
Conference on Disarmament

19 August 2014

English

Final record of the one thousand three hundred and twenty-fifth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 19 August 2014, at 10.05 a.m.

President: Mr. Mazlan Muhammad(Malaysia)



The President: I call to order the 1325th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Before proceeding, I would like to bid farewell to Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia and to Ambassador Luis Gallegos of Ecuador, who will soon be relinquishing their posts as Ambassadors to the Conference on Disarmament. On behalf of the Conference and on behalf of my own Government, I wish them success in their new assignments.

At the same time, allow me to wish a warm welcome to Ambassador Robert A. Wood, who has recently assumed his functions as Permanent Representative of the United States to the Conference on Disarmament. On behalf of the Conference and on behalf of my country, I would also like to extend to our new colleague our best wishes.

Allow me also to welcome the Nagasaki Peace Messengers, who have come to see our proceedings today.

I wish to inform you that one State, Jamaica, has requested to participate in our work during the third part of the 2014 session as an observer. Its request is contained in document CD/WP.577/Add.4, which includes all the requests that the secretariat received through yesterday, Monday, 18 August 2014, at 4 p.m. Are there any comments on these requests? May I take it that the Conference decides to invite Jamaica to participate in our work in accordance with the rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The President: At this time, as this is the first time that I am taking the floor as the President of the Conference on Disarmament, allow me to deliver the following statement.

It is an honour for me and for my country to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. It is a responsibility that we will shoulder to the best of our abilities. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Presidents who preceded me this session for their hard work and effort in steering the work of the Conference. As the last President of the current session, my focus will be to negotiate and finalize the report of the Conference to the United Nations General Assembly as set out in rules 43 and 44 of the rules of procedure.

Before I touch on my plans for the work that lies ahead, allow me to take a step back and share my delegation's view on the status of the Conference and various issues discussed here.

In 2004, Malaysia assumed the presidency of the Conference for the first time since joining in 1999. Ten years on, we are assuming the presidency again. Since we last assumed the presidency, the world's security climate has evolved. The world has embarked on a journey to ban landmines and cluster munitions and, last year, it adopted the Arms Trade Treaty. Ironically, all these achievements were attained outside of the Conference. The Conference is in the same situation as it was 10 years ago. While the world has evolved, the Conference is still rooted in a stalemate, where the only constant attribute is the absence of substantive work.

We join many other delegations in noting that the stalemate in the Conference has continued for far too long. As exemplified by the ban on landmines and cluster munitions, the world did not wait for the Conference, and presumably it shall not wait for progress to be made on other important disarmament issues as well. It is deeply disturbing to witness this situation continuing. The Conference is not playing its role, and the international community are right to express their concern on this matter.

As it stands, the Conference's role as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community continues to be a title, at best. The fate of the Conference lies in the hands of us here in this magnificent chamber. History will judge us whether we succeed or fail. It would seem from our standpoint that the Conference is being held ransom as delegations continue to insist on subjects which are clearly a red line for others.

While nuclear disarmament and a fissile material treaty remain the main focus, let us not forget that there are other issues on the Conference's agenda and the importance of all of them being arranged into a proper programme of work. Malaysia recognizes that there are different priorities with regard to the issues to be negotiated in the Conference. However, these priorities need to be rationalized in relation to one another. The truth is that they all could be negotiated at the same time in different working groups scheduled in different time slots but generally in the same time frame. The important principle is for each issue to be given equal time and emphasis and not be a precondition for the consideration of others.

The priority for Malaysia is nuclear disarmament because this weapon constitutes a clear and present danger to humanity and this planet. This is an evil weapons system that needs to be eliminated completely and comprehensively. The way to achieve this is to immediately start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention. Malaysia does not subscribe to the step-by-step method of achieving nuclear disarmament for it is an impossible process rendering complete and comprehensive nuclear disarmament an unachievable goal. We cannot see why a complete and comprehensive nuclear disarmament agreement cannot be achieved, since we have in the past managed to eliminate a whole class of weapons systems through the Biological Weapons and Chemical Weapons Conventions. Nuclear weapons are just another class of weapon, but they are a million times more destructive and therefore have a million more reasons for their elimination.

To find a way out of this impasse, in 2013 the international community convened an Open-ended Working Group to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. Again, this was an initiative taken outside of the Conference on Disarmament. The Working Group provided a platform for open and honest discussions in realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. It is, however, very regretful that several key delegations were absent from the Working Group. It was a lost opportunity for us to be engaged in this important matter.

Malaysia is encouraged by recent developments in the discussion of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. We are pleased to have contributed to this effort since it first gained traction in 2012. Malaysia participated in the first and second International Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Norway and Mexico, and looks forward to participating in the next conference, to be held in Austria. Hopefully, these conference rounds will garner sufficient momentum and support to initiate a more substantive and successful initiative towards complete and comprehensive nuclear disarmament. Malaysia stands ready to support any initiative towards that goal. The humanitarian initiative proves that there is strong support for the total elimination of nuclear weapons among the international community. Our only regret is, it is taking place outside the realm of the Conference.

Last September, dignitaries from 70 countries, including the Prime Minister of Malaysia, participated in the high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament held in New York. The presence of our Prime Minister at the high-level meeting is testimony to the utmost importance and priority that Malaysia places on this specific issue. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes resolution 68/32 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, calling for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons and the

convening of a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament by 2018. In this context, Malaysia fully endorses the statement by the Group of 21 earlier this year in calling for the commencement of such negotiations in the Conference.

On the working methods of the Conference, it is important to note that a re-examination of the rules of procedure should not be focused solely on the consensus rule, which is a major concern for many delegations. Rather, it should be an opportunity to explore ways and means to further improve the Conference's current method of work. In the past, delegations — including my own — have raised several key issues with regard to the current predicament of the Conference. In this regard, we welcome the proposal made by the Acting Secretary-General at the Conference on 20 May 2014, which could contribute to the resumption of substantive work in the Conference. Malaysia has provided our view on the different proposals, and we look forward to further steps being taken by the Conference on these matters.

Allow me to take this opportunity to comment on the involvement of civil society in the work of the Conference. As I highlighted in our previous statement to the Conference, Malaysia values the contribution made by civil society in the field of disarmament. Our close collaboration with civil society led to the submission of the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention as an official document at the sixty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. Members of civil society in the disarmament sphere should be viewed as a very committed group of people, since their cause has received very little financial support from anyone, unlike civil society actors working in the human rights area. I do not believe that they are involved in this effort for monetary gain, but rather for the genuine concern about what this weaponry can do to us.

Civil society efforts are important in generating support for nuclear disarmament at the grass-roots level, and their invaluable inputs will enrich the work of the Conference and help to stimulate substantive discussion. Malaysia continues to hold the view that the Conference should seize the opportunity to tap into the expertise, knowledge and insight that can contribute enormously to our work. This may just be the much-needed impetus that the Conference requires to move forward and fulfil the role it was created for. In this regard, we look forward to the convening of the informal Conference on Disarmament/civil society forum to be hosted by the Secretary-General of the Conference.

Before concluding, I would like to share with you my plans for the coming four weeks. In addition to the report of the Conference to the General Assembly, I will also seek your consent in dealing with the report of the informal working group with a mandate to produce a programme of work, as mandated by the decision contained in document CD/1974. Yesterday, we had a fruitful discussion on the work of the informal working group. Let me express my appreciation to the Co-Chair, Ambassador Gallegos of Ecuador, and Vice-Co-Chair, Ambassador Woolcott of Australia, for their hard work and commitment this year. I am confident that, with the support and cooperation of all member States, we will be able to decide on how to treat this report in a meaningful way.

On the preparation of the report of the Conference to the General Assembly, I am guided by past reports of the Conference, in particular the 2013 report, which provides guidance on where consensus can be reached. I am also guided by the rules of procedure, which stipulate under rule 45 the content and substance of the report. I noted that a number of initiatives in the Conference this year have been addressed in past sessions. Therefore, I will be guided by past agreed language, which in my view would provide an excellent basis for where consensus can be reached.

You can be assured that my delegation will conduct the work of the presidency in an open, transparent and inclusive manner. In this regard, I would like to inform you that the first draft of the report will be made available to you by Thursday, 21 August, after which you will have time to submit proposed amendments to the draft. It is my intention to hear your initial reaction and comments on the draft at the plenary meeting next Tuesday.

I plan to devote the third week of my presidency to the drafting of the text in an informal mode. Additional drafting sessions will be arranged as required, based on the progress of the negotiation. It is my sincere hope that we can conclude this negotiation at the earliest possible opportunity with a view to adopting the report at the final plenary meeting of my presidency. Let me also add that my door is always open, and I welcome any comment and feedback from you in ensuring the smooth conduct of the work of the Conference.

I look forward to working with all delegations in the coming weeks, and I am confident that with your cooperation and support, we will be able to conclude the work of the 2014 session of the Conference in an efficient and timely manner.

I will now turn to the list of speakers. I give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Sano, and Ms. Koyanagi, Youth Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. Sano (Japan): Mr. President, as this is the first time that I am taking the floor in the plenary under your presidency, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of this important role. As one of the six Presidents of this year's session, I assure you of my delegation's full support to you and your team throughout your tenure.

The month of August is special for the Japanese people. Each year, memorial ceremonies are held on 6 and 9 August in Hiroshima and Nagasaki respectively. We not only commemorate but also pray for peace and renew our determination towards a safer world free of nuclear weapons. This morning I am delighted to introduce to you all Ms. Masaki Koyanagi, now sitting next to me, who has joined the Japanese delegation for the day. She is a high-school student from Nagasaki and a third-generation hibakusha, the direct survivors of the atomic bombings. She will shortly take the floor in her capacity as Youth Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons, commissioned by the Japanese Foreign Minister, Mr. Fumio Kishida. The Youth Communicator programme is one of the pillars of the Japanese Government's policy in disarmament and non-proliferation education and is at the heart of the humanitarian aspect of the disarmament effort by the Government.

It has now been 69 years since the end of the war and the hibakusha are getting old, actually nearly 80 years old on average, and there is a risk of their memories and stories fading away. To keep that from happening, the younger generation of Ms. Koyanagi and her schoolmates sitting on the balcony of this chamber has volunteered to become Youth Communicators. Their mission is to relay the testimonies of hibakusha to the next generation and to spread and deepen the understanding of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. In addition, they act as Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Messengers running a campaign to collect signatures from all over the globe in support of a world without nuclear weapons.

Now, Mr. President, please allow me to pass the floor to Ms. Koyanagi.

Ms. Koyanagi (Japan): Allow me to begin by saying what a great honour it is for me to speak at the Conference on Disarmament. Today, I would like to briefly touch upon the real consequences of the atomic bombing and renew the call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

I was born and brought up in Nagasaki, and I had many chances to hear about the terror of the atomic bomb. My grandmother experienced the bombing at 1.5 kilometres from the hypocentre when she was 22 years old. She escaped death but was wounded in her leg by the explosion. She suffered from poor health and died of stomach cancer when she was 53 years old. I never had a chance to hear about her experience from her. As I came to know, both of my grandparents experienced the atomic bombing very close to the hypocentre. I thought I should know how they overcame their hardship after the bombing. Now, I am determined to work hard as a third-generation atomic bomb survivor to pass down the stories of the survivors to the next generation. “There will be no more survivors in the future of humankind” is the message of the survivors. It is my duty to convey their message to people around the world.

In February this year, I attended in Mexico the second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. During the conference, a “hibakusha session” was held. I made a statement as a third-generation atomic bomb survivor, delivering testimonies from four atomic bomb survivors. I talked about the suffering of my grandparents and other atomic bomb survivors. I said that my mission as a third-generation survivor is to continue to convey the survivors’ message to the people of the world. Now, I have a strong sense of responsibility as a third-generation atomic bomb survivor. We must not forget the tragedies in Nagasaki and Hiroshima 69 years ago. In order to put my thinking into action, I decided to become a Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Messenger.

The first Peace Messengers were dispatched 17 years ago to bring the voices of Nagasaki to the world. The 10,000 High-School Students Signatures Campaign continues to this day, seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons and the attainment of a peaceful world. The campaign has spread to many parts of Japan. The total number of signatures reached 1 million last year, and we have brought here today 131,743 signatures. We were appointed as Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons by Mr. Fumio Kishida, Foreign Minister of Japan. We, the young people of Japan, have a mission to appeal for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons.

It is time for young people to take action. I believe we can open the way to peace through our efforts. I call upon all the delegates at the Conference on Disarmament to renew their determination and pave the way for the total elimination of nuclear weapons through united action. I sincerely hope that the stalemate in the Conference will be resolved and that active negotiation will commence soon. I would also like to ask you to please visit Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Next time, I hope to see you in Japan.

The President: Thank you, Ambassador Sano and Ms. Koyanagi. I think that with the presence of young people like you continuing with this work, we still have hope regarding the elimination of nuclear weapons.

I agree with you that everybody here should visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I had the opportunity in 2012. It was a very moving experience standing in the middle of Nagasaki at the time when the bomb exploded.

I now invite Ambassador Woolcott of Australia to take the floor.

Mr. Woolcott (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for your kind words, and may I also wish you the best in presiding over the Conference on Disarmament in its final session. It can be, as we know, a complex process.

This will be my last time in this historic chamber. Much important work has been done here — but, regrettably, not for a long time now.

I have been here for four and a half years, and I have been struck by the irony of sitting among José María Sert’s extraordinary gold and sepia murals depicting the progress of humankind while we have failed to even adopt a programme of work.

That said, it has been a privilege to work with a group of ambassadors and delegates marked by their integrity and intelligence, who despite their often deep differences over issues that go to fundamental concepts of their nation's security are still able to work in a collegial way.

These personal relationships have gone well beyond these bronze doors and encompassed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) cycle, the First Committee in New York, biological weapons and a myriad of activities involving conventional weapons.

I came to this place shortly after the blocking of the decision contained in document CD/1864, and we have spent years pulling and turning and twisting the very words of that resolution to try and find a way to make it fit into the political realities that confront this body.

And we have still not succeeded in finding that consensus.

It is not for lack of effort by any of us here. In the case of Australia, we have always been unabashed in giving priority to the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Quite simply, we see an FMCT as the bookend to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty — which of course was and continues to be another Australian priority.

Australians are a pragmatic people and, in this context, generally believe that sweeping visions of nuclear disarmament are no substitute for the hard, grinding work necessary to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

For Australia, the debate over whether an FMCT is a disarmament or non-proliferation measure strikes us as a bit like the old theological debate about how many angels you can fit on the head of a pin. What difference does it make?

The basic point is that fissile material is the raw material for nuclear weapons, and stopping the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes is fundamental to nuclear arms control.

We cannot arrive at a world free of nuclear weapons without having negotiated the control of fissile material. There is no getting around this, and there is no short cut.

What is not straightforward — and, in fact, is highly complex — is how we get there. So, we have toiled away on this.

In 2010 we co-hosted with our close partners, Japan, an experts' side event to foster intensive technical discussions relevant to the fissile material cut-off treaty. While Ambassador Suda of Japan and I chaired these discussions, we were ably assisted by Swiss expert Dr. Bruno Pellaud, and brought together experts and diplomats from the Conference on Disarmament member and observer States. This initiative was then followed by substantial events exploring aspects of an FMCT hosted by our German and Dutch colleagues. These side events were aimed at building momentum for commencing FMCT negotiations and delving into the complexity of the issues that will need to be negotiated.

We were then also pleased to work closely with Canada, who took the lead in establishing the FMCT Group of Governmental Experts, which is meeting as I speak. I was delighted to have contributed a little as the Australian expert to what have been interesting and solid discussions in the Group of Governmental Experts, and I wish the Group well in its important deliberations.

We will need to think carefully about what follows on from the conclusion of the FMCT Group of Governmental Experts next year.

I have always thought that the States who possess nuclear weapons are ultimately the ones who need to show leadership on this issue. It would be a giant step forward and a demonstration of their commitment to an eventual nuclear-free world if the five permanent members of the Security Council provided this leadership and drove this issue.

Let me turn now to the 2015 NPT Review Conference. I know a number of States here in this chamber are not parties to the NPT, and I do not want to revisit questions of universalization. But what we can all agree on is that the continuing strength of the NPT and what happens in 2015 has major implications for our work.

The NPT is the global treaty-level commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and its normative force remains the crucial underpinning for what we are seeking to do.

Four years ago, 189 States agreed by consensus on an elaborate action plan which covered nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

For the overwhelming majority of us our efforts at this point should be focused on this action plan; and to be thinking about the desired landing zone in a realistic and constructive way, we need the 2015 Review Conference to provide us with a solid outcome.

Australia and fellow members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative have been working in advance of the NPT Preparatory Committee on proposing practical steps that can contribute to greater nuclear transparency, further reductions in arsenals and greater security of nuclear weapons and material.

We need to be thinking about our frame of mind for 2015, and we will need to be careful in 2015 about how we judge what constitutes success, or relative success, or provisional success in the implementation of the action plan — both its constituent parts and as a whole. We will also need to be realistic about what can be achieved by 2015, including how quickly there is movement on pillar 1. Transparency by the nuclear-weapons States will be important and crucial for managing expectations: collectively, they continue to fall down in this regard.

We also need to focus on the future with genuinely creative ideas. Of course, there will need to be a balance between developing new ideas and implementing the action plan. It is important to remember that the action plan built on the 1995 and 2000 outcomes, and our further thinking should attempt to build on this action plan.

Finally, looking beyond 2015, we need to be giving active consideration to how we manage what might be termed the near-end-game challenges of a world where the United States and Russia have achieved much deeper cuts to their arsenals, how to draw in all five nuclear-weapon States and the other nuclear-weapon possessors into an organized and productive process, while building and maintaining their confidence in stability. This will present huge strategic challenges.

The political dynamics outside this chamber, and predominantly in countries most attached to the workings of the Conference, need to shift in a way that will allow the Conference to resume its proper negotiating role. We have recently seen how this frustration has fuelled the growing global discourse on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and support in some quarters for a near-term nuclear-weapons-ban treaty.

It is the concern over the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and a desire for a peaceful future for our children that underpin all that we do on disarmament and non-proliferation. The discourse about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons

serves a crucial role in energizing the debate and in putting pressure on all States possessing nuclear weapons to move down the path of disarmament. It serves to educate a new generation who never knew the cold war nor the palpable fear of a nuclear conflict and its catastrophic consequences. We need this generation to engage fully in the push to obtain a world without nuclear weapons.

This renewed emphasis on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons can play a vital role in spurring us all to take greater steps towards disarmament and ensuring that we do not proliferate. But what it does not do is provide a short cut. We still need to work methodically — building block by building block — if we are going to attain the necessary confidence and transparency to bring about nuclear disarmament.

The States that possess nuclear weapons must be engaged in this process for it to have a practical impact. Otherwise it will be a distraction from our real business.

In addition, we need to acknowledge the security dimensions of nuclear weapons. Effective disarmament is only possible when those States that possess nuclear weapons feel more secure without nuclear weapons than with them. We must create a world where the utility of nuclear weapons is greatly diminished.

As I noted earlier, much hard work has gone into trying to shift the dynamics of this place. The informal working group has sought to push the envelope, and a two-track approach involving the schedule of activities and informal meetings of the informal working group has been useful in elevating the debate on the four core issues, even if no path through the political thicket has been found. I hope the Conference continues to pursue this approach in 2015. I also want to acknowledge the Open-ended Working Group and its work so ably chaired by Ambassador Dengo.

But if I leave a thought, it is that the impasse cannot go on too much longer. If the current realities do not shift, then the Conference will be swept into the dustbin of history.

Here I would like to talk about the Arms Trade Treaty as a process which may have something to offer in such gloomy circumstances. A critical factor for the success of the Treaty negotiations was that the process was conducive to building the broadest possible constituency of States. From the Group of Governmental Experts to the Open-ended Working Group, then the Preparatory Committee and then finally two negotiating conferences — all of which importantly operated under the auspices of the United Nations — the process towards the adoption of the Treaty text last year was not rushed; its milestones were well measured. Certainly, political will played a crucial part in allowing the co-authors and other supporters to keep moving to the next stage and further build the constituency supporting work towards the treaty.

At every stage it would have been easy to bank the gains made in building a like-minded constituency and go outside the United Nations system to complete the job. But the willingness of all interested States to stay the course within the United Nations system can only add to the legitimacy of the Treaty and its potential for effective action into the future.

One of the key features of both negotiating conferences was the consensus rule, and its inclusion was contentious. In retrospect, the provision of consensus proved beneficial, because it broadened the constituency of those willing to come and negotiate on what was an important but for many at that time still uncertain issue.

Of course, the final conference did not deliver a substantive consensus outcome in the most formal sense, and some may recall that the hashtag #consensusfail popped up very quickly on the Twitter feed on the evening of 28 March 2013. But I believe that it would be wrong to conclude, as some were quick to, that consensus had failed. The final conference showed what is possible when those engaged in a consensus-

governed process are determined to make it work and are striving for a negotiated consensus outcome because of the optimal balance and legitimacy which such an outcome conveys. And as I noted, in the end, there were only three States not willing to let the text through.

The process did have a redundancy, an off-ramp, through paragraph 7 of resolution 67/234, which allowed delegations legitimately to take the text to the General Assembly on 2 April. So in the end, paragraph 7 proved to be a measure of last resort.

I think that is a key lesson to take from the end of the Arms Trade Treaty process. It is not that future treaties can and should routinely be taken to the General Assembly when the going gets rough — treaties of like-mindeds have their clear limitations. Nor is the lesson that consensus should be allowed to bind everything up. Rather, the lesson is that redundancies should be built into consensus processes but they should be used sparingly, as a last resort and only after all effort at consensus have been exhausted.

For those who see the Arms Trade Treaty experience as a model, the challenge, particularly on nuclear issues, will always be making the right judgement at the right moment to apply such redundancies. Potential effectiveness of the instrument in question at such critical moments should always be the key measure for such judgements.

Let me conclude by coming back to nuclear weapons. They are monstrous, and we all know they must never be used. We ought to acknowledge that much has been done since the 1970s in reducing their numbers and much has been done in containing their horizontal proliferation.

At the same time, we ought to acknowledge the quintessential soundness of what former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi said in their report entitled “Eliminating nuclear threats”: “So long as any State has nuclear weapons, others will want them. So long as any such weapons remain, it defies credibility that they will not one day be used, by accident, miscalculation or design. And any such use would be catastrophic ... Maintaining the status quo is not an option.”

I am reminded of a poem by the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet which says much:

This earth will grow cold,
A star among stars
And one of the smallest,
A gilded mote on blue velvet —
I mean this, our great earth.
This earth will grow cold one day,
not like a block of ice
or a dead cloud even
but like an empty walnut it will roll along
in pitch-black space...
You must grieve for this right now
— you have to feel this sorrow now —
for the world must be loved this much
if you’re going to say “I lived”...

The President: Thank you, Ambassador Woolcott, for that farewell statement. It is an inspiring statement and a very substantive one. We all here recognize the contribution you have made to the cause of disarmament, and I for one am very sorry to see you go.

I now invite Ambassador Wai to make a statement on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Mr. Wai (Myanmar): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Mr. President, at the outset allow me to warmly congratulate you, a close ASEAN member, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this important juncture. We are confident that under your able guidance and leadership the deliberations at this august body will produce a fruitful outcome.

ASEAN member States reiterate that nuclear disarmament has always been our utmost priority. Furthermore, we reaffirm the importance and validity of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. It is regrettable that the 18-year stalemate has prevented this body from commencing negotiations on substantive issues. We therefore call upon the Conference to establish, as soon as possible and as the highest priority, an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament.

ASEAN, with its sustained development, strategic geographical location and peace-oriented values in the region, plays a pivotal role in maintaining and promoting peace and stability in the region, aiming towards the prevalence of international peace and security.

We stress the importance of continuing to strengthen cooperation under the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the declaration on a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality and the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We reaffirm the Treaty of Amity as the key code of conduct for governing inter-State relations in the region and a foundation for regional peace and stability.

We underscore that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues.

ASEAN attaches great importance to the outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and reiterates its call for the full and effective implementation of the action plan as set out in the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, particularly the 22-point action plan on nuclear disarmament.

Though there have been some positive signals and developments, the world is still confronted by unresolved challenges. Therefore, ASEAN calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. In this regard, we welcome the successful convening of the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on nuclear disarmament in 2013. We do hope that, building on the outcomes of this meeting, we can move forward to achieve the common goal of nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, we also welcome the work of the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

ASEAN continues to believe that the nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia,

contribute significantly to strengthening the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

In this regard, we welcome the signing of the legally binding Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia by the nuclear-weapon States early in May this year in New York. We also welcome the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace on the occasion of the second summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in Havana, Cuba.

We hope that the forthcoming Third Conference of States Parties and Signatories that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, to be held in 2015 and to be chaired by Indonesia, will produce an outcome document with concrete recommendations in pursuit of achieving total global nuclear disarmament. While nuclear-weapon-free zones play an important role in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, they should not be an end in themselves. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is not a substitute for nuclear disarmament.

ASEAN underscores the importance of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones where they do not exist, especially in the Middle East region, and expresses our continued support for the convening of the conference, at the earliest, on the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. We would also like to stress that it is necessary for the nuclear-weapon States to provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States in the zones.

We stress the importance of strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime to maintain peace, security and prosperity in the region. We reaffirm our commitment to preserve South-East Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter. We further reaffirm our commitment to uphold the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We underline the importance of full and effective implementation of the Treaty and the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty (2013-2017), which was adopted by the ASEAN foreign ministers on 30 June 2013.

We reiterate our commitment to work closely with the nuclear-weapon States on the early signing and ratification of the Protocol to the Treaty without reservations by nuclear-weapon States. We also acknowledge the need to work closely with the nuclear-weapon States to address our concerns over the nuclear-weapon States' proposed reservations to the Protocol to the Treaty.

We agree with the United Nations Secretary-General that there is substantial growth of interest in better understanding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we welcome the successful convening of the first and second Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, in Oslo, Norway, and Nayarit, Mexico, respectively, and likewise welcome the Austrian initiative to host the third Conference.

ASEAN supports the appointment of a special coordinator on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion, ASEAN further emphasizes the necessity of redoubling efforts to reach the goal of general and complete disarmament with particular attention to a nuclear-weapon-free world as a matter of utmost priority.

ASEAN is confident that, under the able leadership of Malaysia, all member States of the Conference on Disarmament will render their support and exercise utmost flexibility towards the successful completion of the report of the Conference to the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

The President: I thank you for that statement on behalf of ASEAN and also thank you for the kind words addressed to me. I now invite the newly arrived representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Wood, to take the floor.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): If I may, let me first thank Ambassadors Woolcott and Gallegos for their distinguished service in the Conference on Disarmament and wish them well in their future endeavours.

I am delighted to join you here as we work to advance the important agenda of the Conference. As this is my first opportunity to address the Conference, I would like to commend the efforts of the 2014 presidencies for their dedication and skill in fostering substantive discussions on all Conference agenda items under the schedule of activities, even as efforts continue to achieve consensus on a programme of work. In this connection, I am very pleased to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the important duties of the Conference on Disarmament presidency, and I wish to assure you and the Acting Secretary-General, Mr. Møller, of my delegation's full support.

Since its inception, this Conference has achieved historic agreements that have made the world a much safer place. While progress in the Conference has not always been as steady as we would want to see, its cumulative outputs have been indispensable. Mindful of this legacy, my delegation is strongly committed to working with others to enable the Conference to make further substantial contributions to international security. Pending agreement on a programme of work with a negotiating mandate, the United States believes that the informal substantive discussions the Conference has conducted this year have provided a useful elaboration of views and helped to keep the Conference ready to conduct negotiations. The in-depth nature of these discussions demonstrates the Conference has the capacity to work; as an institution and as professionals, it is clear we can engage constructively when enabled to do so. While we do not discount the challenges associated with getting the Conference back to substantive work, we believe it important to maintain high expectations regarding what the Conference can and should deliver.

In approaching the Conference's core agenda items, my delegation is guided by the commitment of the United States to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, as outlined by President Obama in Prague five years ago and reaffirmed by the President in Berlin last year. As President Obama emphasized, this goal will not be reached quickly — “perhaps not in my lifetime”, in his words. It will take patience and persistence. Step-by-step, practical, multilateral efforts are an essential part of this process, in which the Conference has a valuable role to play. In that context, the priority of the United States at the Conference continues to be negotiation of a treaty banning the further production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (fissile material cut-off treaty, or FMCT), consistent with the Shannon report and the mandate contained therein. An FMCT would end the production of weapons-grade fissile material needed to create nuclear weapons in the States where it is still ongoing, cap stockpiles worldwide and provide the basis for future reductions in nuclear arsenals. It is with a view to promoting the prospects for negotiation of an FMCT in the Conference that the United States has engaged actively in our discussions under the schedule of activities and also in the meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts on an FMCT. While we are convinced that an FMCT can and should be the Conference's next major contribution to international security, we do not discount the importance of other core issues on the Conference's agenda. The United States remains willing to engage in substantive discussions of those issues, and we have taken practical steps to advance each of these issues.

I join this body following recent assignments addressing United States cooperation with the European Union and the engagement of the United States in international organizations in Vienna, including the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. These previous assignments have reinforced my profound appreciation for the vital importance of multilateral cooperation — not least with regard to non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control. It is against this backdrop that I join colleagues here today with a clear-eyed perspective on the challenges and the opportunities ahead.

The President: Thank you, Ambassador. I do not have any more speakers on the list. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I recognize the Russian Federation.

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the high and challenging office of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I wish you every success in this critical closing phase of the 2014 session. I would also like to express the hope that your national position, which you set out in detail in your statement and which we obviously respect, will not impact upon your objectivity when finalizing the documentation of this session.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Ambassador Woolcott for the years of productive work that he has dedicated to the Conference. I hope that his efforts will not have been in vain and that they will form the basis of the future work of the Conference, including the pursuit of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. I wish Ambassador Woolcott continued success in his new posting.

Returning to the issue of objectivity, I would like to share with you the comments of the Russian delegation with regard to the report on item 3 of the Conference's agenda: the prevention of an arms race in outer space. At the informal meeting of the Conference held on 15 August, the Russian delegation drew attention to a number of serious factual errors in the report submitted by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Mr. Rowland, who was the coordinator of the thematic discussions on this item. We are raising this again because our proposal on ways to rectify the situation, including by making appropriate adjustments, was not addressed substantively. Our comments relate to the following facts, which, inexplicably, were not reflected in the document.

First, the discussion on no first placement of weapons in outer space was completely overlooked in the report. The meetings had seen a very lively and substantive exchange of views on various aspects of this initiative. Experts from capitals contributed to the dialogue among delegations. That notwithstanding, the report does not include a single word about this, as if nothing had taken place. This initiative is quite directly related to disarmament. It is an interim measure intended to serve as a political guarantee not to place weapons in orbit until a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects has been concluded and enters into force.

Second, the updated Russian-Chinese text for the treaty was the object of specific critical remarks reflecting the stances of some delegations. However, the report neglects to mention the fact that there were no objections to the draft in principle. Over the years, this text has been the only draft of a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space that has enjoyed broad support. A number of delegations expressed support not only for continuing work in this vein but also for launching negotiations on the basis of the Russian-Chinese draft, proposing that questions and concerns could be addressed along the way. Yet the

report does not mention those statements, which have added value for the revitalization of the Conference as a negotiating body.

Third, the focus was placed not on issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space but rather on a politically binding draft international code of conduct on outer space activities prepared by the European Union. In this regard, it is worth recalling that not long ago delegations representing some of the States sponsoring or supporting the drafting of the code expressed serious doubts about the idea put forward by the Acting Secretary-General, Mr. Møller, to launch negotiations in the Conference on politically binding instruments. It is thus hard to understand why the report, in its coverage of the discussions in the Conference, gives prominence to the code of conduct. In addition, the report does not reflect the fact that a number of specific comments were made on the draft. In particular, delegations criticized subparagraph 4.2, which permits the destruction of outer space objects under certain circumstances. If the code is adopted in its current version, this provision will provide a basis for deploying “first strike” systems. It seems very strange to be discussing such an initiative in the Conference, as one of our key objectives is, on the contrary, the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Moreover, a number of delegations questioned the appropriateness of discussing the code of conduct at the Conference, arguing that most of its content was not related to disarmament issues. Indeed, the problems of security in outer space, including such aspects as space debris and the prevention of incidents, go well beyond the mandate of the Conference but references to this viewpoint are also absent from the report. It is worth mentioning here that the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which deals with basic aspects of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, has not reviewed the draft code.

In principle, we do not question the right of the coordinator to have his own opinion on certain aspects of the discussion covered in the report, for whose compilation he was personally responsible. At the same time, we and other delegations have the right to expect an accurate presentation of the substantive elements of that discussion, which could be of practical use to the Conference.

In view of the foregoing, the Russian delegation cannot consider the report to be balanced or objective. Moreover, in our view it would be unacceptable not to react as appropriate to a report that gives a patently distorted image of the events. We are therefore requesting that the secretariat publish the present comments as an official document of the Conference.

In conclusion, the Russian delegation calls on Conference members to adhere strictly to the consensually adopted agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, especially with respect to core issues such as the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The President: I thank the Russian Federation. I believe the Secretary will take note of the request you made at the end of your statement.

The next speaker is Ambassador Rakhmetov of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Rakhmetov (Kazakhstan) (*spoke in Russian*): As this is the first statement delivered by my delegation under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you. Mr. President, on your assumption of this role and to assure you of the full support of the delegation of Kazakhstan in your work, including in the process for the drafting of the final report on the work of the 2014 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

We wish to join the representative of the Russian Federation in drawing attention to the lack of understanding concerning the discussions on no first placement of weapons in outer space, which took place as part of the informal discussions on item 3

of the Conference's agenda: the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Including the aforementioned information, which is directly relevant to issues under this agenda item, in the report on this item would result in a more balanced and factual report.

The President: I recognize the Ambassador of Indonesia.

Ms. Djajaprawira (Indonesia): Mr. President, the Indonesian delegation would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assures you of our support and cooperation towards the successful conclusion of your presidency. Indonesia also wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Wai of Myanmar on behalf of ASEAN member States.

Indonesia shares the views expressed by the delegation of the Russian Federation with regard to the report on item 3: prevention of an arms race in outer space. We would like to recall that a joint statement by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and the Russian Federation was signed in Brunei on 1 July 2013 declaring that neither country would, in any way, be the first to place weapons of any kind in outer space. This joint statement was circulated as an official document of the Conference as document CD/1954 on 31 July 2013.

As for the international instrument, we welcome the joint Russian-Chinese initiative on an updated draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, which we believe deserves further consideration. The previous draft, which was contained in document CD/1839 introduced by China and Russia in 2008, serves as a basis for the Conference to negotiate international agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The President: I thank the delegate from Indonesia. The next speaker on the list is Ambassador Pollard of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Pollard (United Kingdom): Mr. President, as this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, I would like to convey to you our support for your presidency as you take forward the drafting of the report for the First Committee.

I would just like to respond very briefly to the comments made by Russia and some other delegations. I would like to reiterate that the report my Ambassador made was done in his personal capacity and that we tried to find a balance of what we heard during the informal meeting, not only on the prevention of placement of weapons treaty but also on the international code of conduct of outer space activities. While we did not want to get into specifics on what was said on each, we thought that the balance that the report had was very general and generic as the discussion had shown.

I also find it slightly surprising, and I do wish to place this on record, that the Russian delegation has now come with these comments given that they saw a first draft of the report before it was released to the Conference on Disarmament membership and had the time to comment before it was released. So, I do just want to place that on record to put our side of the story.

The President: Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I recognize the Russian Federation.

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, allow me to exercise my right of reply to clarify what the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Pollard, has termed an advance review of the draft report. The Russian delegation, as was the case for all delegations to the Conference on Disarmament, had the opportunity to see the report when it was circulated with an accompanying letter from

the Kenyan President together with all the other reports, in other words virtually when it was circulated officially. We made preliminary comments at the informal meeting of the Conference held on 15 August and, as was indicated in our earlier statement, we are returning to this issue today only because our statement and proposal were not addressed substantively.

The President: Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case. This concludes our business for today.

The next meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will take place on Tuesday, 26 August. It is my intention to circulate later this week to all Conference members and observers the draft report of the Conference to the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.