

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.960  
17 June 2004

ENGLISH

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE NINE HUNDRED AND SIXTIETH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 17 June 2004, at 10.20 a.m.

President:                      Mr. Suren BADRAL                      (Mongolia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 960th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I first of all would like to thank you for giving me trust and confidence in presiding over the plenary today, which is the last plenary that the presidency of Mongolia is conducting. As you know, my Ambassador is absent, and according to the rules of procedure, I will preside over the meeting.

I have one speaker on my list today, and before giving him the floor, I would like to say a few words. I would like to bid farewell, on behalf of my Ambassador, to our distinguished colleague Ambassador Carlos Miranda, who will soon be leaving Geneva, following the completion of his duties as the representative of Spain to the Conference on Disarmament.

Ambassador Miranda joined the Conference in 2001. During his tenure, he represented his Government with remarkable authority, diplomatic skills and elegance. Ambassador Miranda has always been actively engaged in efforts to revitalize the Conference, and we have all benefited during the discussions from his wisdom, clarity of vision and his sensitivity to the security concerns of other States. In 2002 Ambassador Miranda represented the presidency of the European Union in the Conference and he discharged this function with dedication and with unique diplomatic talent.

On behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, I should like to wish Ambassador Miranda and his family much success and happiness in the future.

Now I give the floor to Ambassador Miranda to say a few words before he leaves us.

Mr. MIRANDA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): First of all, Mr. President, I wish to congratulate you on chairing today's meeting, the plenary meeting and the informal plenary meeting that we are going to hold afterwards. I would also like to ask you to be kind enough to convey to your Ambassador my congratulations on the way he performed the duties of President in the recent meetings, which he has done with great efficiency and dignity, for him and for this Conference.

Today is the last time that I shall be attending a formal plenary of the Conference on Disarmament, because I have to leave for another assignment. At this moment I am overwhelmed by two contrary feelings. On the one hand, I am setting off for my new posting with great pleasure and excitement, but on the other hand, I am very sad to leave not only Geneva and Switzerland, which welcomed me and treated me and my family with great hospitality, but I am also very sad to leave the Conference. I regret leaving the Conference not because I am a cynic or a masochist, but because in the almost three years I have been in Geneva, it has been a very instructive privilege for me to address security and disarmament issues with all those who attend the meetings of the Conference, regardless of their rank or nationality. The human and professional qualities of all the members of the Conference have doubtless mitigated the pain I feel at seeing how the Conference continues to sink into an

(Mr. Miranda, Spain)

apparently irreversible coma, despite the efforts made by many to reactivate its substantive work. It is these human and professional qualities of the members of the Conference that will make me remember with nostalgia the time that I spent participating in its work, and I will also remember with nostalgia the friends I am leaving here, whom I hope to see again in the future.

As for the Conference, I hope that the efforts that are constantly being made to reactivate it, with no thought of discouragement, will bear fruit as soon as possible. Those who try to thwart this objective are mistaken, because our security is not just an individual concept - it is collective and interdependent, and this Conference is an important instrument for arriving at multilateral agreements which will enhance our security.

While wishing every success to those who remain in the Conference for the time being, I would like to recall that my delegation and my country have worked over the years with the sincere desire to contribute to reactivating the substantive work of this Conference - hence the realistic support of my country for the five Ambassadors' proposal. These efforts will be continued by my colleague and the person who will be replacing me.

It is undoubtedly of great importance and usefulness to have the informal plenaries that we have been holding on the agenda items, and I would like to congratulate once again those who have led us along this path. This effort should be rewarded by further movement which will lead us to negotiate and deal with certain items.

I would also like to mention the pleasure I felt during the first half of 2002 when I spoke in this forum on behalf of the presidency of the European Union. The Union has just been expanded and is now embarking on an important new phase that will consolidate it even more, not least in relation to issues that are significant in the context of this Conference. One need only look back and see what Europe was in 1956, when the Rome Treaty was signed, and what it is today, to understand that Europe has a manifest destiny which is inexorably being realized, despite the Euro-sceptics within and outside it. A solid and unified European Union which enhances its competences, aware of its special historical and present links with other parts and countries of the world, is making and will increasingly make a very important contribution for peace in the European continent and throughout the world.

For reasons beyond my control I was unable to bid farewell to my colleagues in the Western group yesterday. I hope that the members of the group will forgive me, but I would like them to know that I have always appreciated our frank discussions and the positive spirit of coexistence that prevails in the group. In leaving, I would also like to thank Mr. Ordzhonikidze and Ambassador Román-Morey for the devotion, efficiency and kindness of all the services of the United Nations in Geneva, without forgetting the translation services, and especially the interpreters.

So I will be leaving the Francisco de Vitoria room and its murals by another Spaniard, Sert, with a feeling of having done my duty, although regretting that we have not yet seen our efforts crowned with success, but hoping that those who remain will succeed.

(Mr. Miranda, Spain)

Before concluding, Mr. President, I also wish to thank you for the kind words you addressed to me at the beginning of this meeting.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ambassador Miranda. I hope that you will be continuing your connection and involvement in the work of the Conference wherever you are in the future. Your expertise will be valuable, as before.

Since we do not have any more speakers on the list, I would like to ask the Conference if there are any other speakers who wish to intervene at this stage. If there are none, I would like to take up the next item on my agenda.

I would now like to invite the Conference to take a decision on the request for participation in our work from Lebanon, a State which is not a member of the Conference, but has asked for observer status. I propose that we take up the question without having first considered this matter in an informal plenary. If it is acceptable, we will proceed accordingly. This request is contained in document CD/WP.534/Add.6. I hope you all have copies of the document.

If there is no intervention on this matter, may I take it that the Conference decides to invite Lebanon to participate in our work in accordance with the rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: With regard to the timetable of meetings for next week, I would like to recall that in accordance with the decision on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament contained in document CD/1036, the Conference has provision for holding two plenary meetings next week. However, I have been informed by the secretariat that at this stage there are no speakers for next week. Therefore, if I do not hear any views to the contrary, I would propose that only one plenary meeting be scheduled next week, namely on Thursday, 24 June 2004.

If there is no objection, may I take it that it is so decided?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Since this is the last plenary meeting under the presidency of Mongolia, I would like to take this opportunity to wish my successor in the post, Ambassador Omar Hilale of Morocco, every success during his term of office.

Before concluding the formal plenary, I would like to make a general statement on behalf of my Ambassador on the experience we have gathered during the presidency of Mongolia.

At the conclusion of the term of office of Mongolia's presidency at the Conference on Disarmament, I wish to share with you some thoughts of a general nature, which I am doing on behalf of my Ambassador.

(The President)

During the four weeks of the presidency, my Ambassador had intensive bilateral consultations with most of his colleagues. These bilaterals were excellent learning opportunities and thought-provoking exercises. My Ambassador thanks all of you for your friendly support and openness in the exchange of views.

The most fruitful undertaking during the last weeks, however, have been the informal plenary meetings. This new initiative launched and realized by the successive Presidents - the Ambassadors of Malaysia, Mexico and Mongolia, and to continue with the Ambassador of Morocco - has become a serious confidence-building exercise, to borrow from Ambassador Jackie Sanders. The Conference has not seen such active and focused deliberations since 1998.

You may recall that the President of the Conference, Ambassador Rajmah Hussain of Malaysia, admitted in her closing statement on 11 March 2004: "I ... discovered, to my horror, that there is a lot of mistrust and misunderstanding."

That was the atmosphere in which we started our work earlier this year. Now, after six informal sittings of the Conference, including the one we will have this morning, we find ourselves in a more relaxed mode. The horror has dissipated, I hope. We understand each other better. We know better what developments have taken place since 1998 and what the new priorities are in the disarmament policy of our members today.

A new element has also been introduced. At the initiative of Ambassador François Rivasseau, we were given an opportunity to hear the well-documented opinion of an expert. Such fresh air will definitely help improve our health - the health of this body.

Altogether, we have made a right move forward. The point of restoration of our mutual trust has been raised by one step at least. It means that as we move forward, we might face circumstances when we may be forced to slip back. But such a slippage, if it happens, will stop at this point of restoration, not further down to the situation before 2004.

Of course, the international community demands much more from us. Even the cold war era was not so unpredictable as today. The current situation has become more alarming. As Ambassador Miranda said, the Conference is slipping into an irreversible coma. But we still hope that the Conference can recover.

The then widely welcomed initiative of President Eisenhower 50 years ago called "Atoms for Peace" has now become a troublemaker. We have to advance a counter-initiative that I would dub "Peace to Atoms".

We will need to uncover the netherworld in our increasingly globalized society.

The role of the Conference in these endeavours has become more pertinent than ever before.

(The President)

If the CD cannot make tangible progress in adopting and implementing its programme of work, it will mean that we are in a multilateral disagreement. When nations do not respect each other and do not enter into amicable security arrangements, multilateralism fails. Instead, bilateralism or even unilateralism takes over.

On the other hand, when nations disagree, do not cooperate and behave in a hostile manner, history tends to produce a powerful leader. This was historically the case with Genghis Khan's Mongolia.

In other words, we are at a crossroads where we have to choose one of two directions: one leading to accepting a single or a group of powerful leaders; the other - to strengthening multilateral mechanisms to manage world affairs, especially in the area of disarmament.

While commending our predecessors and, in advance, the incoming Presidents, I think that the six Ambassadors who chair the Conference in 2004 have to work together to reflect on and analyse the developments that have taken place both within and outside the Conference during their presidencies. They might come up with new, refreshed proposals without downsizing and diminishing the important A-5 initiative. I think innovative approaches never hurt.

My Ambassador will definitely do his best to contribute to such an enterprise, since Mongolia, as a small, nuclear-free country, has always been active in disarmament affairs.

I cannot conclude without thanking Ambassador Mine and Ambassador Rivasseau for commending Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status.

My sincere thanks go the secretariat, the DDA staff and the interpreters, for their outstanding professional support rendered to the presidency of Mongolia. As a small mission, we could not have accomplished our presidential duties without daily assistance from Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, Mr. Jerzy Jaleski and their associates, to whom I offer my sincere gratitude.

This concludes our business for today.

In accordance with our timetable, after a brief adjournment, the Conference will hold an informal plenary to discuss agenda item 6, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". In accordance with practice, this meeting will be open only to members and also to observer States.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 24 June 2004, at 10 a.m. in this conference room, and will be followed by an informal plenary on agenda item 7, entitled "Transparency in armaments".

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.