
Conference on Disarmament

16 June 2011

English

Final record of the one thousand two hundred and twenty-eighth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 16 June 2011, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Valencia Muñoz(Colombia)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call to order the 1228th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. At the start of today's plenary session I would like to warmly welcome our guest, Her Excellency Ms. Gioconda Úbeda, Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). Her presence today clearly indicates the importance that OPANAL attaches to the work of the Conference. Before inviting the Secretary-General to address the Conference, I would like to allow the head of the OPANAL coordination office in Geneva, His Excellency the Ambassador of Brazil, Mr. Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, to say a few words of welcome to our illustrious guest.

Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of OPANAL in the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General of OPANAL, Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda, at this plenary. This is the first visit by a representative of that body to the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that the experience of OPANAL, which has existed for 44 years, may be of interest to this Conference.

OPANAL was created under article 7 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco to ensure the implementation of the obligations contained in that instrument, which was the first to establish, in 1969, a nuclear-weapon-free zone in an inhabited region. Under the Treaty, the 33 States of Latin America and the Caribbean undertook to refrain from engaging in, encouraging or authorizing, directly or indirectly, the testing, use, manufacture, production, possession or control of any nuclear weapon. Under the established regime nuclear-weapon States also undertook to respect the region's nuclear-weapon-free status.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco inspired other regions to follow the same path. The Treaty of Tlatelolco was followed by the treaties of Rarotonga, Pelindaba, Mongolia and Central Asia. But the Treaty of Tlatelolco remained unique in establishing a body — OPANAL — to ensure the implementation of its obligations.

Because of its unique nature, OPANAL has in recent years also played an important role in promoting coordination between the various nuclear-weapon-free zones, including preparations for the two Conferences of States Parties That Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico in 2005 and in New York in 2010.

We are grateful to Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda for her willingness to visit Geneva to publicize the work of OPANAL, as she did last year in New York, during the First Committee's session, and will soon do in Vienna.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now invite the Secretary-General, Ms. Gioconda Úbeda, to address the Conference.

Ms. Úbeda (Secretary-General of OPANAL) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this meeting of the Conference on Disarmament in my capacity as Secretary-General of OPANAL. I think this is a propitious time for sharing the agendas of all the regional and international entities that are committed to disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

If we look at the series of developments that began in 1945 with the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, then it is clear that we are facing a new surge towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and with that also confronting new challenges. The global political reality requires progress in nuclear disarmament, which is the responsibility of all States, especially those that possess nuclear weapons, of multilateral agencies and of civil society organizations as well, in their own way.

Like the Conference on Disarmament and its predecessors, OPANAL has been active for a long time, from the zone's military denuclearization to the present, a long time

span marked by periods of faster and slower progress. In this new phase, the focus of OPANAL is on redefining the *raison d'être* of the Latin American and Caribbean nuclear-weapon-free zone, as well as its role not as an end in itself but as a means of achieving general, complete and irreversible nuclear disarmament.

I would like to very quickly mention that the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones in densely populated areas was put into practice in Latin America with the signing, in 1967, of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which entered into force in 1969, as Ambassador Macedo Soares reminded us just now. The same year saw the establishment of OPANAL, a body whose mission is to ensure the fulfilment of the Treaty's aims.

Thirty-five years passed before all of the region's 33 States joined the zone; Cuba ratified the Treaty in 2002 after signing it in 1995. The early 1990s saw a significant number of signatures and/or ratifications: Brazil, Chile and Argentina ratified the Treaty in 1994 and six Caribbean countries fully joined between 1992 and 1997. Thirty-five long years have shown that the political and legal will of States to consolidate their position as a nuclear-weapon-free zone have been and remain strong; that the paths taken have been winding and characterized by a search for possible agreements. As we in this room all know, building agreements requires trust and flexibility with regard to their form, given the complexity of the *realpolitik* that constitutes our daily work.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco was a novel and necessary response in a context in which the nuclear arms race was at full throttle and just a few months had passed since the missile crisis of 1962, a year which, of course, saw the highest planet-wide number of nuclear tests ever, including 117 above and 61 underground. Under the leadership of Alfonso García Robles, Ambassador Emeritus and former foreign minister of Mexico, who was the delegate of Mexico to this Conference for some years, the Treaty of Tlatelolco was responsive to this situation and preventive with regard to the future. Today, almost 45 years later, we still consider that decision prescient and hard-won. Speaking of this historic moment, I will quote the words spoken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the time, U Thant, before the Preparatory Commission for the Denuclearization of Latin America (COPREDAL) on 12 February 1967, in reference to the adoption of the Treaty of Tlatelolco:

“The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America marks an important milestone in the long and difficult search for disarmament. ... It provides the statute for the creation, for the first time in history, of a nuclear-free zone for an inhabited portion of the Earth. ... The nations of Latin America can, with ample justification, take pride in what they have wrought by their own initiative and through their own efforts.”

In addition, at the time, the Treaty of Tlatelolco represented an important contribution to international law and a reference and inspiration for the other nuclear-weapon-free zones that later emerged, as we know, in 1985 in the South Pacific, with the Treaty of Rarotonga; in 1995, in South-East Asia, with the Treaty of Bangkok; and a year later, in 1996, in Africa, with the Treaty of Pelindaba. The latter treaty and the Treaty of Central Asia entered into force in 2009. As we all know, today there are five nuclear-weapon-free zones, plus Mongolia, which declared itself a nuclear-weapon-free State in 2000.

Regarding the Treaty of Tlatelolco itself, I would remind the Conference that it incorporates three key elements that remain in force. Under it, States:

1. Agree to refrain from the testing, use, manufacture, production or acquisition of any nuclear weapons, avoiding the proliferation of such weapons, while contributing to the maintenance of peace and security in the region;

2. Consider the nuclear-weapon-free zone as a means for achieving general and complete disarmament on the grounds that the nuclear-weapon-possessing powers also have responsibilities and obligations with regard to ensuring the military denuclearization of the area and do this by signing and ratifying, as they have done, the Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco; and

3. Reaffirm and guarantee the right of the States parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, establishing a system of control and international obligations.

Now I would like to mention briefly the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones and their current role in nuclear disarmament.

The member States of the nuclear-weapon-free zones originally envisioned them as dykes for protecting certain territories from proliferation and obtaining the guarantee of the nuclear-weapon-possessing powers “not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Contracting Parties of the Treaty”. The importance and contribution of the nuclear-weapon-free zones with regard to international and regional peace and security have been repeatedly recognized in the context of the United Nations, as has their contribution to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the goals of nuclear disarmament. The importance of this issue is clear. However, without general and complete disarmament nuclear-weapon-free zones are in the middle of the river. We need to cross to the other side. Negative security assurances will be adequate only if they are comprehensive, both for nuclear-weapon-free zone inhabitants and for humanity as a whole. The 114 member States of the nuclear-weapon-free zones are convinced — and have repeatedly stated in various forums — that decisive steps must be taken towards a universal, legally binding agreement which guarantees that nuclear weapons will not be used, nor their use threatened, against countries that do not possess them. Mr. President and representatives of the member States of the Conference and the observers to it, we, the countries of all the planet’s nuclear-weapon-free zones, hope that soon this Conference will take meaningful steps in that direction.

Today, the *raison d’être* of the nuclear-weapon-free zones transcends their role as dykes or islands, transcends the original concept, and they should evolve until they fulfil their purpose, forming bridges in the complex architecture of global nuclear disarmament. It is towards that goal that efforts must be directed. The most important challenge right now is to determine how and when. This work began with the five nuclear-weapon-free zones that exist today and that I mentioned, plus Mongolia, which has held two conferences of States parties to the treaties governing these zones, the first in 2005 and the second in 2010. The first was organized by Mexico and OPANAL, and the second coordinated by Chile.

In recent years there has also been progress in the creation and consolidation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The year 2009 was important because it marked the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba and the Treaty of Central Asia. This year is also important: Russia ratified the Protocols to the Treaty of Pelindaba, and the United States sent to the Senate for ratification the protocols of that treaty and the Treaty of Rarotonga. We welcome these two events because they are closely linked with improvement and progress in these nuclear-weapon-free zones.

For their part, African States in May of this year began the operational work of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCON). We should bear in mind that this is the first time since 1969, when the Treaty of Tlatelolco entered into force, that another nuclear-weapon-free zone has created a specialized body to oversee compliance with its treaty. We welcome the African initiative. It could facilitate coordination between the two zones. Here I would like to mention that a major obstacle to coordinating the work of the five nuclear-weapon-free zones has been that not all such zones have a specialized body that follows up on and ensures compliance with the respective treaties. So the steps being

taken by the African initiative will help in consolidating the work of entities that facilitate coordination and work between all the zones.

However, I must say that work between the nuclear-weapon-free zones has only just begun. It is essential to identify effective measures for promoting and deepening cooperation and coordination among them. OPANAL thus welcomes proposals such as that of Brazil to create an informal group of countries friendly to the nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the interest reiterated by Mexico in facilitating and contributing to joint efforts by these zones.

I would like to invite the most dynamic countries in other regions of the world where these zones have been created to also take the lead before the Third Conference of States Parties, which will take place in 2015. This preparatory work is expected to start in the margins of the preparatory meetings for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2012.

The final documents of the two meetings I mentioned earlier are a starting point. Now we need to implement the shared agenda of the nuclear-weapon-free zones. Uniting the efforts of these zones through a convention or agreement to ban nuclear weapons would be a natural step for joint action on their part, given their basic purpose. The 114 member States have an important role to play in fulfilling this worthy goal.

I can assure you that the OPANAL Secretariat will, with the commitment of member States, continue to work to strengthen the zone and build bridges to a world free of nuclear weapons. I can assure you that we will continue to implement nuclear-disarmament-related educational programmes. Here I would like to quickly mention that OPANAL has, since 2009, offered training courses on nuclear challenges. This fall we will hold our first course in English. We hope, therefore, that in coming years the other nuclear-weapon-free zones and other interested countries will be able to participate in this course sponsored by OPANAL. Participation is also very easy, as it occurs electronically or online. We hope that this course can be enhanced in coming years and thus contribute to education for nuclear disarmament.

I can assure you on behalf of OPANAL that we will continue our dialogue with the nuclear powers to get them to change or withdraw interpretive declarations made to the Additional Protocols at the time of signing and/or ratification. Such talks have been initiated with the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia, and we have continued our discussions to see when and how it would be possible to move forward so that these interpretive statements also make possible enhanced assurances for the Latin American and Caribbean nuclear-weapon-free zone.

I can also assure you that we will continue to work with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization so that the three countries of our region that have not yet ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty do so; that we will continue to promote effective coordination between all the nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially on measures for achieving complete and general nuclear disarmament; and that we stand ready to collaborate in the creation or enhancement of other nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this regard we support the interest of the international community in the creation of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, as has been agreed in many United Nations forums. To that end we are making available relevant good practices and lessons learned from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to thank Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares for his effective leadership of the Mexican Permanent Mission's coordination of the work of OPANAL vis-à-vis the Conference on Disarmament in 2011. We hope that this is the start of strengthened dialogue and exchange of information between OPANAL and the Conference. I thank Mexico for having pioneered this work during the second half of 2010.

Guatemala, Costa Rica and Uruguay are engaged in similar collaboration in New York, at the United Nations. Jamaica is doing the same with the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

These mechanisms for coordination with various multilateral bodies are new for our body and help in coordinating our actions globally and orienting our agenda towards new challenges.

We are also pleased that this year three countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region are chairing plenary meetings of the Conference on Disarmament. I wish Chile, Cuba and Colombia success in their challenging task. These countries are very active in the meetings of the OPANAL council, of which Chile is a member along with Bolivia, Guatemala, Brazil and Costa Rica. I acknowledge the leadership that all of them are providing to OPANAL and their active commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament.

A decade or more can be short when compared to the “long wave” of the history of disarmament. We hope that the second decade of the twenty-first century will, in retrospect, prove to have been that of general and complete nuclear disarmament. At the very least, may it witness the building of bridges that lead us to this worthy and legitimate goal.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you very much, Ambassador, for your statement and for your important contributions today. Now let me suspend the meeting briefly in order to escort the Ambassador out.

The President escorted Ms. Úbeda out of the meeting room.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Let us resume our meeting. I would now like to start with today’s list of speakers. The first speaker listed is Ambassador Akio Suda of Japan.

Mr. Suda (Japan): I asked for the floor to speak on behalf of Japan and Australia, who are co-hosts of the expert side event on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). It is our view that the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in this body is the urgent next concrete step for international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In order to build confidence and to keep momentum in such negotiations, Japan and Australia have been co-hosting expert side events on FMCT since February this year. From 30 May to 1 June, two weeks ago, we had the third round in the Palais des Nations, which were attended by delegates and experts of more than 45 CD member and observer States and international organizations.

The third side event focused for the second time on the issue of verification in FMCT. I chaired this side event with the extraordinary assistance of Dr. Bruno Pellaud of Switzerland, former International Atomic Energy Agency Deputy Director General for Safeguards, who acted as discussion facilitator of the meeting. I am preparing a detailed Chairs’ report on the event in my personal capacity and I will present it to the CD at a future plenary meeting. But today, I wish to give a brief overview of the discussion we had.

On the first day, we began by recapitulating the discussion of the previous side event, specifically revisiting issues such as the relationship between definition and verification, as well as the purposes of FMCT verification. In the other half of the first day’s session, we focused on various verification tools applicable to FMCT.

On the second day, we continued our discussion, concentrating on the verification of production facilities, possible tools for verifying FMCT-relevant facilities and the question of sensitive information and so forth.

On the final day, the third day, we covered other verification issues that might arise under FMCT, such as legal structure issues and organizational matters, and concluded the event with a wrap-up session with the use of a list of discussed items on FMCT verification.

The discussions over these three days on interactive elements of the issue of verification were very interesting and enlightening. We believe that the discussion of the third side event, together with all of the previous events, will help our focus on the evaluation of the issues associated with FMCT.

Many of the issues debated and options considered can only be addressed within the setting of formal negotiations. It is our hope that these side events contribute to the impetus necessary to start FMCT negotiations in the CD, and take us one step further down the road that will lead to a world without nuclear weapons.

The delegations of Japan and Australia would like to thank all the CD members and the observer States that participated in this event. We are also pleased to see in attendance a large number of experts who in some cases have travelled far to join us in Geneva. We appreciate their great contributions, which enriched our discussion and the understanding of the important topic of FMCT verification.

Mr. Gil Catalina (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am taking the floor today to present a document endorsed by Bulgaria, Germany, Mexico, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, Turkey and Spain. Last week I had the pleasure of circulating it by e-mail to all delegations. The document will be distributed shortly under the symbol CD/1910. This working document contains elements for a fissile material treaty. As is well known, the eight signatory countries are in favour of the immediate start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) in the Conference on Disarmament.

We regret deeply that, for reasons we all know, this Conference has to date not been able to start these negotiations, and that it is therefore not fulfilling its mandate. The current paralysis and lack of prospects for action call into question the credibility of this forum and, therefore, its very existence.

However, we think that, despite the paralysis that has gripped the Conference on Disarmament, the international community should continue its preparations for starting negotiations on an FMCT. In this context we should welcome the initiatives of many countries and NGOs, such as the convening by Australia and Japan of a series of meetings at the margins of this Conference to address various aspects of an FMCT. Similarly, we believe that it is useful to circulate a document containing our thoughts on possible elements relating to such a treaty.

We are fully aware that this is not the first time there has been a proposal for a formal or informal document on an FMCT. We also know that we are not proposing anything completely new, but we hope that our reflections may be useful to other States in preparations for future negotiations.

To be useful, any discussion of an FMCT should begin by emphasizing the elements that unite us, before addressing those that separate us. The conclusion of an FMCT would be a significant contribution, an essential step towards a world without nuclear weapons. It is therefore of the utmost importance for the international community that these negotiations begin without further delay. Inactivity and passiveness are not acceptable options – not as long as the very existence of nuclear weapons remains a threat to the survival of the human species.

The above statements are hardly open to question and are the starting points of the working paper we are presenting today. As we all know, many other aspects of the issue are open to debate. Our document acknowledges all of these alternatives.

For example, in the section on definitions, the working paper takes an open-ended approach, given that the option that is finally chosen regarding the object of the treaty will determine both its impact and its implementation. Similarly, in dealing with the subject of stockpiles of fissile material, the document lists various options.

It then addresses other related topics, such as transfers of fissile material and production and storage facilities. Finally, the document deals with matters relating to transparency and verification. Leafing through the document shows that there is no section on conclusions. And that is as it should be, since — let me emphasize — this is not a position paper. Our intention at this stage is only to contribute to the ongoing debate and lay the groundwork for the negotiation of an FMCT.

We hope that the distinguished delegates will find this contribution useful for the discussion.

Mr. Hernández Basave (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I would like to begin by wishing, through you, a very cordial welcome to Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda, Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). Her presence here today is the first occasion on which this Conference has had the opportunity and the privilege of welcoming a representative of OPANAL. We regret to note once again the dysfunctionality of the Conference on Disarmament, where we are once more victims of rules of procedure and cannot even have a substantive dialogue with a distinguished visitor such as Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda. We would have appreciated having the opportunity and the privilege of holding an interactive dialogue with her and making this statement in her presence.

Mexico associates itself with the statement of the distinguished Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Macedo Soares. As a footnote to his speech, my delegation wishes to remind the Conference that, as the United Nations General Assembly has acknowledged on several occasions since the adoption of resolution 2286 of 5 December 1967, the Treaty of Tlatelolco was a historically significant step in the efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promote international peace and security. The spirit of Tlatelolco lives on in the treaties governing nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions of the world.

The Conference on Disarmament should remember that the countries that possess nuclear weapons constitute 28 per cent of the planet's territory and 46 per cent of the world's population, while the 60 per cent of the world's countries that belong to nuclear-weapon-free zones cover 56 per cent of the earth's surface and include approximately 39 per cent of the global population.

It is often said that the Latin America and Caribbean nuclear-weapon-free zone was the first such zone to be established in a densely populated area of the planet, when in reality the whole world, the entire planet, was a nuclear-weapon-free zone until 1945. In this regard, we reiterate that nuclear-weapon-free zones are not an end in themselves or a disarmament measure per se. They are a means for achieving general and complete disarmament and do not in any way replace nuclear disarmament. We must not lose sight of the fact that nuclear disarmament should be the goal of our political and diplomatic activity within and outside the Conference on Disarmament.

We would like to duly thank Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda for her visit and hope that the work and steadfastness of OPANAL may someday contribute tangibly to disarmament negotiations.

I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to my distinguished colleagues in the Conference on Disarmament, because, as often happens in the life of diplomats, I have received a new assignment — in this case, as director-general for the United Nations system and the specialized agencies in the Mexican Foreign Ministry. My time in Geneva has been very brief, but very full and rewarding, especially because of the opportunity to represent Mexico in this important forum.

I end my assignment here very frustrated that during my stint in the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the Conference on Disarmament, the Conference was unable to regain its productivity or escape the impasse that for the past decade has not yielded any substantive work. From now on — and in fact from Tlatelolco — I will be following very closely the work of the distinguished diplomats who in this forum, day after day, express their commitment to nuclear disarmament, with the hope that very soon we can start a multilateral negotiating process inside or outside the Conference on Disarmament.

In concluding, I would like to recall the words of Ambassador Alfonso García Robles, who, as you all know, received the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to advance international disarmament and peace, including his work on the Treaty of Tlatelolco and in this Conference.

On 27 November 1963, minutes after the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted, without any dissenting votes, a resolution on the denuclearization of Latin America, Alfonso García Robles concluded with the following words, which proved prophetic:

“We do not intend to act rashly or hastily. We shall follow the advice of the wise Latin adage and make haste slowly, but we shall make haste. Today, with the historic resolution adopted by this Assembly, Latin America starts along the road to denuclearization. We are convinced that sooner or later we shall achieve that goal, for we can count upon the unreserved and enthusiastic support of all our peoples.”

With this quotation I today invite the distinguished delegates to the Conference on Disarmament to give their enthusiastic and steadfast support to efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament, and to hasten to achieve it within or outside this Conference.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Ambassador, for your words and thoughts. We will forward your message to the Secretary-General of OPANAL, and I wish you every success in your new position in Mexico. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Austria.

Mr. Strohal (Austria): Thank you, Mr. President, and first of all let me also thank the Secretary-General of OPANAL for her presentation, and join you in extending our best wishes to Ambassador Hernández of Mexico for his new function. We certainly enjoyed cooperation throughout his time here at the CD.

I have asked for the floor simply to briefly refer to the statement that we delivered at last week's informal plenary of the Conference that dealt with the question of revitalization. That was delivered on behalf of the following 29 delegations to the Conference: Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and my own. We certainly don't intend to repeat the statement, but let me simply indicate that we requested the secretariat to circulate it as an official document.

Mr. Jazaïry (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we would like to offer our sincere thanks to the Secretary-General of OPANAL.

The issue of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East reminds us of the importance of creating such a zone in the Middle East; we believe that this step will contribute to the stalled peace process.

We would also like to offer our sincere congratulations to the Representative of Mexico and wish him further success in his professional and personal life. We would like to tell him that we have derived great benefit from his contributions to the meetings of both

the Conference on Disarmament and the Group of 21, which have added a certain depth to the discussions.

The informal debates held previously during this session under the supervision of coordinators on various agenda items were meaningful and rich. We reiterate our profound thanks to the coordinators for assuming this responsibility.

At the meeting held on 1 June, the Ambassador of Italy gave a presentation on the debates conducted under his supervision as coordinator for agenda items 1 and 2 and the general focus on the issue of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes, in accordance with document CD/1907.

The Algerian delegation participated during these debates, both on the issue of the prohibition of the production of fissile materials and on agenda item 2 concerning the prevention of nuclear war and related issues. The Algerian delegation made its contribution at the meeting of 18 May 2011 and, in particular, put forward its view concerning item 2 on the agenda of the Conference. In this context, we hope that the coordinator, the Ambassador of Italy, will include in his oral report the contribution of the Algerian delegation concerning agenda item 2. In addition, we hope that the report that will subsequently be prepared in accordance with paragraph 5 of document CD/1907 reflects the perspective of the Algerian delegation on agenda item 2 as part of the discussions held under the auspices of the coordinator, the Ambassador of Italy.

Lastly, we would like to reiterate our thanks to the Ambassador of Italy and to all the coordinators for their efforts, and hope that such discussions will contribute to clarifying perspectives and so advancing the work of the Conference.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Sir. I have taken note of your comment.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): My delegation wishes to join other delegations in thanking the Secretary-General of OPANAL for her important statement.

At the CD plenary on 1 June 2011, the distinguished Permanent Representative of Italy spoke about the informal meetings under agenda items 1 and 2 chaired by him during the last month. In the first place, I would also wish to place on record our deep appreciation for the excellent conduct of the informal consultations, which were held under the chairmanship of the Ambassador of Italy.

We however presumed that the distinguished Ambassador spoke in accordance with rule 30 of the CD rules of procedure, since according to our understanding the Chairs and coordinators are required to report orally in their personal capacity on informal discussions to the President of the CD, who in conjunction with each of them would finalize reports under his/her own responsibility.

Since the distinguished Ambassador of Italy spoke on the record about his views of the discussion, I would also wish to place on record what my delegation exactly said during these informal discussions with regard to the so-called Shannon mandate, and I quote:

“We have heard repeated references to the Shannon mandate as the basis for addressing the issue of stockpiles. This kind of constructive ambiguity that existed in 1995, or shortly thereafter, would have been sufficient for us, but certainly not in the present circumstances. In view of the discriminatory arrangements undertaken in our region that we have referred to in detail in the past, the issue cannot be addressed by any kind of constructive ambiguity but needs to be addressed in a very direct manner.”

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have taken careful note of your comment.

Mr. Zvekić (Serbia): On behalf of the informal group of observer States, I would like to express our appreciation for the presentation made by Her Excellency Gioconda Úbeda Rivera, Secretary-General of OPANAL, which operationalizes the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the nuclear-weapon-free zone of Latin America.

Gratitude goes to the Colombian Presidency for the very useful stocktaking exercise which we had over the last two sessions, and also to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and Mr. Tim Caughley for the questionnaires they produced, which informed our discussion.

With reference to the points on the membership of the CD and its enlargement, I would like to acknowledge the support expressed by a number of member States, both during this exercise and in the 17 May session, to start a serious debate in the CD on these issues. It is, in our view, indeed time to launch such a discussion, which will contribute to reinvigorating this body.

In this context, I would also like to take the opportunity to kindly request the secretariat of the CD to brief us at the forthcoming plenary meeting on the membership expansion process in the Conference, highlighting past experiences and the role of the Special Coordinator/Rapporteur in enlargement.

Mr. Mantels (secretariat): I thank the representative of Serbia for his observation and his request. We will make sure — the secretariat will make sure — that his presentation will happen at the next formal plenary meeting.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have taken careful note of your comments, Ambassador, and I would ask the secretariat to kindly do so as well.

Mr. Daryaei (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me to join others in thanking the distinguished Secretary-General of OPANAL for her very useful statement. We also would like to join others in wishing all the best to the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico in his new career.

One of the important issues related to the work of the Conference on Disarmament is building an atmosphere that contributes to enhancing trust and confidence. One of the major tools in this regard is to stick to the agreed framework of conducting the task of the CD and following the work of the CD based on this agreed framework.

We decided to conduct some informal meetings on issues related to the agenda of the CD based on working paper CD/WP.565/Rev.1. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of this document are clear about the conduct of the work of the CD, and I will quote: “The chairs/coordinators are required to report orally, in their personal capacity, on the discussions of the various substantive agenda items to the President who, in conjunction with each of them, would finalize the reports, under his/her own responsibility. The reports will not affect in any way the positions of the CD members.” Paragraph 6 states: “Following informal consultations with CD members, the incumbent President will transmit, through a letter to be addressed to the Conference, the report of the Chairs prepared in their personal capacity and submitted to him/her on the work done by them.”

We tried very much to convince ourselves that the report presented by the distinguished Ambassador of Italy on agenda items 1 and 2 in the meeting of the plenary of the CD is consistent with the agreed framework in CD/WP.565/Rev.1, but we could not do so. I think this may cause some unnecessary discussion, because it may indicate that the report of the Coordinator is going to be negotiated here. While this is not the case for the report, the personal summary and the main responsibility remain a matter for the former President of the CD.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have taken careful note of the comments of the representative of Iran. Rest assured that the Colombian presidency will continue what was agreed on in document CD/1907, previously CD/565/Rev.1.

Mr. Reid (United States of America): First of all, we very much welcome the presence, even if briefly, of Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda Rivera. It is very nice to see OPANAL speaking here; we have always welcomed the work that OPANAL does on behalf of the Treaty of Tlatelolco signatories and those such as ourselves and others who have chosen to join the protocols. It has been very valuable work throughout the years, and we are happy to see the outreach work that they have done in the Conference on Disarmament.

Of course, Tlatelolco has long played a central role in inspiring the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, as the Secretary-General herself laid out. In fact, it has been contributing, in its spirit and its philosophy, to the United States engagement on nuclear-weapon-free zones in multiple regions in the world. Again, as the Secretary-General noted, as you have no doubt noted in our most recent declared posture view, we continue to extend that work to regions. It is very much in the spirit of Tlatelolco that we reach out in this way, and I thank her for noting the recent effort by the President to take forward the protocols on Pelindaba and Rarotonga to the United States Senate.

It is a bittersweet moment, in that we have to note the departure of Ambassador Hernández. We have always very much valued his counsel. Perhaps, I must say, with a note of happiness though, that since you have moved to tasks that will not be far removed from our work here, perhaps it will be in the fall, if not sooner, in July, that we will hear at least your philosophy at work again.

I cannot help but note, listening to several of our recent colleagues' intercessions on the procedural boredom and dreariness that basically constitutes this assembly these days, that perhaps the words in your notes on productivity, or the lack thereof, might ring through the West Lawn in New York in Oyster Bay in the coming months.

And, with a final note on the recent observations by our colleagues from Algeria, Pakistan and Iran, I would note that it has long been the case, and is set out in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I), a document so near and dear to their delegations, as affirmed on a repeated basis, that one of the central aspects of dialogue and discussion here in the Conference on Disarmament is that any delegation can raise any issue on the agenda at any time that they so wish. I am sure that it is in that spirit that our Italian colleague shared his thoughts with us in recent days. We welcome his thoughts. We welcome the thoughts, as well, that our Spanish colleague has brought to us today, as well as our Japanese colleagues and Australian colleagues before; they all speak to the obvious rightness of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and the burgeoning demand to have that negotiation start as soon as possible. We welcome very much those comments in that spirit.

Mr. Tabajara de Oliveira (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Brazil is taking the floor to pay a small tribute to our departing friend, Arturo Hernández, a good friend and an excellent career diplomat. We wish him the best. May he be as successful as he has been here, and may his achievements be a bit more tangible than what we have been able to achieve here. In any case, we wish him all the best, and, since we are all working in the same field, I hope we will see him very soon. I wish it with all my heart.

Mr. Parodi (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you very much, Mr. President. First we would like to welcome the presence today of Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda, Secretary-General of OPANAL, and to express our full support for the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil. We welcome the statement by the Secretary-General of OPANAL, and we support the efforts by the member countries of that and other nuclear-

weapon-free zones. We welcome coordination between the nuclear-weapon-free zones. We hope to continue expanding these zones, particularly in the Middle East. We hope to see negative security assurances consolidated in a concrete and binding manner, and we hope that soon the world will be free of nuclear weapons.

In closing, we regret the departure of our colleague the Ambassador of Mexico and wish him great success in his new position and his career.

Mr. Hoffmann (Germany): I would also like to express our appreciation for the statement we heard this morning by the Secretary-General of OPANAL. I would like to say in this connection that we attach great importance to the role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in nuclear disarmament. I join others in thanking Ambassador Hernández of Mexico for the excellent cooperation we have had with him and I would like to wish him well in his new post.

Third, I would also like to comment briefly on the issue which has been brought up by our colleagues from Algeria, Pakistan and Iran with regard to the intervention we heard here from the Ambassador of Italy on his coordinating the informal discussions on FMCT. In fact, our colleague from Algeria mentioned that the issue was discussed in his regional group. I can say that the issue was discussed also in our regional group. It just so happens that I am presently the coordinator. I would say, in general, that — I am speaking here for myself but I think I reflect a wider feeling — that the Ambassador of Italy wrote his report to the President as foreseen and this will be just routed through the President to member States; I think it is in his personal capacity that he reported in this forum. I think this is only something which can help the process of dialogue in this forum.

I would add, personally, that I am not sure whether it will help our work very much if we go into such minute procedural issues when we are actually challenged to make progress on our real work. I said already on an earlier occasion that I am not sure whether this reflects very well on the Conference on Disarmament when we are dealing with issues of that nature. I would think we should look at more productive areas of debate than these kinds of issues

Mr. Öskiper (Turkey): Allow me to start, at the outset, by thanking the Secretary-General of OPANAL. Indeed we believe that this agency may be a good example for the other nuclear-weapon-free zones of ideas that we have in mind for the future.

While I have the floor, allow me also to bid farewell at an early stage to our dear Mexican Ambassador. It has been a pleasure working with him. We will miss him, but we are happy for him that he is going back home.

I did not intend to take the floor but I do so in order to respond to the comment of the distinguished Ambassador of Serbia and the follow-up remark by the secretariat. We believe that we are at a very critical juncture at the CD, otherwise we would not have spent days, hours and weeks talking about issues such as the revitalization of the CD, the Advisory Board, what to do here and what to do elsewhere, if it ever comes to that. Therefore, we are passing through a very critical juncture at the CD. Therefore, we believe that it is highly important for the secretariat of the Conference to play a key role in unifying issues, rather than raising divisive issues. So, you would have expected the secretariat to have made the comment after having consulted the members.

It is no doubt that Turkey will play an important role when it comes to issues such as revitalizing the CD or moving forward, and we hope that the membership and observers and the secretariat will be mindful of the important critical juncture we are passing through.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have taken note of the comments of the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Khelif (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): The Algerian delegation apologizes for taking the floor again, but it seems that we have been challenged. We would like to clarify the statement made earlier by our delegation. This time we will speak in French, because it seems that our message in Arabic was not well understood.

It does not seem to me that the Algerian delegation stated that this issue had been discussed in the regional group, but perhaps we did not express ourselves clearly on this issue.

Second, our goal in making our statement was not to question the fact that the Ambassador of Italy can express his viewpoint on the discussions concerning agenda items 1 and 2. He holds this right in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference. It is a right that we ourselves cherish and a right that is granted to all.

Our wish was that the report by the coordinator, His Excellency the Ambassador of Italy, on agenda items 1 and 2 should reflect Algeria's stance on item 2, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters".

Mr. O'Shea (Ireland): I would first of all like to join other colleagues in expressing appreciation to the President, and to the Secretary-General of OPANAL for coming here to brief us this morning. I think it was a very useful contribution to our work; nuclear-weapon-free zones are indeed very important. My delegation has highlighted their importance on a number of occasions, as well as the related issue of negative security assurances which we believe is now being pursued in the Conference on Disarmament on a global basis, because of the geographic restrictions which applied to nuclear-weapon-free zones and the difficulty of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in some parts of the world.

Secondly, I would like to bid farewell to the distinguished representative of Mexico, with whom we have worked very closely in a number of formations in Geneva. We very much enjoyed and found useful our interaction with him and we wish him well in his future endeavours.

Finally, I would like to comment on the remarks of the distinguished Ambassador of Serbia and our distinguished colleague from Turkey. As has been mentioned previously on a number of occasions in the Conference, Ireland is one of the countries that has most recently become a member of this Conference, which we did on 5 August 1999. So, we know very well what it is like to be sitting on the observer benches and arguing the case for membership of the Conference. We therefore note that we are a member of the Conference, have great sympathy, as my Ambassador has expressed on a number of occasions, with the aspirations of other countries to become members of this Conference. We certainly consider that it would be very useful for our consideration for the secretariat to provide the kind of information which was requested by the Ambassador of Serbia.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I hope that the secretariat is taking note of delegates' comments.

Mr. Hernández Basave (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to very briefly express my gratitude for the warm words addressed to me by friends and colleagues in this chamber today. I would like to say that those feelings are mutual, and to assure them of my continued full cooperation in our common cause.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before we conclude our substantive work today, I would like to invite the Conference to take a decision on the requests for participation in our work by States that are not members of the Conference. These requests, by Guinea and the United Arab Emirates, appear in document CD/WP.563/Add.4. Are there any comments on these requests? May I take it that the Conference agrees to invite these States to participate in our work, in accordance with the rules of procedure? It is so decided.

This concludes our substantive work today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Wednesday, 22 June, at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.