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# Conference on Disarmament

25 January 2011

English

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

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 25 January 2011, at 10.20 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Marius Grinius ..... (Canada)

**The President:** I call to order the 1198th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. Unfortunately I must start this first plenary on a sad note. As President, I would like to convey, on behalf of the Conference on Disarmament, our deepest sympathy and condolences to the people of Russia and, in particular, to those families who lost dear ones in yesterday's bombing of a Moscow airport. The use of violence against innocent people must never be tolerated. We condemn those responsible for this horrible act. Would you join me in a few moments of silence, please.

It almost feels like back to school with so many familiar faces here, but as we begin our activities for the day, I would like to bid a belated farewell to our colleagues who have left the Conference since we adjourned in September of last year. I refer to Ambassador Babacar Carlos Mbaye of Senegal and also Ambassador Abdelwahèb Jemal of Tunisia. On behalf of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to request the respective delegations to convey to them our deep appreciation for their many valuable contributions to the work of the Conference during their tenure, as well as our sincere wishes for their success and satisfaction in their new assignments. Allow me also to extend a cordial welcome to our new colleagues who have assumed their responsibilities as representatives of their Governments to the Conference. I refer specifically to Ambassador András Dékány of Hungary, Ambassador Tom Mboya Okeyo of Kenya, Ambassador James Manzhou of Zimbabwe and also Ambassador Jan Knutsson of Sweden. I would like to take this opportunity to assure them of our full cooperation and support in their new assignments. I would now like to pass on to the President's statement. You will have to bear with me for at least a few minutes when I do this.

In preparation for assuming the responsibilities of President of this august body, the Conference on Disarmament, you will be aware of the extensive consultations that I have had not only with each member State bilaterally, but also in various combinations, including the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the other presidents of the 2011 session and each of the regional groups. In addition, I have consulted with observer States, the directors of both the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and members of civil society.

Before I share with you my conclusions from these extensive consultations I would like to start with a quotation:

I have naturally found great frustration among delegations that the Conference has not been used to much purpose at all for years now. They feel that they have real value to add, that there is vital non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament progress available here and that they are being prevented from achieving it. They find this waste of opportunity disheartening, not to speak of how they feel about the waste of their time and professional energies.

Thus wrote Canadian Ambassador Chris Westdal, my predecessor once removed, when he assumed the responsibilities of President at the first plenary session on 23 January 2001. And, by the way, I would like to thank Reaching Critical Will for being able to find Chris Westdal's quotation and his speech very easily, and I commend you all at Reaching Critical Will.

It would seem that not much has changed here in a decade. Now, I would just like to share with you my basic conclusions from my consultations thus far. There is considerable frustration that we have had no programme of work since May 2009. There is also considerable disappointment that there still are no negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT).

Document CD/1864 of May 2009 remains the "gold standard" for a programme of work, but the suggestion by the delegation of Brazil incorporated in document CD/1899

could also be further considered. Positions, however, appear to be entrenched and mutually exclusive. That is, some members will accept a programme of work only if it includes negotiation on an FMCT, and at least one member will not accept a programme of work if there are negotiations on an FMCT.

There is a clear indication that we, the Conference on Disarmament, need to focus on the four core issues, namely nuclear disarmament, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and negative security assurances.

It is also evident that interest in the other non-core issues contained in recent Conference agendas is almost non-existent. I should add, however, that one State considers “transparency in arms transfers” to be its highest priority; but, it also recognizes that substantive progress on this issue may better be made outside of the Conference on Disarmament.

There is general support for greater openness and transparency with respect to the Conference’s relationship with civil society. Finally, many members reiterated their official policy in favour of the expansion of the Conference. In this case, however, some States wondered how an expanded Conference would contribute to breaking the impasse that currently exists with 65 members.

From these conclusions, which I originally shared informally and now share more formally, I believe that my priorities are clear, and they are the following:

First, I will continue to consult and to work with all interested parties to identify a programme of work acceptable to all members. In the pursuit of this objective I ask for help from all of you, including the regional coordinators.

Second, as we make all efforts to achieve an acceptable programme of work, I will also endeavour to ensure that the very little time that we have is not wasted, and that substantive, worthwhile exchanges on vital disarmament issues may still take place.

Third, I will look to you to see how we may collectively engage with civil society with greater openness and transparency. Indeed, I hope that greater openness and transparency will be our *modus operandi* in all that we do in this chamber.

Finally, under rule 2 of the rules of procedure, which states that the membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals, I will continue to consult about how we may learn about previous expansions and what the situation is today.

In preparation for assuming my presidential responsibilities, I read *The Whispering Gallery of Europe*, the memoirs of Major General A.C. Temperley, the senior military adviser to the British delegation to the Geneva Disarmament Conference of 1932. He arrived in Geneva in 1926, and he published his memoirs in 1938. There are many interesting quotations from his book, but I will highlight just two of them. The first one: “If speeches could have made the world safe for democracy then the League [of Nations] would indeed have been impregnable.” The second one: “Although the discussions were nominally on technical questions, it was in reality political differences that created the deadlocks.”

Major General Temperley also refers to issues like the sometimes difficult relationship between the “Great Powers” and the “small Powers”, as he called them; the challenges of verification; the “extraordinary clash of national temperaments”; and majority vote versus the principle of unanimity before any action could be taken. And the Conference of the 1930s actually did vote. He also certainly does not admire what he calls “hair-splitting fanatics, definition maniacs and masters of League procedure”. Finally, he considers the Conference — which, by coincidence, grew from 61 to 65 States — to be “an

unwieldy body". Generally, Major General Temperley does, however, praise the generous hospitality of the people of Geneva.

Anthony Eden, who wrote the foreword to the book on 6 March 1938, hoped that *The Whispering Gallery of Europe* might "be widely read as a sincere endeavour to seek wise guidance for the future from the chequered experience of the recent past". I would certainly hope so, too.

The year 2011 will be pivotal for the Conference on Disarmament. In late 2009 and throughout 2010 there were significant positive international security developments, which you all know about, from the Security Council summit of September 2009, to a new strategic arms reduction treaty (the New START Treaty), to the Global Nuclear Security Summit and, of course, the successful result of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. At all these milestones, political will seemed abundant.

In contrast to all these positive security developments elsewhere, the Conference on Disarmament appeared to be an oblivious island of inactivity where political will continued to be absent.

Tomorrow I expect that we will hear the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, urge the Conference on Disarmament to get back to work, and I hope that we will heed his call.

I would now like to pass on to the adoption of the agenda.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): Mr. President, I do not want to raise the issue relating to the agenda at this point. I have taken the floor to refer to an issue which has come to our attention, and my delegation, at least, believes that this issue goes to the very heart of the substance and procedure of the Conference on Disarmament. I am referring to communications that we have received from the coordinator of the Group of 21 informing us of a meeting that is to be held on 26 January, which is going to be an address by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, thereafter, an informal meeting of the six presidents of this session, the five permanent members of the Security Council and the regional coordinators. Then there is another communication which says that there will be a meeting with the Secretary-General in room 9 on 26 January and, again, there is a list of countries that have been invited to participate in this session with the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the Secretary-General of all the countries represented in this room. We find it rather unacceptable to have a meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations which is on a selective basis. I could have accepted the fact if it had to be a meeting restricted to a few countries, where perhaps the equal or equitable thing to do would have been to have the meeting with only the regional coordinators, who would have represented all of us here in Geneva. However, in addition to the regional coordinators, there are certain countries, and I could even accept that the six session presidents might be there, because, although it is not a formal group that we recognize in the Conference on Disarmament, certainly, for the purposes of coordination and facilitation, the six presidents do act together, and that could be accepted as an interaction with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

What I do find unacceptable, however, is the fact that the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council seem to take it upon themselves to represent all of us. My delegation, for one, is not ready to accept that kind of representation. We speak for ourselves. We do not need anyone else to speak for us, and we are not going to be bound by what is decided or what emerges from this meeting, because we will not be a party to this meeting. And, by extension, I want to state very categorically that any decisions taken in this meeting with the Secretary-General will not be on behalf of the Conference on

Disarmament, because, as members of the Conference, we must be there in this meeting to state what we would like to state to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and if it is a meeting to which we are not a party, we cannot be bound by its decisions.

I would like to know how this has come about, what is the rationale behind it, and, I hope that you will give us a satisfactory explanation. However, having said that, let me reiterate that until and unless all of us are included in this meeting with the Secretary-General, my delegation, at least, cannot accept any outcome – it will not be an outcome on behalf of the Conference.

**Mr. Jazairi** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I did not intend to take the floor today, but, having heard the statement by the representative of Pakistan concerning the follow-up to the high-level meeting on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations, held in New York on 24 September 2010, I wish to make a few comments. First, though, I would like to extend my congratulations to you as you take over the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament.

That high-level meeting was convened by the United Nations Secretary-General, who deserves praise. It was an important opportunity to discuss the need to revive negotiations within the Conference in order to respond to the challenges threatening peace and security in the world, and it enabled us to renew our support for the Conference as the sole multilateral forum for negotiating disarmament issues. As the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement indicated at that meeting, any follow-up steps have to be taken with the full and transparent participation of all member States.

For this reason we hope that any initiative or effort made in this regard will involve all the delegations, without distinction or discrimination.

**Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to wish all my colleagues a happy New Year and both professional and personal success. I would also like to join in expressing our condolences to, and our solidarity with, the Russian people and Government following the events you mentioned that took place at one of Russia's airports.

Having said that, I would like to briefly state that, although we had not intended to take the floor at this time, we understand the concerns expressed by the Ambassador of Pakistan. We share the view that, above all, the work of the Conference on Disarmament needs to be transparent. While we do not doubt the transparency of our activities, we think that certain actions could sometimes be misinterpreted and that, therefore, any meeting of the Conference on Disarmament which relates to the work of the Conference should be open to all our members.

**Mr. Badr** (Egypt): Mr. President, I was not intending to take the floor right now, but since I have, let me congratulate you, on behalf of the delegation of Egypt, on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We will be more than happy to work and cooperate with you. We convey our condolences to the Russian delegation in connection with the terrorist bombing.

I take the floor to share what has been said just now. We of course recognize the interest and the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to support the Conference on Disarmament, and an example of this effort was the convening of the high-level meeting on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations, held in New York on 24 September 2010, where Egypt actively participated and delivered a statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, which we currently have the honour to preside over. Therefore, we welcome the Secretary-General's efforts, and we will be interested in hearing his statement as he

addresses the Conference tomorrow. However, we sympathize with the statements of the delegations of Pakistan, Algeria and Cuba. We would like any effort made following that meeting to be conducted in a transparent manner, with no selectivity, and to understand the list of countries. If there is any interaction, we would prefer it to take place among all the members and not only a select group of countries. This, I think, would be the best way to foster the efforts that we all want – to encourage the Conference on Disarmament and its function. I would like to end with that and come back later on the more substantial issues which we have before us today.

**Mr. Sajjadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, first of all let me congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference and also express my condolences to the Russian delegation for the terrorist attack. I share the views of the Ambassador of Pakistan. The Conference on Disarmament is a conference where transparency and non-selectivity should be considered in all meetings so that we are here on an equal footing. In that regard, as the Ambassador of Pakistan said, any decision by selective meetings cannot be accepted by my delegation because it is the outcome of a selective and non-comprehensive meeting.

**Mr. Khabbaz Hamoui** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I would first like to congratulate you on assuming the presidency. We are confident that, thanks to your wisdom and hard work, you will actively accompany our efforts towards achieving our shared goal of ensuring that this Conference makes progress. I would also like to extend my sincere condolences to the delegation of the Russian Federation following the reprehensible terrorist attack at an airport in Moscow yesterday. We express our deepest sympathy to the delegation of the Russian Federation.

I wish to thank the Ambassador of Pakistan for having drawn our attention to the forthcoming meeting — which is being convened in a way that is both selective and lacking in transparency — between the Secretary-General and certain countries chosen, we know not how, from among member States. If the selection had taken place with representatives from the regional groups, we would have understood and might have accepted the restricted number, but selecting some States and excluding others is incompatible with the principle of transparency towards which we all strive.

I must also agree with the ambassadors who spoke before me that we will not be obliged to implement any decision that may emerge from that meeting.

**Mr. Macedo Soares** (Brazil): Mr. President, first of all, since the whole conference has already manifested its condolences, I extend, on behalf of my delegation, my condolences to the Russian delegation for the sad events. During the last few years I have been working very closely with you and admiring your competence and creativity and looking forward to this moment when you start your term as President of this Conference, and I am very glad to be here to take part and try modestly to support your efforts.

I would like to address the question that was raised by Ambassador Akram of Pakistan and some others. In fact, it brings a tone which is not so positive for the beginning of your presidency. You do not have any responsibility for that, but there is always this temptation of working by reducing numbers. In your statement just now you mentioned the question of the expansion of the Conference, and now we have a great number of delegations that are asking to be accepted as observers, and you pointed out that some States wondered how an expanded Conference on Disarmament would contribute to breaking the current impasse. There is always the view that it is better to have small numbers to get results. To those who think like that, I would say that the best way is to have only one. That way you take decisions much more easily. We have to be prepared for democracy, and it is not easy. I too was surprised by this invitation to a number of delegations, and, to be very blunt, I asked myself why Brazil was not on the list. What does the Secretary-General of the United Nations have in mind if he excludes a country like

Brazil from this group? I do not see any precise criterion for drawing up this list of invitees. So I join those delegations that expressed some surprise, and I would also like to recall that, in his summary of the high-level meeting of 24 September 2010, the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed the question of expansion of the Conference and mentioned the idea of the appointment of a special coordinator on the expansion of the membership of this body. It is therefore a little surprising that he starts by trying to reduce the number of delegations that he would like to consult.

**Mr. Rao** (India): Mr. President, it was also not my intention to take the floor, but I think that the issues which have been raised by colleagues who have spoken before me merit some expression of my views. Before I do that, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency. I would have hoped that it could have started on a better note. Let me also pay my condolences to the delegation of Russia for those who were killed by an act of violence in Moscow and convey my sympathies to their families.

Mr. President, we also learned about this event yesterday evening, and I must say that we were a bit surprised by the selection of participants from the Conference. As the rules of procedure say, we participate as sovereign equal members in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference. In the Conference we do not categorize States into various categories or give particular privileges, and I think it is important that in this process we respect those rules and conduct our work accordingly. At the high-level meeting in September, there was a high level of participation and interest, and of course we look forward to hearing the views of the Secretary-General of the United Nations tomorrow. There is wide interest among the members of the Conference and beyond on this subject. It would be natural in that sense for the entire membership of the Conference to be interested in the exchange of views with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Therefore, I think it is important that the way we proceed brings us all closer together rather than moving us apart. As I mentioned in the consultations which you held with the Group of 21, I think that in all our efforts, while we work on building consensus and adopting a programme of work, we should not do anything which moves us further apart, but rather should do things that bring us together, because only then can we achieve the desired objectives which are shared by all of us.

**Mr. Mundaraín Hernández** (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, like the previous speakers, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment. We trust that your habitual good humour, your capacity for dialogue and your experience will contribute to strengthening the work of the Conference.

Along with previous speakers, we stand by the Russian Government and the Russian people, the victims of a terrorist act, in their time of grief and mourning. Likewise, we also send our regards to the ambassadors of Tunisia and Senegal, who have left the Conference to perform other public functions. As you mentioned in your statement, we would also like to use this opportunity to welcome the ambassadors of Hungary, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Sweden.

Mr. President, in your speech you commented on the involvement of civil society and States with observer status. It is an opportunity to increase the level of participation in the Conference and make it more democratic. However, I think that such efforts are undermined by these kinds of meetings, which are not transparent and reflect a selective approach. My delegation thinks that at this juncture in the Conference's work it is important to build trust among all the members, and that these kinds of non-inclusive meetings do not foster such trust, which is essential.

**Mr. Hoffmann** (Germany): Mr. President, it was not my intention to take the floor today either, but I thought maybe one should not give the impression that this is a meeting of G21 member States only, so others should also participate. I congratulate you on the

assumption of the presidency and also on your opening statement, in spite of the fact that it does not contain good news; but we are, of course, aware of the situation. I join those who expressed condolences to our Russian colleagues.

Now, on the issue before us, I must say it is my understanding that the invitation to this particular informal meeting was not extended by the President of the Conference on Disarmament. When I heard and read about this invitation, at first I thought, from a purely pragmatic point of view, that it is probably a good idea to have a smaller circle of delegations present because it makes dialogue easier. However, in view of the enthusiasm which we see here in this hall about this meeting and participating and engaging in the dialogue, I think it is never too late to reconsider such arrangements. Indeed, although I was pragmatic in approaching it, I share a little bit the feeling of our Brazilian colleague: at first I thought, why are we not there, why are others not there, why this particular formula? I would assume that the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is present and whom I greet in particular, has taken note of this discussion.

**The President:** Before I give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference, just a couple of comments from me. I actually think that, from some perspectives, we have got off to an excellent start for this Conference, in the sense of having a good free exchange of views on a subject that obviously is important to many of the participants. We may end up disagreeing among ourselves, but at least we are having what I consider an honest and open discussion. One last comment: for those of you who are also involved in other work relating to United Nations organizations here in Geneva, it is my understanding that the time of the Secretary-General of the United Nations is extraordinarily limited and that he is actually going from one meeting to another, so he has a pretty full schedule. I also note that in other forums the question of whether all States may address the meeting where the Secretary-General will be present is still an ongoing question, and it is interesting to hear the pros and possible cons of such representation at any meeting with the Secretary-General.

**Mr. Jazaïry (Algeria):** Mr. President, I am sorry to take the floor again. I just did not want the fact that I was the only one not to convey condolences to the Russian Federation for the horrific act of terrorism that that country was exposed to yesterday to be interpreted wrongly. I was simply making a specific comment on the proposal by the Ambassador of Pakistan and had intended to make a general statement later. However, since the occasion has arisen, I of course extend to the Russian Federation and to its Ambassador our most sincere condolences.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations):** As you heard the President saying, the Secretary-General has a very tight schedule here in Geneva for almost two days. He has about 40 minutes for the meeting, and he is not planning a formal meeting. I believe that the Secretary-General has the right to meet any delegation or group of delegations he wants, taking into account that this is just an informal meeting and nothing more. He is not going to present any kind of great new ideas or proposals. It is up to the member States to take decisions on those proposals and ideas and how to proceed further. His intention is to ask what is going on and how you would like to proceed. I believe that it is the right of a Secretary-General, and it is the right of any delegation, to have informal meetings with a friend or a couple of friends or even more than a couple of friends. When you have such informal consultations, I, as the Secretary-General's representative, do not object. I hope that you will not be in a mood to object to the Secretary-General's meeting with certain delegations. I see the logic of the Secretary-General's invitations. Of course he wants to meet with the session presidents. Of course he wants to meet with the regional coordinators, and of course he wants to meet with the representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council, which he normally does

during his stay in New York, at least several times a month, because without them I do not think it is possible to go ahead seriously. I do not see any hidden agenda there, and in any case your coordinators will inform you about the meeting. By the way, he even asked me, as his representative, to make a speech. I said, "No, Mr. Secretary-General, I would prefer to listen to you, and then I will inform the others." However, the coordinators can inform the others as well. Do not think from the very beginning that there is a ploy behind the Secretary-General's meeting a group of delegations. In the United Nations, as you know, and as everybody knows, there is nothing secret, and the Secretary-General in particular is not going to make this a secret meeting held under tight security with guards not letting anybody in. In any case, everybody will be informed if anything interesting happens at the meeting. So please do not worry.

**The President:** Before giving Ambassador Akram the floor, I should say that there is some important housekeeping work which I hope this meeting will achieve with regard to the agenda and observer States, and I do have a regular list of speakers that I would like to get to. However, if Ambassador Akram has some specific comment on the subject at hand, I will give him the floor again.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Mr. President, I am sorry to take the floor for a second time, but I think that, in view of the explanation or the views that have been expressed by the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, it is incumbent on me to take the floor and at least express the views of my delegation. I am grateful to all my other colleagues who have also spoken in this regard. The clear idea that you have got across the board from all the speakers is that there is a need for an inclusive and transparent approach to our work, including our interaction with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Now I know the Secretary-General is an extremely busy person, and I respect that. I know that he is also addressing the Human Rights Council and a meeting on humanitarian issues later on today. And I may say that in this meeting on humanitarian issues there is no preferred list of countries that will be allowed to speak or not speak. Everybody has been invited, and whoever wishes to take the floor will have an opportunity to do so in the meeting on humanitarian issues. I do not see why we cannot emulate this practice in the Conference on Disarmament.

The second point which I want to make is that, yes, if there is a need for limiting the number of persons with whom the Secretary-General can interact, then the logical choice would be to limit it to the coordinators of our groups. Each of those coordinators would have the opportunity to convey the view of their respective group to the Secretary-General. I could, as I said before, even accept the fact that the six presidents for 2011 might meet the Secretary-General and exchange views with him on the way forward in the Conference on Disarmament. However, I simply do not understand on what basis the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are the only countries that are going to be invited to this meeting. In the Conference on Disarmament we are all equal. No one is more equal than others. We do not recognize the fact that there are countries here that can exercise a veto. This is not the Security Council; this is the Conference on Disarmament. And for that reason I cannot accept that my country's views are going to be represented or not represented by five countries which are considered the only ones that can go and speak to the Secretary-General. A very sensible proposal was made by the Ambassador of Germany, and I would like Germany to become a member of the Security Council sooner rather than later, because we would certainly have more sense prevailing among the permanent members of the Security Council that have not spoken up in this regard. In any event, the final point that I want to make, and I want to make it very clearly, is that, formal or informal, any decisions or any course of action that this meeting agrees upon with the Secretary-General will not be binding on Pakistan and therefore, by extension, will be unacceptable as a consensus decision of the Conference on Disarmament.

**The President:** I am one of the people invited to this informal meeting, but I certainly did not get the impression that there would be any kind of decision or anything coming out of it. I think our colleagues from the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament have got your message. I thank all of you for this exchange and the messages duly passed both ways.

I would now like to move to the second, very important housekeeping agenda. I invite you to consider the draft agenda for the 2011 session of the Conference contained in document CD/WP.562, which was circulated before this meeting, at least yesterday, if not earlier. I propose that the agenda should be accompanied by a presidential statement, which is the same as in previous years and reads as follows: "In connection with the adoption of the agenda, I, as the President of the Conference, should like to state that it is my understanding that if there is a consensus in the Conference to deal with any issues, they could be dealt with within this agenda. The Conference will also take into consideration rules 27 and 30 of the rules of procedure of the Conference."

This statement has regularly accompanied the agenda. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this time? May I take it that the Conference is ready to adopt the draft agenda as contained in document CD/WP.562, followed by the statement I have just read out? It is so decided.

The agenda will be issued by the secretariat as an official document of the Conference. I would now like to invite the Conference to consider the requests received from States that are not members of the Conference to participate in the work of the 2011 session. The requests are contained in document CD/WP.563, which includes all the requests received by the secretariat by 3 p.m. yesterday, that is, 24 January 2011. All requests from non-member States received after that point will be submitted for your consideration and decision at future plenary meetings. Are there any comments on these requests? May I take it that the Conference decides to invite these States to participate in our work, in accordance with the rules of procedure? It is so decided.

We have had a very good and open exchange. I would now like to turn to the list of speakers, and to add Colombia to that list.

**Mr. Dékány (Hungary):** Mr. President, it is an honour for me to join you today, at the very first plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament in 2011, as the new Permanent Representative of the Republic of Hungary to the United Nations Office at Geneva and to the Conference on Disarmament. First, let me express my delegation's sincere condolences to the Russian Federation for the loss of innocent lives due to a heinous terrorist act in Moscow. We firmly condemn terrorist violence, and our sympathies are with the victims and the members of their families. Allow me to congratulate Canada and you, Ambassador Grinius, for taking over the presidency of the Conference. I am looking forward to working with you and with the other presidents in the coming year.

Over the last two years we have witnessed a revival of the disarmament agenda. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, member States adopted by consensus an action plan; negotiations on a new strategic arms reduction treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States concluded successfully and its entry into force is expected in the very near future; nuclear security has emerged as an issue of central importance, with interested States making various commitments to improve their cooperation and national practices in this field.

Despite this positive momentum, however, the Conference on Disarmament was once again unable to deliver on its promise to move the disarmament machinery forward. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the 2010 NPT Review Conference and the First Committee of the General Assembly all called upon this body to start substantive work, but their requests have so far remained unanswered. This practice cannot continue.

Tomorrow we will hear an assessment of the situation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and I am sure that he will not refrain from conveying his deep disappointment regarding the lack of progress with the issues on the Conference agenda.

Let me stress that Hungary is ready to actively engage in discussions whose aim is to rapidly agree on and adopt a programme of work. We acknowledge the fact that all four core issues on the long-standing agenda of the Conference on Disarmament deserve serious discussion, as each one of them contributes to our common goal of a more secure world and a more stable international environment. We must decide, however, how and where to start our substantive work. Almost all States members of the Conference are of the view — a view that the Republic of Hungary fully shares and strongly supports — that negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty should be our first step towards the revitalization of the Conference. I appeal to all member States to be flexible, to be committed to our common goals and mandate, and to be ready to adopt the programme of work, in order to demonstrate that we are here to deliver what is expected from us.

Let me continue with a more positive message. Only a few weeks from now, the Republic of Hungary will start the destruction of its stockpiles of cluster munitions. In parallel with the destruction process, which — according to plans — is due to be completed by 30 June, Hungary will ratify the Cluster Munitions Convention this year. The destruction process will take into account all environmental and public health regulations, and the destruction site will be recultivated. We will invite international observers to witness this event, as we did in 2005 when we eliminated the last 1,500 anti-personnel mines retained under article 3 of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Let me say a few words about the observers to the Conference on Disarmament. Year after year, observer States are showing great interest in our deliberations. Their commitment deserves to be recognized through the enlargement of the Conference. Hungary therefore urges and continues to support the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament. Civil society is equally committed to moving the Conference agenda forward. I believe that they belong to our wider family, and I look forward to working with them and to listening to them, not only at the conventional Women's Day occasion, but at other NGO events in the Conference on Disarmament as well.

In conclusion, I would like to express my deep appreciation for your work in thoroughly preparing the ground for the start of the 2011 session of the Conference. We all know that this year is considered to be crucial, since 2011 may be the very last chance to get the Conference on Disarmament back on track. Let me assure you, Mr. President, that my delegation is ready to take part in this endeavour. I wish you and all the delegations success and the best of luck.

**Mr. Knutsson** (Sweden): Mr. President, let me first of all convey my Government's deepest sympathy to the Russian people after the deplorable terrorist attack at one of Moscow's airports. I would like to warmly congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of my delegation's strong support for and confidence in your endeavours to advance our important work.

This is the first time that I have had an opportunity to address the Conference. I would like to use it to provide a brief outline of my delegation's position on the matters before this Conference. Let me begin by mentioning that Sweden's voice will also be articulated in statements delivered on behalf of the European Union. We are also part of the New Agenda Coalition.

Sweden has a strong interest in the disarmament agenda, not least nuclear disarmament. We have, for our part, come to the conclusion that possession of nuclear weapons would be more likely to lessen our security than to enhance it. Subsequently, we

have been active in efforts to promote nuclear disarmament and to prevent further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It will come as no surprise to you that Sweden urgently wants the Conference on Disarmament to move into a negotiating mode on issues of substance. I would like to quote my foreign minister, Mr. Carl Bildt, who said at the high-level meeting last September that serious supporters of progress in multilateral disarmament and arms control work can no longer accept the lack of substantive negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. He added that tangible progress to address the issues — and in particular negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) — must be achieved. He concluded by noting that political will has to be mustered in order to break the stalemate of the Conference and allow it to play its proper role of contributing to peace and security.

The high-level meeting in New York made it abundantly clear that the world expects progress to be made, not least in the Conference on Disarmament. It is very much incumbent upon us to live up to those expectations. Progress, or a lack of progress, will surely be assessed in the follow-up to the high-level meeting.

We are all aware of the recent international developments in the disarmament field, which we like to characterize as a renewed momentum. The latest developments in the form of ratification by the United States Congress of the New START Treaty, as well as the corresponding process in the Russian Federation, are very positive and welcome. The reaffirmation by the United States administration of the commitment to seek ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is another positive sign.

Now, however, we must do more than merely refer to this momentum in our speeches. It must be used to the fullest extent in international forums and processes, perhaps in particular in this one — the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. We should be using the Conference on Disarmament for what it has been devised to do.

In recent times the membership of the Conference on Disarmament has already — at least once — been able to agree on what it is that the Conference should be doing. We all know what this carefully crafted compromise looks like. It has never been meant to resolve, in and by itself, real differences in security perceptions. That has to take place in the actual negotiations. However, we remain convinced that it can form the basis for substantive work without undermining anyone's ability to defend their security interests.

One of the key issues before the Conference on Disarmament is the FMCT. The view that we need to put a legal cap on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes is widely shared. The informal sessions on this topic last year, which were chaired by the Swedish delegation, further reinforced the impression of a topic that is ripe for negotiations.

Such a treaty, with the appropriate scope and agreed verification measures, would ultimately limit the ability of its States parties to expand nuclear arsenals. It is our conviction that a cut-off treaty is a necessary element in a step-by-step nuclear disarmament process. The FMCT is indeed part of the practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed on at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and also of the action plan for nuclear disarmament adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Nuclear disarmament is the very objective of many of our efforts. To all of us who want to see a world free of nuclear weapons, it is necessary that further steps be achieved towards the realization of that vision. Sweden attaches particular importance to continued reductions in nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic or tactical nuclear weapons. The New START Treaty is an important step forward. Sweden believes that it is important that the treaty be followed by talks aimed at a sharp reduction — and, eventually, elimination — of tactical nuclear weapons. Such weapons are dangerous remnants of a dangerous past.

Multilateral legally binding negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States are another of the core issues of the Conference. The issue should be pursued as a means to enhance the security of States — individually and collectively — and in order to facilitate progress on the broader disarmament agenda.

Yet another topical issue before the Conference on Disarmament is outer space. In this age of globalization, mankind is becoming ever more dependent on the peaceful use of space, which underlines the need for discussions on space security. This involves preventing an arms race in space as well as dealing with the creation of debris through tests or use of anti-satellite weapons. Discussions ought to be taken forward on the PAROS issue.

Our vision of a world without nuclear weapons will not be a reality tomorrow, but we are convinced that it is possible to take, without delay, further steps towards this goal. In other words, and to conclude, Sweden joins many others in calling for the immediate commencement of substantial negotiations and discussions in the Conference on Disarmament. The groundwork for this has been laid. We have every reason to proceed on the basis of that groundwork. As dedicated and responsible representatives of the member States of the Conference and the international community, we are indeed under an obligation to do so.

**Mr. Gómez Camacho** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, first of all, I would, of course, also like to express my most sincere condolences to the Russian people and to our colleagues at the Russian mission, following the tragic events in Moscow. Secondly, I have been listening attentively to all the statements and the discussion this morning, and I must say that my delegation basically shares the opinions expressed by our colleagues. Additionally, if you will allow me to do so, and with the honesty that should always prevail in our discussions, I would of course like to express my sincere appreciation for the response provided by the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament. However, I must say that I am only partly convinced by what he said. Perhaps, as the Permanent Representative of Germany stated, there is still time to resolve the problem.

Mr. President, my delegation would like to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the Conference on Disarmament, which begins its 2011 session today. You can count on Mexico's support in all your endeavours, and we welcome your inclusive, pluralistic and transparent conduct of the consultations that formed part of the preparations for this session. In our view today the Conference has an opportunity to question the assumption that the international climate is not favourable for concluding agreements on disarmament. With regard to the international disarmament agenda, the years 2009 and 2010 witnessed historic milestones at the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral levels. These included the United Nations Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, as well as the first agreement in 10 years in the framework of the NPT Review Conference, with the adoption of a timely and specific action plan for achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

Important events in the field of conventional disarmament, such as the start of negotiations on an arms trade treaty and the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, show that it is possible to make such instruments a reality.

However, today, as the Conference starts a new session, there is great frustration because once again there seems to be no way out of the deadlock. From my Government's point of view, this situation is neither natural nor acceptable. Neither is it acceptable for the Conference to spend its time on activities falling outside its mandate, or for one item to dominate the agenda to the detriment of the rest. Mexico is deeply disappointed by our inability to adopt a programme of work, and particularly by the lack of progress in the

Conference in multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, which continues to be our highest priority.

It is imperative for the Conference to fulfil its mandate to negotiate. Mexico has stressed, in this forum, that negotiation does not necessarily mean reaching an agreement. However, in order to conclude agreements it is necessary to negotiate. For the Conference concluding agreements is a prerogative, but negotiating is a duty.

The deadlock will not resolve itself. We, the members, should take concrete steps entailing a high level of responsibility and accountability. Therefore, Mexico has suggested establishing a deadline for the Conference to fulfil its mandate, and will work with the understanding that the deadline will be set for sometime this year.

The high-level meeting called by the Secretary-General revealed that many countries would like to end the Conference's period of inactivity, which means that deciding to resume its negotiating work should not be difficult.

We cannot continue to operate on the assumption that the structure, membership, agenda and rules of procedure of the Conference must remain unchanged. Past experience has shown us that international organizations, after springing to life, either die off or improve and adapt to reality. We must make the Conference more representative of the world in which we live, consider expanding it and involving civil society in a more visible way. Most of all, I wish to stress that abusing the consensus rule devalues it by turning into a mere veto tool.

In Mexico's opinion, there are forums that facilitate decision-making and others that inhibit it. The Conference on Disarmament is one of the latter. I hope that someday the spirit of Cancun and other international organizations that produce agreements for the benefit of humanity will permeate the walls of this room.

**Mr. Manzou** (Zimbabwe): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to join others in extending our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Russia for the tragic events that happened at a Moscow airport yesterday. We would like to assure the people and Government of Russia of our sympathies and solidarity.

It is a great honour for me to be joining you for the opening of the first part of the 2011 session of the Conference on Disarmament in my capacity as the new Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva. I thank you, Mr. President, for your very kind words of welcome. I look forward to working closely and productively with all of you as we seek consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work to enable the resumption of substantive work in this august body.

My warm congratulations go to you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the first presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the 2011 session. We would also like to commend you on the extensive consultations that your delegation undertook during the intersessional period. We are hopeful that the groundwork which you have undertaken will enable the Conference to reach consensus on the programme of work under your able leadership. My delegation extends to you and your team its full support and cooperation.

Zimbabwe is a non-nuclear-weapon State and has no ambitions to acquire such weapons. We are a country that cherishes peace and advocates multilateral solutions to the challenges besetting our world today. Our active participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations bears testimony to our resolve and commitment to international peace and security. In this spirit, the pre-eminence of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body cannot be overemphasized.

My country attaches great importance to all four core agenda items of the Conference on Disarmament. Our top priority is nuclear disarmament, to be followed by general and complete disarmament in order to foster international peace and security for all mankind. It is reprehensible that global military expenditures reached approximately US \$ 1.6 trillion in 2009 at the expense of poverty alleviation and efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015.

Meanwhile, the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has been in a state of paralysis for over 12 years. We certainly can, and indeed we must, do better, for our sake and that of future generations. However, efforts to achieve this noble objective should not undermine the cornerstone principle guiding our work, namely that of consensus. It is the considered position of Zimbabwe that the consensus rule is still valid and relevant for our work today. It empowers all States to assert their national security interests and priorities in the Conference.

The Conference on Disarmament and its predecessor bodies have a track record of negotiating landmark disarmament treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. This august body is still capable of attaining many more successes. We strongly believe that with the highest level of political will and leadership the Conference on Disarmament should be in a position to resume substantive negotiations soon.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes you, Mr. President, and the other presidents for 2011 a productive session.

**Ms. Arango Olmos** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I would like to start by offering the condolences of the Colombian Government and people to the people and the Government of the Russian Federation, in the aftermath of yesterday's terrorist attack at an airport. Our thoughts are with the families of the victims. We know how difficult it is to deal with these terrorist attacks, which leave nothing but death and destruction in their wake.

I would also like to congratulate you on your appointment as the first President of the 2011 session of the Conference on Disarmament, and to thank you for pushing ahead with important work and consultations during the past few weeks.

I would like to reiterate my country's firm support for Canada's efforts to achieve tangible progress in the work of the Conference. As one of the countries that will hold the presidency of the Conference in 2011, we are aware of the major challenge we face, and we would like to call on all member States to cooperate and remain flexible so as to make significant progress in our work this year.

Colombia is of the view that in 2011 the main objective of the Conference on Disarmament should be to adopt and implement a programme of work. However, the difficulty of achieving consensus on this matter should not prevent us from continuing our deliberations on the key issues on our agenda, particularly nuclear disarmament, the possibility of a treaty on fissile material, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. All those treaties should be negotiated in a balanced and equitable manner, without neglecting the other issues on our agenda. In this regard, we think that the approach proposed by the current presidency is appropriate, and we would like to reiterate our delegation's support for the work and debates of the Conference on Disarmament.

The renewed momentum that nuclear disarmament has gained in recent years offers us a significant opportunity to make progress in negotiations leading to the establishment of specific instruments. The Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral forum for negotiations on disarmament and international security, has an important role to play in this context. The international community is eyeing the Conference for signs of progress, and it is our duty to meet their expectations. Not only the reputation of the Conference is at stake here, but also the opportunity provided by the current international climate to move closer to achieving the dream of a safer world free from the threat of nuclear war.

**Mr. Oyarce** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I would first like to join the others in expressing my sorrow at the terrible attack that affected the delegation of the Russian Federation.

We send our regards to the ambassadors of Senegal and Tunisia, thank them for their work and wish them success in their future endeavours. We would also like to welcome the permanent representatives of Hungary, Kenya, Sweden and Zimbabwe.

Chile would like to join other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your appointment to the presidency of the Conference. We would particularly like to acknowledge the commitment shown by Canada and your personal involvement in laying the groundwork for this year's session through broad consultations and initiatives which will allow us to make substantive contributions to the issues to be examined here.

You can count on our full support. We would also like to note that our country intends to continue with any programme of work that you may propose and that the Conference may approve. I think that our delegation has a political duty to take on that responsibility.

We also think, as has already been pointed out — I will not go into greater detail here — that the international context is not necessarily unfavourable for preparing the ground for negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation. We think that, as the Ambassador of Mexico pointed out, it is important to negotiate, that negotiations are an essential part of multilateralism, and that therefore the silence, I repeat, the silence of the Conference on Disarmament is difficult to understand, and not only for us, but also for the international community and civil society. It is clear that there are political concerns relating to the *raison d'être* of this Conference, and the high-level meeting in New York highlighted this collective, shared sentiment. This is an important moment for us. Everyone has said it and will continue to say it. It is a moment that requires reflection, realism and practical actions.

We think that, pragmatically speaking, we need to acknowledge the importance that the Secretary-General has attached to the mandate of this forum, in line with the Organization's priorities for this year. Clearly there is interest in revitalizing multilateral action in this field. The Conference on Disarmament should be at the centre of such endeavours. If that does not happen, it will be difficult to avoid more drastic decisions, which could be taken outside this forum.

Mr. President, in our modest opinion, your plan of work could open up what I would call a more structured space for addressing issues defined as priorities by this forum. It seems to us that this plan could help the Conference to systematically address, in its plenary sessions, the basic substantive tasks before it. States, civil society and experts could all be involved in these efforts, as they are in other multilateral fields of action, in order to enhance the information needed by member States to fulfil their fundamental role as negotiators.

On the other hand, we do not think it would be a positive step to once again make a series of political declarations in this forum, or have meetings, without a clear plan or a

schedule for the year. Thus, after the adoption of the agenda that you have proposed, we would advocate continuing our efforts to adopt, as soon as possible, a programme of work that reflects in an innovative way our fundamental feelings and priorities with regard to the core issues. All these efforts, Mr. President, should be viewed in the light of our common interest in revitalizing disarmament mechanisms, which to us seems indispensable for creating conditions of peace and security, which is our ethical and political responsibility. The Conference on Disarmament in its current configuration, without precluding its expansion, should form part of this responsible approach. I assure you that my delegation will cooperate in efforts to ensure that the Conference succeeds in its work.

**Mr. Akram (Pakistan):** Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to convey our deepest condolences to our Russian friends for the terrorist attack yesterday in Moscow. We in Pakistan can fully empathize and sympathize with this situation that they are confronted with, and we wish them every success in overcoming the scourge of terrorism.

Mr. President, I would like to begin by congratulating you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at the beginning of the 2011 session. We are confident that you will carry out your responsibilities in a balanced, transparent and inclusive manner, in keeping with the rules of procedure. We highly appreciate your personal commitment and dedication to the work of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of our fullest cooperation.

I would also like to formally welcome all our colleagues who have recently joined us in the Conference on Disarmament, and we look forward to working constructively with them in the future.

I have taken the floor at the very outset of our proceedings in view of serious recent developments that will have negative repercussions for global security and stability and therefore on the conduct of our work in the Conference on Disarmament.

My delegation has always maintained that the Conference on Disarmament does not operate in a vacuum. Our work is directly affected by developments in the international political system. No State can pursue policies on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation at the global level and pretend that these do not have an impact on our work.

Over the last two years, Pakistan has clearly stated that it cannot agree to negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) in the Conference on Disarmament owing to the discriminatory waiver provided by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to our neighbour for nuclear cooperation by several major Powers, since this arrangement will further accentuate the asymmetry in fissile material stockpiles in the region, to the detriment of Pakistan's security interests.

As we have also pointed out earlier, Pakistan has been compelled to take this position due to the selective and discriminatory action of certain States in violation of their own national and international commitments, in pursuit of profit and outdated cold war concepts of containment and balance of power.

It is indeed unfortunate that, instead of reversing this destabilizing course of action, one of the major world Powers has gone a step further by announcing its intention in November 2010 to support our neighbour's full membership in the four multilateral export control regimes — the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement — and to “consult with regime members to encourage the evolution of regime membership criteria”.

Clearly this irresponsible undertaking raises several questions. For instance, let us consider NSG membership. Clearly the recipient country is not eligible for NSG membership as it is not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

or any of the other regional non-proliferation arrangements. Therefore, there is the requirement that NSG members develop new membership criteria, in other words, create yet another set of discriminatory criteria, tailor-made to suit only one country, as was done when providing the same country with the NSG waiver for nuclear cooperation.

Once again we are witnessing a blatant violation of national and international commitments that have been undertaken to uphold the international non-proliferation regime. Once again, selectivity, exceptionalism, discrimination and double standards are being employed at the cost of international principles as well as commitments.

It remains to be seen whether this understanding, which was already conveyed to the NSG Consultative Group meeting in Vienna in November 2010, will elicit the support of other NSG members. Two of them have already indicated their concurrence, no doubt with an eye on the profits to be made from their own nuclear cooperation agreements with the recipient country.

A fundamental question is whether other NSG members, especially those who claim to be the committed protectors of the international non-proliferation regime, will agree to the flagrant violation of this regime. Clearly, since all NSG decisions are made by consensus, they are in a position to live up to their obligations. Or is it possible that they will once again simply succumb to great Power pressure, as they have done in the past? Pakistan will certainly be watching what they do.

In our view, we must ask ourselves whether NSG can afford to flout its own rules by opening up its membership to a country whose nuclear tests in 1974 were the basis for the creation of NSG itself. If it does so, NSG will have no credibility left in the context of the international non-proliferation regime.

These developments will amount to a paradigm shift in strategic terms. It will be a step towards fundamentally altering the very basis of the international non-proliferation regime. The message that such steps transmit is that the major Powers can change the rules of the game if it is in their interests to do so. We strongly believe that double standards and discrimination must be rejected.

Apart from undermining the validity and sanctity of the international non-proliferation regime, these measures will further destabilize security in South Asia. NSG membership will enable our neighbour to further expand its nuclear cooperation agreements and enhance its nuclear weapons and delivery capabilities. As a consequence, Pakistan will be forced to take measures to ensure the credibility of its deterrence. The cumulative impact would be to destabilize the security environment in South Asia and beyond or at the global level. From our perspective in the Conference on Disarmament, this would further retard progress on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament measures.

In view of these considerations, the highest decision-making body on strategic issues in Pakistan, the National Command Authority (NCA), chaired by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, met on 14 December 2010 to review the implications of these developments for national security.

While the text of the NCA statement will be circulated as a Conference on Disarmament document, it is pertinent to cite here some of the important elements of this statement.

The NCA expressed concern over policies and trends of selectivity, exceptionalism and discrimination relating to strategic export control regimes. Such policies, detrimental as they are to international peace and security, undermine the credibility of the existing non-proliferation regime and are inconsistent with the national laws and international obligations. Revisionism based on strategic, political or commercial considerations accentuates asymmetries and would perpetuate instability, especially in South Asia.

The NCA categorically reiterated that Pakistan will never accept discriminatory treatment and that it rejects any effort to undermine its strategic deterrence. Pakistan will not be a party to any approach that is prejudicial to its legitimate national security interests. It reaffirmed that all requisite steps will be taken to ensure national security and to maintain credible deterrence.

It is quite obvious from what I have stated that my Government's opposition to negotiations on an FMCT has been further strengthened as a result of these developments. Nevertheless, we, along with a number of other delegations, do not want to see a stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. We therefore believe that substantive progress can and should be made on the other core issues on our agenda, namely nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The issue of nuclear disarmament remains the very *raison d'être* of the Conference on Disarmament. This forum was not created only to negotiate an FMCT. There should not be any linkage between progress on one agenda item and progress on the others. We should make progress on those issues on which we have consensus. My delegation has clearly stated on numerous occasions the reasons for our opposition to FMCT negotiations. Those who oppose negotiations on the other three core issues should state their position with equal clarity or allow progress to be made on these issues.

The work of the Conference on Disarmament can proceed only on the basis of equal security of all States. The Conference should therefore be alive to developments that undermine the security of member States, not only at the strategic level, but also at the conventional, regional and subregional levels as well as the impact of all types of weapons, including missiles. In view of the developments that I have referred to, this aspect has become all the more important. For this reason, Pakistan believes that the issues of conventional arms control at regional levels and missiles are critical considerations for international peace and security. Accordingly, the Conference on Disarmament should not remain oblivious to the negative implications of these weapons systems, and we invite members to consider these proposals and express their views in this regard during the plenary sessions. It is our endeavour that informal discussions will ensure that during its 2011 session the Conference on Disarmament deals with all current existing threats to international peace and security. Accordingly, we propose to raise the issues of missiles in all their aspects and conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels during our subsequent statements in the Conference on Disarmament under rules 27 and 30 of the rules of procedure.

**The President:** The statement by the Ambassador of Pakistan covers a lot of areas, and, if I may say, on a personal note, some of the issues mentioned perhaps go beyond the purview of the Conference on Disarmament and touch on matters covered in Vienna. Again, on a personal note, I had the privilege of attending a seminar in Moscow in early spring of last year, and a lot of the issues that you raised were actually discussed in one of the panels because of the global and regional aspects, and so on. I will certainly follow up and look into the possibility of organizing a side event so that we can have full knowledge and a good discussion of those issues, as perhaps we will have on the other items that are the core issues of the work of the Conference on Disarmament. I will be happy to follow up and see what we can do.

**Mr. Loshchinin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, the Russian Federation and my delegation welcome you as the first President of the 2011 session of the Conference on Disarmament. We wish you every success in your work, and you can certainly count on our support.

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues, we are deeply touched and sincerely grateful to all of you for your condolences to us in connection with the act of terrorism

which occurred yesterday at Domodedovo international airport in Moscow. Thirty-five people lost their lives and more than a hundred sustained injuries of various levels of severity. This was a cruel, well-planned and inhuman act of terrorism using a high-capacity explosive device filled with a large amount of projectile material.

We are especially grieved by the fact that there were totally innocent foreign nationals among the casualties. I would like to convey our heartfelt condolences to all countries whose citizens were among the victims of this vile crime. Our thoughts are with you.

The tragedy at the airport in Moscow shows once again that terrorism is a global threat to humanity, and that we must work together to end it.

Your words of condolence and the minute's silence observed by all members of the Conference on Disarmament are not only an impressive demonstration of moral and political support to us at this difficult time, but also a sign of the international community's solidarity with the Russian Federation in its fight against terrorism.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze** (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): Of course, as a Russian national, I feel the same as the Ambassador: deep sorrow for the tragic events there. However, the main part of my statement is that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to whom I talked on the phone after the exchange of views that took place, said that he is very happy to learn that everybody wants to meet him. Since he did not expect that kind of outpouring of interest from the members of the Conference on Disarmament and he had only 45 minutes, he planned to have a very informal exchange of views. Nonetheless, he asked me to convey to you the message that he invites everybody who would like to come to attend this meeting so that our Conference will start on a good note. Since delegations have expressed such a wish, the Secretary-General is available to listen to everybody, but please take into account that his time is very limited – 45 minutes, maximum 1 hour. I hope that a bigger forum of the Conference on Disarmament will be helpful for the promotion of the role of the Conference. What is most important is the speedy adoption of the programme of work and progress during the course of this year.

**The President:** There are no more speakers on the list; I just have a few more comments before we end this opening plenary session. As I said in my opening statement, my first priority is to continue to consult and to work with all interested parties to identify a programme of work that is acceptable to all members. In this context, I will have to report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, that I have failed to adopt a programme of work at the first plenary session, as he requested. However, I also said that my second-highest priority was not to waste our time, and that we could still have substantive worthwhile exchanges on the various vital disarmament issues that you have identified, particularly in connection with the four core issues. You will remember that in our informal regional meetings I had suggested an indicative timetable, not to preclude anyone from speaking or raising other issues, but to use our time as well as we can, given that the Canadian presidency will have only three more weeks after this week. I had suggested the following schedule for discussion: 1 February (Tuesday of next week) – nuclear disarmament writ large; Thursday, 3 February – more focus on fissile material; 8 February – the prevention of an arms race in outer space, keeping in mind that on 7 February there will be a Stockholm International Peace Research Institute side event on outer space; 10 February (the end of the third week of the Canadian presidency) – negative security assurances. Now, this is only for those States that would like to say something on the four core issues and, if they are bringing experts from capitals, especially those who travel far, would perhaps like to know more or less what the subject matter involves. This is in no way meant to constitute a schedule of work as stipulated in rule 20 of the rules of procedure. Also, some members have already reminded us of rule 30 of the rules of

procedure on raising any issue that any member would like to bring up in a plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament.

This concludes our business for today.

**Mr. Jazairi** (Algeria): Mr. President, I am sorry – I would just like a clarification. We have agreed on an agenda. We have not, unfortunately, agreed on a programme of work. Can we therefore agree now on your suggestion to discuss items other than those explicitly set out in the agenda? You suggested four points, one of which is not explicitly mentioned in the agenda. Would that not require a specific decision by the Conference on Disarmament to actually include it as one of the key points, since we are going to discuss an item which is not specifically mentioned in the agenda that we have just adopted?

**The President:** First of all, I am not seeking a decision on anything, actually, because I do want to continue my consultations on the adoption of a programme of work. Obviously the one adopted during your presidency, Ambassador of Algeria, remains the “gold standard”, and there it is. In actual fact, what I am suggesting has no direct linkage to the agenda itself. I am just suggesting that if people want to raise a particular subject, that would be welcome, but again it is not official, and it is not what I would consider as requiring any decision at this time.

**Mr. Daryaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, we really appreciate your efforts to find a way to start a substantive discussion in the Conference on Disarmament. As you know, we attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiation body for disarmament. We also attach great importance to the rules of procedure of this body, and we would really like our efforts to be in full conformity with the rules of procedure. You have informed different delegations about your initiative to start some sort of substantive discussion. We have reported this to our capital and have received some questions. There should be some clear answers to these questions. First of all, we believe that it is only a discussion, not a negotiation. It is separate from the other parallel initiative being conducted on the sidelines of the Conference on Disarmament. We would like to know whether this exercise has had any sort of outcome. The other question is why we are starting such a substantive discussion at this early stage in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The priority should be the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work – we have to focus mainly on that. A further question is how this proposal fits in with the rules of procedure and how we can guarantee that the proposal will not be used to bypass the rules of procedures. These are the preliminary questions on which we have to report to our capital. I would really appreciate any information possible, and we may come back to this issue later.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Iran for raising these questions, and I will certainly try to answer them as clearly as possible. Yes, it is discussion and not a negotiation. We do not have a programme of work, and you also heard from my opening statement about the difficulty of arriving at an acceptable programme of work by the rules of consensus. In terms of sidelines and other events, which are separate from other initiatives, I am not entirely sure what other initiatives outside of the Conference on Disarmament you are referring to, but there is no direct link, in any case. In terms of outcome, it is what the members of this body actually wish to do – if there are any outcomes. As to the question of why we should have substantive discussions, while the priority is the programme of work, I believe that there are a number of possible approaches. As President, I can continue consultations informally, bilaterally and in groups on a programme of work, as we have been doing since May 2009. We are coming up to the second anniversary of the creation of the “gold standard”, document CD/1864. Another approach would be not to have any meetings until the President comes up with a programme of work. We can close down the place and see what happens. However, I really think, given my consultations, that people do want to have a strong, substantive exchange

on the four core issues in particular. If we can have these exchanges and perhaps deepen our understanding of other national positions, even if at the end of the day there is agreement to disagree, this would be an acceptable activity while we struggle to come up with a mutually agreed programme of work. I can assure you that I am not attempting in any way to bypass the rules of procedure. I think they are pretty clear. Of course, in my bilateral and regional consultations, it has been interesting to listen to the different interpretations of the rules. However, I think that the basic rules are very clear, especially the rule of consensus and rule 30, which says that any member State can raise a relevant topic. I am hoping that we do not waste our time in the interim as we are trying to come up with a programme of work. In my speech I referred to my predecessor of 10 years ago who struggled with that, and also Major General Temperley's commentary from the 1930s. It is important work, and I hope that at least something can be done to bring about a better understanding of our positions. I would be happy to talk further bilaterally.

**Mr. Daryaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am sorry to take the floor again. As I mentioned earlier, we have to report your answer to our capital, but then in your explanation I found out something which we also mentioned to our capital, and so we have some more questions. I am sure that everybody is well aware of the exercise done last year, namely the informal discussion of the seven topics on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. We had a full debate on different aspects of all these agenda items, including a fissile material cut-off treaty, nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances. So the question is whether we want to repeat the same thing, because almost six months ago we had the position of every country clearly explained during the informal discussions. Do we want to repeat the same exercise in a formal meeting? What is the purpose and added value of conducting this exercise at the beginning of the Conference on Disarmament?

**The President:** You raise an important issue that I thought I had actually covered, both in my conclusions, which I read out today, and during bilateral informal discussions held with each of the regional groups, including the G21. Concerning the seven topics, I already mentioned, but I will repeat, that it is my conclusion from all the bilateral and group discussions that the four core issues are, shall we say, the main event. It does not mean that the other issues are not important, but, quite frankly, even though my questionnaire specifically asked about the other three issues that are recognized as perhaps not having the same, let's say, status, most countries — almost all countries represented in this room — did not even talk about them. Some said that yes, they could go along with them; one actually said that transparency and arms transparency were the most important national priority, but recognized that we would not go there, that there were other forums where substantive progress might be made faster than in the Conference on Disarmament. Also, although I did not raise it in plenary but in my informal briefing, part of my conclusions was my impression from the consultations held that this idea of the pattern of informal meetings on the seven topics has kind of run its course, which is why, as all of you, I believe, said to me, we cannot at this point negotiate the four core issues. However, we do want to have solid substantive discussions, and certainly, as someone mentioned, this is not only about the fissile material cut-off treaty, and that is why I want to have balance among the four core issues. We can talk further; I would be delighted to talk bilaterally and with your regional coordinators, if required.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): Mr. President, I do sincerely apologize for taking the floor yet again. I will be very brief in my comments. I just want to flag the understanding, and we did discuss this when you came to our G21 meeting, that whatever course of action we take in accordance with what you are proposing will be a course that has the approval of the Conference on Disarmament. Our understanding is as follows: these four core issues will be treated equally in terms of time and emphasis; you will assign time for them to be discussed, but during the plenary session other delegations who want to speak on some other item will be able to do so; the discussions on the four core issues will not constitute

negotiations or pre-negotiations; this will be a purely informal discussion of views on these issues. This is the understanding that my delegation has from the G21 meeting, and I just wanted to flag it so that we are all on the same page. While I have the floor, I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, whose intervention has, I am sure, contributed to ensuring that all of us will have the opportunity and the honour of interacting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**The President:** If I may attempt to answer Ambassador Akram on the subject of understandings, it is an indicative timetable. I am not assigning topics on which you must speak on 1 February only, for example, and I certainly was not suggesting that we need decisions or formal approvals of anything. I am just hoping that there will be discussion, and if States do not want to discuss, they are most welcome not to. And if there are other items that any member State wants to raise, in accordance with the rules of procedure, on any Tuesday or Thursday, they are most welcome to do so. These are not pre-negotiations and certainly not negotiations, but my attempt to follow your views concerning substantive work and discussion in the absence of a programme of work. I am very happy to talk bilaterally or with coordinators, however you want, outside of the plenary session.

**Mr. Wang Qun (China):** Mr. President, in order to save time, I will simply dispense with etiquette, although we are so happy to see you holding the presidency. I also think it is important that we convey our deep sympathy and condolences to our Russian colleague for what happened yesterday in Moscow. Turning to the indicative timetable you suggested, Mr. President, I think you have made it very clear that you are not going to seek a decision from the members, but we do appreciate that you have been sharing your ideas with the members of this body in an open and transparent manner, and, in so doing, seeking their views. We are appreciative of this approach.

**Mr. Hoffmann (Germany):** Mr. President, very briefly, since I also took the floor on the question of the meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, I explicitly wanted to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference for his intervention and for establishing contact with the Secretary-General of the United Nations so that we can all look forward to a productive meeting with him. Secondly, I wanted to say that I will certainly report to my Government the suggestion made by Ambassador Akram of Pakistan, for which I want to thank him, namely that Germany should become a permanent member of the Security Council sooner rather than later. I will also report that his suggestion has found a very friendly reception in the Conference on Disarmament.

**The President:** This concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting will be held tomorrow, 26 January at 3 p.m., when the Secretary-General of the United Nations will address the Conference, and I expect that we will get more information on the procedure governing the second part of the meeting with him.

The meeting stands adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.*