage us, to do just that. I do realize that not all of us in the Conference are parties to the NPT, but still it is a message, it is a reminder that we need to pursue our efforts to try to agree on a programme of work. We must not give up. We must pursue this effort on a daily basis. If we talk about a possibility of having informal meetings, that is fine, but we must not lose sight of that fact that we have to pursue our main task, which is seeking an agreement on the programme of work. This must continue. It must not be postponed.

As to the informal meetings that we could organize in parallel, as it were, with this main objective, I think that, substantially, we all agree that we have to respect what the rules of procedure say about the programme of work. I have not heard anybody say that

they want to change the rules of procedure. This is a bond that unites every single one of us. Now, if we agree to the rules of procedure, then we have, as the Ambassador of the United States reminded us, seven items that we have been discussing so far as possible components of this programme of work. We could take any approach to the consideration of these items, including an informal discussion.

There is nothing wrong with discussing these issues, and I do not think that there is anybody in the Conference who would disagree. The problem lies in the way that the issue came up. First, the focus was on one subject, then the focus was on four subjects. I suggested to the President informally, and I did not feel that he was allergic to this proposal, to simply put the seven issues on the table, because people are all very concerned, and rightly so, for national security reasons, about having a parallel approach and ensuring that one subject is not put forward at the expense of another. I do not think that anybody would disagree with discussing these seven subjects informally, even sequentially, if necessary, provided that there is a clear calendar for their discussion and provided that there is no disagreement among the present Presidents and future Presidents. The Presidents would, after all, only reflect the position of the Conference itself. As the Ambassador of Syria has said, it is the Conference on Disarmament that is sovereign. So if we decide that we are going to have a programme with a timetable for the consideration of all these issues, nobody could consider this to be a tentative proposal; it would be something that any future president would have to go along with.

It seems to me that perhaps if we put all these seven issues on the table and we discuss them, it would be best for us to refrain from going into sub-issues and sub-sub-issues because we would then have too many units of discussion. I would suggest that we refer to past practice and consider having coordinators; those coordinators could then present, on their own responsibility, the conclusions reached at the end of the discussion. The report of the Conference could simply say that there were informal discussions, as has been done in the past. This is intended to answer the question put by the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan, and I do not see that there should be any problem if we all agree on this approach.

I would like to conclude by saying that we need to remember that this is a bridge-building exercise. It is not easy for you, Mr. President, to find a common denominator, but we very much appreciate your efforts. We support you and we have confidence in you. What is needed now is simply for all of us to agree now on such an approach. I suggest that perhaps you could prepare, on the basis of what I have just said and the views expressed by others, a paper that would dispel the sense of discomfort that some of us have experienced.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of France. You have the floor, sir.

**Mr. Danon** (France) (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Mr. President. I shall begin as many of my predecessors have done by thanking Ambassador Anatoly Antonov and Ms. Gottemoeller for their presentation; I should also like to thank the Philippine delegation and ask them to thank Mr. Libran Cabactulan, President of the NPT Review Conference, once again for his excellent work, not just for a month, but also for the year leading up to the Review Conference.

A word now on the Conference on Disarmament: first the substance, to assure my colleague and friend, the Ambassador of Pakistan, that the idea of negotiating a fissile materials treaty is not directed against Pakistan alone. Negotiation of such a treaty is an additional legal instrument of universal interest. For those countries that have declared a moratorium, it will result in a legal instrument of far greater value than the moratorium alone, and for countries that are parties to the NPT, as for those that are not, it will provide an additional legal instrument for rendering the high-level "enrichment" of fissile materials

impossible, thus eliminating a slight ambiguity from article 2 and article 3, paragraph 1, of the NPT; and, lastly, for those countries that are not parties to the NPT, it effectively puts a quantitative brake on production and thus on any expansion of nuclear arsenals.

That said, as with any international negotiations, if a country does not wish to become a party to the treaty or if, once the treaty is finally ready, a country still does not wish to be a party, there is nothing to prevent this. I am still amazed that negotiations on the subject cannot start in the present circumstances because, unlike in previous years, circumstances have changed radically where the possible negotiation of a treaty of this type is concerned.

I shall turn now to the rules contained in the Conference's rules of procedure. I think that we are making progress thanks to the proposal by the Group of 21 and to what the Ambassador of Algeria has just said. In any case, there are prospects for working informally. I think that we must move away from ambiguity in interpreting the rules of procedure. The problem with the individual rules is that while we are quite familiar with them, they are ambiguous. I would propose that the Conference secretariat provide us with an interpretation of rules 18 and 19 in particular, that if perhaps not "definitive" is in any case strong and thus help us out of this situation.

I know that this is difficult, I know that they can be interpreted in several ways, but given that they can be interpreted in several ways, we do not want to spend years with some people thinking that the incumbent President can do more or less what he or she wants, and others thinking that the incumbent President cannot do anything. We need to get out of this situation. It would thus be helpful if someone could act as a judge and give us a ruling, if I can put it like that.

Once again, I admit that this may be rather complicated, as the rules of procedure are ambiguous. No one is challenging them, that is not the issue. But many people interpret them differently. That is the problem, and I think that we have to dispense with this ambiguity if we want to overcome this current impasse. Of course, if everyone agrees that we should hold informal meetings on all topics that will be wonderful. But if that is not the case and we spend yet another year asking who is going to head this working group and what the timetable of that working group will be, I think that we will once again lose momentum in the negotiations or the discussions that we want to see held.

I therefore propose that we work on the hypotheses outlined earlier, and that we also make a genuine effort to interpret the rules of procedure so that we can finally get back to work.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Thank you, esteemed colleagues. We are going to have to conclude our meeting. We have taken note of the list of speakers who still wish to take the floor, and they will certainly be able to do so next week.

For my part, I should like to emphasize that consultations on the programme of work have continued and will continue until the end of my term as President. I must nevertheless say that I have nothing new to tell you at this time.

As I mentioned in my letter of 19 April, I intend to begin holding informal meetings on the agenda items next week, starting with items 1 and 2. These meetings will be open to all members of the Conference and observers who wish to take part, and will be chaired by representatives of Member States acting in their personal capacity.

The first meetings will be held on 7, 8, 9 and 10 June and will consider agenda items 1 and 2. I shall continue my consultations with the delegations that will be chairing the Conference in the future to ensure that discussions are held on all agenda items, particularly the last three. As a number of delegations have requested, I shall inform delegations in writing of the results of the consultations.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that the organization of informal discussions between members of the Conference is, I believe, very much a part of the President's duties, as it is standard practice in any multilateral organization.

I should like by way of conclusion, simply to assure you, should such a thing be necessary, that I consider myself to be everyone's President and that I intend to continue as such until the end of my term, while seeking to ensure the well-being of all.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*