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# Conference on Disarmament

14 September 2010

English

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

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 14 September 2010, at 10.20 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Anatole Fabien Marie Nkou .....(Cameroon)

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I declare open the 1197th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have two delegations on the list of speakers for today. The list remains open and I would above all like for us, at the start of this meeting, to first discuss the good work that has been accomplished – that is, the draft report of the activities of the Conference. I would also like to say that a number of meetings and gatherings have been devoted to this draft report and that all the paragraphs have been adopted. So we will begin by considering this point.

Then, as I said, the list of speakers remains open. There are already two on my list. During this part of our plenary session today, I will give the floor to all the delegations that wish to express their views or their feelings about the work we have accomplished here at the Conference on Disarmament — for we have done good work and worked a lot, as the report shows — or to communicate their views on the high-level meeting that the Secretary-General of the United Nations has called for 24 September 2010 in New York.

That is what I had to say by way of introduction to this plenary meeting. If you allow me, let us move on to adopting the draft report.

On that point, I will perhaps give the floor to our secretariat, which will provide a very brief summary of the document.

**Mr. Sareva** (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference): Mr. President, the secretariat has, in line with established practice, made available to the delegations document CD/WP.561/Amend.1. It should reflect the provisional agreement reached at the informal meetings last week and this week. In this connection, I should emphasize that the blanks in the revised and amended draft report, such as those relating to the number of meetings or the date of the adoption of the report, will be filled in by the secretariat. Furthermore, all documents that have already been submitted to the secretariat before the adoption of the report will be added to the lists of documents under the appropriate subsections.

The document that you have before you (CD/WP.561/Amend.1) reflects the amendments made to the various paragraphs during the informal consultations, as we recorded them. As you can see, those paragraphs to which no amendments were made have not been included in this document and will appear in the final document, CD/WP.561, in their original form.

If you have any questions for the secretariat, any observations, any corrections, if you see anything you think might be amiss in document CD/WP.561/Amend.1, now is the time to notify the secretariat.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the secretariat, and I give the floor –

**Mr. Sareva** (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference): Mr. President, sorry, there is one correction that we need to make orally. I wish to draw your attention to paragraph 7 of document CD/WP.561/Amend.1. The seventh line should read: “They also welcomed the concerted efforts by the presidents of the Conference on Disarmament ...”. This, I believe, reflects the agreement reached during informal consultations.

**Ms. Kennedy** (United States of America): Mr. President, of course I noted the statement by the secretariat that all the papers submitted would be included. I just wanted to note that we have also submitted a working paper on the position of the United States on the high-level meeting on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations.

**Mr. Macedo Soares** (Brazil) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I do not know whether you would prefer to finish the adoption of the report before hearing statements

regarding the high-level meeting of 24 September. In either case, my delegation will accept your decision.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Ambassador. I would like for us to wrap up the report first. We will then move on to discussing the high-level meeting.

**Mr. Khabbaz Hamoui** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would first like to thank the secretariat for the enormous amount of work it has carried out for us. There is a minor repetition on page 4: paragraphs 33 and 36 are identical.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I believe that the secretariat will take note of that in order to correct it.

**Mr. Wilson** (Australia): Mr. President, as this is the first time we have taken the floor during your presidency, we congratulate you on assuming the presidency. I also wish to thank the secretariat for all its work on the report.

I have just one brief point to make, which is that Australia has registered two papers late in the day with the secretariat; my apologies to all. These papers were presented during the informal discussions on items 1 and 2 in June. I just wanted to advise the Conference of that.

**The President**: The secretariat will take note of that.

**Mr. Sareva** (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference): Mr. President, the secretariat has taken note of the interventions by the delegations of the United States and Australia. Those reports submitted before the adoption of the report will be duly reflected in the lists of documents under the relevant sub-items.

I would also like to draw your attention to two minor editorial corrections that will be made. I am now referring to document CD/WP.561/Amend.1. On page 1, in paragraph 3, the comma at the end of the first line will have to be removed. Secondly, on page 3, in paragraph 18, the word “any” in the first line will have to be deleted. In other words, the paragraph will begin: “No consensus was reached on either of the proposals ...”.

As far as the other point raised by the Ambassador of Syria is concerned (paragraphs 33 and 36), if you go back to the original draft in document CD/WP.561, paragraphs 33 and 36 are intentionally identical under the two agenda items, namely “Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament” on the one hand, and “Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters” on the other hand. The corrections made, as reflected in document CD/WP.561/Amend.1, are identical, because the original paragraphs were identical.

That is what I wished to note at this stage.

**Mr. Manfredi** (Italy): Mr. President, a couple of things. First of all, concerning the comma that was deleted on page 1, in paragraph 3. I think the comma should be inserted after the word “items”, on page 1. Then, paragraphs 32 and 35 are also identical, but perhaps that is intentional. Finally, yesterday I signed off a letter to the Secretary-General attaching a working paper from my Government, and I do not know if it has arrived yet, but if it is possible to insert a reference to it in the report, I should be very grateful.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Ambassador. I believe that the secretariat has taken note of your comments.

**Mr. Vasiliev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, I would like to add my voice to those thanking the secretariat and yourself for the work that you have done. I would make one technical observation. As has already been noted, a rather long list of repetitive paragraphs appears on page 4 for reasons that are quite understandable. However, paragraphs 34 and 37 are missing. I therefore suggest that the paragraphs be renumbered.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I would like first to thank the representative of the Russian Federation for this excellent contribution and then to say that this is not the final document, so such a contribution is absolutely necessary. Naturally, the secretariat will take careful note of it so that everything is done properly.

**Mr. Rao** (India): Mr. President, let me join others in appreciating the hard work you have done and the work which has been done by the secretariat for the speedy adoption of the report.

I should like to draw your attention to the fourth line of paragraph 7. I think that the programme of work was adopted by consensus in 2009, not in 2010. I think it is a typographical error and will need to be corrected.

We would like to go back to that situation.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Ambassador. You have cheered us up, which is very important. This observation, this positive contribution, will be duly taken into account by the secretariat.

Do any other delegations wish to make a statement on the adoption of the report? As that is apparently not the case, should I then consider the draft report as adopted, taking into account, of course, all the observations and positive contributions that have been made? I solemnly declare adopted the draft report of our activities.

Laughter is the best ending. Better to laugh than cry, but this really is a great achievement. It is a great achievement in that, despite what some may say, the Conference on Disarmament is alive and will live on.

The report that has just been adopted is the epitome of this, of the fact that we have had many exchanges, have mutually benefited from each other and been attentive to the mandates given to us by our respective States. Of course, people will focus on the fact that we have not managed to agree on a programme of work — which, granted, is a failing — but, aside from that, we have worked hard, and that is commendable. I especially wish to congratulate each of you, each of the delegations that have contributed to this achievement. But our work is not over. We must also work together to prepare a draft resolution for adoption by the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

I will keep in touch with you. I will submit the draft resolution to you for improvement or amendment, so that a very high-quality document can be adopted by the First Committee.

Now, as you know, many delegations have asked to speak about the high-level meeting to be held in New York on 24 September. I think we have the time to do that, and I humbly ask any delegation that wishes to speak on that topic to do so.

I open the floor to delegations wishing to make a statement. On the topic of the high-level meeting of 24 September 2010, do not be shy, speak up!

**Mr. Macedo Soares** (Brazil) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, it is my nature to be shy, but I will try not to be.

Firstly, thank you for the way you have led our work so far. We witnessed the apparent ease and fluidity with which the report was considered and adopted. That was thanks to your leadership, and I say “so far” because I am pleased that you will continue to preside over the Conference until 24 January 2011.

(*continued in English*)

Mr. President, I am informed that this meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is the last one for the time being to be attended by the Deputy Permanent Representative of

the United States of America, our colleague Garold Larson. I cannot let this occasion go by without saying that, for my part and that of the Brazilian delegation, we will miss his diplomatic style, his precision, his firmness and his courtesy. I am sure that Ambassador Kennedy is losing a first-rate collaborator, and I wish Mr. Larson the best in his future duties, in his career and in his personal life, and the same for his family.

As we approach the end of this year's session, I should like to make a brief comment on the work of the Conference on Disarmament which, I hope, has some relevance for the consideration of the high-level meeting of 24 September.

A number of colleagues have repeatedly, throughout the current year, as well as in previous sessions, voiced complaints about the inactivity of the Conference on Disarmament. The argument can be summarized by the fact that this year, as in the previous 10 years or so, the Conference has not undertaken any negotiation on disarmament, or even adopted a programme of work, which, according to the rules of procedure, should be the basis for starting a negotiation.

The blame is laid on the institution itself or on the rules that govern it. We even hear comments about Geneva not being a propitious location. Of course, it is especially comfortable to be able to attribute the responsibility to one member State. All this — if I may use an expression common in my country — is nothing more than “crocodile tears”.

At this point in time, it is necessary to say that, throughout the session, I could not discern any clear political will on the part of the nuclear-weapon States. I am not sure that all regional groups have the same desire to change the situation. Having occupied one of the six presidencies in 2010, having consulted all delegations one by one, and having met all regional groups, I have a clear picture.

Notwithstanding the absence of negotiations and the impossibility of adopting a programme of work, I think that the Conference did function as a political body, and here I am echoing your words of a few moments ago. The simple fact that since the beginning of the year we have negotiated different possibilities for a programme of work is in itself evidence of the political significance of the Conference, which comes from the political pre-eminence of the matter itself. The refusal to accept a programme of work and the avoidance of real negotiations on nuclear disarmament are political attitudes. The same can be said of the opposite actions to find a way forward.

All institutions can be reformed, and many delegations are ready to back a special session of the General Assembly in order to examine the matter. Others prefer to keep lamenting this status quo and — so they say — the waste of time and money. Time is certainly relevant when we deal with highly political issues, albeit of extended duration, and diplomacy is also a matter of patience. As far as money is concerned, I doubt that States judge multilateral structures in terms of cash flow or cost benefit.

My delegation is prepared to continue the search for a safer and more democratic international system in this high-level institution.

**Mr. Grinius** (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, firstly, let me warmly congratulate you. It is thanks to your leadership as President that we were able to adopt the Conference report this year, and fairly quickly at that.

(*continued in English*)

Secondly, I would certainly like to associate myself with the words of the representative of Brazil, Ambassador Soares, in terms of his comments regarding the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States delegation, Mr. Larson. To the list of attributes that Ambassador Soares has already mentioned, I would add two more: Mr.

Larson's great patience and, equally important, his sense of humour, which of course we all need in this particular body.

I should like to turn now to a few comments regarding the high-level meeting and this distinguished body. We believe that the high-level meeting of 24 September is a timely opportunity to discuss the multilateral disarmament machinery, and particularly the Conference on Disarmament. For Canada, it is deeply regrettable that, since 1998, this body has not undertaken any disarmament negotiations – which is, after all, its sole mandate.

Just as the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978 recognized the need for “a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of limited size”, a subsequent special session also recognized in its declaration that “all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations”. This was a clear acknowledgement that the Conference on Disarmament was intended to be accountable to the larger global community, and not just accountable to itself. Since 1998, for 12 years, we in this body have collectively failed the peoples of the world as we have failed to commence negotiations.

As the Conference stalemate continues, with no early prospects for negotiations in sight, Canada finds it increasingly untenable that 65 States take upon themselves the job of multilateral disarmament negotiations, given the failure of this group to fulfil its mandate. In particular, it is of concern that the Conference is becoming an obstacle to — and not a vehicle for — such negotiations; and, of course, I listened very, very carefully to our colleague from Brazil and his take on the situation.

The consensus rule under which the Conference is to operate may have been appropriate for the cold war, but it is no longer suited to today's multipolar environment in which the old regional blocs have lost their relevance. The use of the consensus rule in the Conference has increasingly drifted far away from its original intent of serving as an ultimate guarantor of a State's security. The consensus rule is now abused by a handful of States in order to block this body from starting its work. It is now an open question whether a body of 65 States can ever operate under the strict interpretation of consensus, if it is applied not only to substantive but also to procedural matters.

Canada will hold the first presidency during the 2011 session of the Conference and we intend to invest our time and energy in achieving consensus on a programme of work that includes negotiations. However, just as we commit ourselves to working tirelessly towards this goal, we should also not lose the opportunity provided by next week's high-level meeting in New York. It should be a significant opportunity to rethink our approach to, and our understanding of, the multilateral disarmament paradigm.

If the paralysis in this forum continues next year, we will have achieved the dubious distinction of matching the length of the Conference's previous spell of inaction between its relaunch in 1979 and the conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction in 1992. Worse still, we cannot even point to an equivalent to the substantive Chemical Weapons Convention negotiations that took place during that period despite the lack of an outcome. This regrettable prospect is yet another clarion call for action to end this forum's stagnation. Accordingly, Canada is among those States which would like to see the outcome of and a follow-up to the high-level meeting to recommend a deadline for this body.

**Ms. Kennedy** (United States of America): Mr. President, I had not realized that today's plenary might be the last of this period, or I would not have left my distinguished colleague from Brazil, as well as my equally distinguished colleague from Canada, to beat me to the microphone in bidding farewell to my very distinguished colleague Gary Larson.

I could go on and on praising him, but I want to spare your patience and also the cost of interpretation, so I will simply say he is the best.

Also, if I am not mistaken — and please correct me if I am — if this is the last plenary meeting we attend, it is also the last for our distinguished Pakistani colleague. I also wanted to offer similarly warm words in his regard, but, as always, I will let the Pakistanis have the last word on whether this is his last plenary meeting.

Again, I neglected to say before, Mr. President, how much we appreciate your efforts and those of your staff and of the secretariat for all their work on our behalf. A heartfelt thank you to you all.

Although I have just spoken on the high-level meeting, I should like to add a few words in view of the other good statements that have been made today. Now, I know this is the Conference on Disarmament, not the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). However, I would note that that body of 189 States did call on the Conference on Disarmament to adopt a balanced programme of work that includes mandates for negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and substantive discussions on nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

As we all know, we are unable to agree on a programme of work today that would allow these FMCT negotiations to proceed. We are eager and willing to engage on the full range of core issues, but, turning specifically to the FMCT, I would note that we are under no illusions that such a treaty could be concluded quickly. It would take years and years, but it is for this very reason that we do not believe that we can afford further delay. If efforts to start negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament continue to stall, those countries that still wish to negotiate an FMCT will have to consider whether there are other forums, existing or ad hoc. I know we spend a lot of time talking about whether this is the single or the sole multilateral disarmament forum. As a matter of fact, I would say it is the single or sole standing body, but we all know that there are many other forums tackling many key issues.

Now, as you are all probably aware, my Government has shown little enthusiasm for ad hoc negotiations among smaller groups of like-minded States. We continue to believe the Conference on Disarmament is an institution that has produced landmark treaties. It includes so many distinguished diplomats and experienced statesmen from all of these States. It ought to be able to tackle this work, but, after well over a decade of inaction, new approaches may be called for. My Government is certainly looking into that, and it should come as no surprise that patience is running out for many States, including my own.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Ambassador and distinguished colleagues, I would like to join you in sincerely congratulating Mr. Larson. He will be greatly missed. On behalf of the Conference, I would like to extend to him our sincere thanks for the work he has accomplished here, and to wish him luck. May his talents continue to be used in the service of his country, the United States of America, but also of the international community.

**Mr. Woolcott** (Australia): Mr. President, may I congratulate you on the smooth way in which you have conducted our work, and most notably on the adoption of our report today.

At the plenary meeting of 24 August, Australia offered some initial comments on the Secretary-General's forthcoming high-level meeting in New York. You will recall that we expressed Australia's strong support for the Secretary-General's initiative in calling the high-level meeting and our strong support for the Secretary-General's prerogative to call that meeting and present a summary of that meeting. Our support remains as strong as ever.

Just over three months ago in New York, States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted by consensus an action plan at the NPT Review Conference. The action plan is a road map. It is forward-looking. It guides States parties to the NPT for the next five years on issues that cross all three pillars of the Treaty, and includes recommendations, under the first pillar (nuclear disarmament), on the focus and the substantive work that the Conference on Disarmament should be doing. Documents CD/1864 and CD/1889 are fully consistent with those recommendations.

Looking towards New York next week, we have an early opportunity to support the implementation of the action plan in relation to this forum. Australia urges States parties to the NPT — the overwhelming majority of States here — to value what we, as the NPT membership, collectively achieved in May under the leadership of Ambassador Cabactulan of the Philippines. We should get on with the job of supporting the implementation of the action plan, including in relation to the Conference on Disarmament, so that it can once again assume a meaningful role in the disarmament arena.

Before concluding, may I add my words to those of the other ambassadors and the President in wishing Mr. Larson all the best for his work and life in Florida; his attributes have already been well listed.

**Mr. Danon** (France) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, it is my turn to thank you for the way you have led us, under difficult conditions, to adopting this year's report. The way you led all the preliminary consultations was absolutely remarkable.

I also wish to join all those who have congratulated two distinguished deputies as they leave. They are among those deputies who breathe life into missions and the Conference, namely, our colleagues from the United States of America and Pakistan, who have also become our friends.

Substantively — I do not know whether we will reopen here an umpteenth debate on the future of the Conference on Disarmament — we can feel that impatience and frustration are mounting. Will all this eventually lead to significant changes? Certainly. There will come a time when, if the system remains deadlocked for years, we will have to deal with the consequences. Will that be now or later? We can feel the debate escalating, and impatience as well.

A few events were very important this year, starting of course with the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). What matters, beyond adopting the plan of action by consensus, is that the plan addresses all three areas — in other words, disarmament, non-proliferation and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes — demonstrating for the first time that the international community is prepared to review nuclear issues in a comprehensive and balanced fashion. This is a key outcome.

Regarding the disarmament component, we now have a road map, an action plan, and I can assure you — and we shall demonstrate it in the upcoming days — that the five nuclear-weapon States which are parties to the NPT intend to implement this action plan on disarmament and all the others tangibly and swiftly. Thus I disagree with the analysis of my colleague and friend from Brazil when he says — and I quote — “I could not discern any clear political will on the part of the nuclear-weapon States” in the Conference on Disarmament. I think that the political will of the five NPT nuclear-weapon States, including that of beginning negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, is utterly constant and permanent within the Conference, and I will allow myself for the first time to go a little further. I believe that the political will of those five to begin negotiating such a treaty means that the negotiations will in fact begin. All I want is for that to happen here, but do not fool yourselves: when the countries that possess more than 95 per cent of the world's nuclear warheads wish to negotiate a treaty together, it is usually political will that enables them to



get started. I would like the negotiations to include all members of the Conference on Disarmament, without exception. I would like them to happen in the Conference on Disarmament and with all its members.

That was what I wished to say about political will. It remains to be seen whether the negotiations happen here or elsewhere. We want, and I repeat it here, the Conference on Disarmament to retain its role. Why? Simply because, were we to establish another forum, we would have the same countries and the same rules. Therefore, fundamentally, I do not think that we can reinvent the wheel. All nuclear countries — not just the five NPT nuclear-weapon States — are represented in this room, and the rules of the Conference on Disarmament are those we would reproduce were we to invent a new forum. That is not the point. The point is to actually get started and see who is ready to enter into this negotiation.

That is what I wished to say, with a final word on the high-level meeting. We unreservedly support the Secretary-General's initiative, as I have said many times. We feel that this is a time of transition where all the multilateral bodies have started up again, except the Conference on Disarmament, and that is a problem. Although I personally consider that the United Nations Disarmament Commission is not a particularly effective body either, at least it works. The Conference on Disarmament remains the only multilateral organ at a standstill, and that is why we are feeling political pressure from all sides for something to change in order to better reflect the situation in the world today.

I have said it before: the Conference on Disarmament has always more or less reflected the state of the world in terms of disarmament, especially nuclear matters. But nowadays its problem is that it no longer reflects the state of the world, for there is an impulse to move forward on all those issues that the Conference on Disarmament is unable to reflect. In short, it reflects the gridlock in the world and is not sufficiently dynamic. That is where the problem lies today. Let us try once again to make an effort to pull the Conference out of this impasse.

**Mr. Rao (India):** Mr. President, let me begin by congratulating you on the manner in which you conducted consultations and the hard work done by you and the secretariat for the adoption of our report by consensus. I should also like to join previous colleagues who have spoken about Mr. Larson. Concerning the long list of attributes which the other representatives enumerated about Mr. Larson, I would endorse all of them and add that we will miss his warmth and personal charm, which at times has been very important in moving our work forward. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Khokher will also be leaving us soon. I wish Mr. Larson and Mr. Khokher all the best in their future careers, as well as in their personal lives.

I should like to begin by associating myself with the statements made last week by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 21 on the subject of the high-level meeting. I should also like to recall the statement I made in the plenary meeting of 17 August and my remarks on this subject on 24 August 2010.

India welcomes the opportunity provided by the high-level meeting to examine the work of the Conference on Disarmament and to discuss ways and means to revitalize its work and build consensus on the larger challenges facing the wider architecture of disarmament machinery. We believe that the objective of the high-level meeting is to demonstrate political support for the multilateral disarmament agenda and the United Nations disarmament machinery, in particular the Conference on Disarmament.

Given the nature of the meeting, its summary remains the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Follow-up, if any, should be pursued by member States in the relevant forums, through existing mechanisms. In other words, the chair's summary should be relatable to existing mechanisms and forums, and in particular the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

India has consistently attached the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, and we are ready to negotiate a nuclear weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament, as the Secretary-General himself has called for. In our view, the high-level meeting should reiterate the priority prescribed since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and encourage multilateral forums to respond to the growing sentiment in favour of the total and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons.

With regard to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, a substantive agenda and programme of work (document CD/1864) was adopted last year in the Conference on Disarmament by consensus. Our efforts, including at the high-level meeting, should be to encourage the Conference to get back to that situation, so that it can start substantive work, including negotiations.

The United Nations disarmament machinery put in place by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament has served the international community well. Nonetheless, we would welcome the opportunity to debate the role of the United Nations disarmament machinery at a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In the interim, we have an opportunity to do so in the First Committee of the General Assembly this year, during discussions on the cluster on the United Nations disarmament machinery.

Thereafter, early next year, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the sole and universal deliberative disarmament body created by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, will be meeting. We are fortunate in having an agenda item at that session that allows us to consider the United Nations disarmament machinery and to build consensus on convening a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We hope that all those who wish to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the area of nuclear disarmament will help in building this consensus.

In conclusion, we sincerely hope that the meeting can strengthen the role of the United Nations disarmament machinery, in particular the Conference on Disarmament. The objective should not be to question the Conference or its rules of procedure, which are not responsible for the current impasse or the longer-standing impasse on nuclear disarmament. The objective should be to refocus the political will that has dissipated somewhat since May 2009.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Ambassador, for your statement, which described the spirit of the Conference on Disarmament, in addition to enabling us to learn the opinion of your great country, India, regarding the high-level meeting to be held in New York on 24 September 2010.

I would now like to give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Mr. Khokher. I have just learned of your imminent departure from Geneva. I was not aware of it and associate myself with the praise given by our friends and colleagues. I will have the opportunity to tell you privately how much I will regret your departure and, above all, to wish you luck in all you undertake after leaving Geneva. We will count on you as a member of the Conference on Disarmament, if only in thinking that you have always helped us move forward.

**Mr. Khokher** (Pakistan): Mr. President, I am sorry for being impatient, but let me first of all express my appreciation for the way you have conducted our work on this report – in a very professional, open-ended, transparent and speedy manner. It has only been possible because of your style and leadership.

I am personally touched and grateful to the ambassadors of the United States, France and India and the President for bidding farewell to me. Indeed, it is my last Conference on

Disarmament plenary meeting, so I can admit and acknowledge that I cannot beat the information and intelligence network of the United States Ambassador for knowing that I am leaving. I am grateful to her.

Briefly, I will take the opportunity to make some comments on the substance of the Conference on Disarmament and its role. I think that the Ambassador of Brazil has presented a very apt diagnosis as to where the fault lies, as well as a solution. The Ambassador of India has also indicated that there is nothing wrong with the Conference or its rules of procedure.

I am not good at history — I will appreciate being corrected later, bilaterally and informally — but when the cold war ended, the Conference on Disarmament delivered two important instruments: the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. If the Conference is blamed as a relic of the cold war, that is incorrect. The only way forward is patience, as was demonstrated when some countries were not able to join negotiations on fissile material. The same patience is required now, and Pakistan, as a responsible nuclear-weapon State, will continue to be constructively engaged in the Conference on Disarmament, so that it can deliver on a core mandate.

Deadlocks can happen in multilateral forums. This is not something new. It happened with the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, but we are back on track after 10 years. It will happen in the Conference on Disarmament when there are the international consensus and political will to do so.

On the high-level meeting, we fully associate ourselves with the statement by the Group of 21; we have expressed our views in previous plenary meetings. Before concluding, I would just seek your indulgence concerning our understanding that the presence at the meeting of the President of Cameroon, which we value because we have very strong bilateral relations with Cameroon, is as President of that State and not as President of the Conference on Disarmament, and that it will be reflected as such at the meeting.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank you, once again, dear friend, for your wise words. Before you leave Geneva, I hope — I wish, even — I am sure that we will manage to get together to say, not “goodbye”, but “until we meet again”.

Distinguished colleagues, the floor remains open. I know that diplomats like to speak, so I am surprised at this silence, I who thought that today we could tell each other a little of what is in our hearts. Apparently this is not the case. I would, however, like to add a few things, namely, that we are entering an intersessional phase, with the next session to start, if my information is accurate, on 24 January 2011 here in Geneva. Until that date, I will carry on as President of the Conference on Disarmament, and I do not intend to remain idle. Therefore, I can already tell you that, if the need arises, I will, at my or your initiative, call a plenary meeting, even if an extraordinary or informal one, to calmly discuss any issues that may have arisen. As I have said, I undertook and continue to conduct my presidency humbly in that I rely entirely on you. I will not fail to inform you of ongoing changes, or to consult you on, for example, the preparation and wording of the draft resolution that we would like to submit to the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. Thus we will remain in contact.

I see that the secretariat is suggesting a final point. Yes, as I have said, these are the acknowledgements. They are telling me to express my thanks, but I cannot do that since this is not the end of my mandate. I will thank everyone when my term ends. To do otherwise would mean I was leaving. On 24 January I will thank each one of you for the work accomplished. For the time being, we will continue to work towards the disarmament of our beautiful world. I would like to congratulate you once again for the wonderful work

we have accomplished, and I hope that from this point forward we can continue apace towards a bright future.

Naturally, I must thank the interpreters for so wonderfully facilitating understanding among us. Thank you to the interpreters and translators and, of course, to the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament.

This plenary meeting stands adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.*