

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 2 June 2005, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Joseph AYALOGU (Nigeria)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 983rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the start of the second part of the 2005 session of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to extend a cordial welcome to new colleagues who have assumed their responsibilities as representatives of their Governments to the Conference, namely, Ambassador Alberto Dumont from Argentina and Ambassador Nyunt Maung Shein from Myanmar. I would like to take this opportunity to assure them of our cooperation and support in their new assignments.

At the last plenary meeting before the intersessional break, I indicated that I would continue my bilateral consultations with members of the Conference. Allow me to provide you with some feedback on my consultations during the intersessional period, and I will also touch briefly on the NPT - the results of the NPT Review Conference, which as you all know, most of us went to New York for.

In my opening statement, I committed myself to continue to build on the momentum set by my predecessors since the beginning of the year. I indicated, however, that if there were no positive responses to the “food for thought” non-paper in two weeks, I would focus the search for a programme of work based on the A-5 proposal. In that regard, I said I would explore the possibilities of agreeing on a work programme based on the A-5 proposal, while not disconnecting from the “food for thought” non-paper. The dual track was intended to help identify and narrow down divergent views in the hope of building consensus.

During my consultations with the regional coordinators, I detected the eagerness and willingness of all groups to resume substantive work. The Eastern European Group indicated its flexibility to work with either the A-5 or the “food for thought” non-paper. China said it was prepared to join consensus and work on the basis of the A-5. The G-21 had made a formal statement in the plenary, stating it would join consensus based on the A-5 proposal. The Group added that the “food for thought” was a departure from the A-5 proposal. This left me with the Western Group to consult and find out their position on the two proposals. I promised on 31 March 2005 to keep the Conference informed of the outcome of my consultations.

Based on the outcome of bilateral consultations held by my predecessor and my consultations with the regional coordinators, I decided to conduct further bilateral consultations with some delegations, with more focus on, but not limited to, delegations in the Western Group. I consulted with 22 delegations, and I wish to share with you my observations.

Most delegations were enthusiastic and eager for the CD to address the four core issues. They however expressed fears that it might be practically difficult or impossible to take up the four core issues simultaneously. There were therefore suggestions that consideration be given to scheduling, which should form part of an agreement on a work programme to assure all delegations that the issues they considered priority were not being sidelined.

The A-5 proposal still enjoys the support of most of the delegations I consulted, although many expressed concern that it might not achieve consensus because of a tiny number of

(The President)

delegations, who are not in a position to join consensus. Since the A-5 is unable to achieve consensus, they remain flexible and would be able to work with the “food for thought”, which is generally regarded as a watered-down version of the A-5. With the readiness of the Eastern European Group and the G.21 to join consensus on the basis of A-5, the proposal still enjoys the support of about 60 delegations.

Again, a number of delegations indicated that they were not in a position to join consensus on either the A-5 or the “food for thought” non-paper at this stage. They would, however, be prepared to commence work only on an FMCT, provided the mandate was simply to negotiate an FMCT “without preconditions”, implying that anything, including stockpiles and verifications, could come up during the negotiations but were not explicitly spelt out in the mandate.

Furthermore, those who are unable to join consensus on either the A-5 or “food for thought” explained that they had difficulties with the mandates on FMCT and NSA.

A few delegations would also prefer the CD to take up new and additional issues.

There were also suggestions that another paper, which might marry the A-5 and “food for thought”, be developed to accommodate the concerns of all delegations.

There were also suggestions that we await the outcome of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, as decisions relating to nuclear disarmament, fissile materials and negative security assurances might impact on the work of the CD. In this regard, any proposal to be made after the Review Conference should be done collectively by the next four or five succeeding Presidents to ensure continuity in the direction of the discussions.

Lastly, suggestions were also made that the CD should schedule an informal discussion to exchange views and ideas on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the United Nations Secretary-General’s report entitled “In larger freedom”, with a focus on the work of the CD.

The foregoing were the outcome of my consultations before I left Geneva to attend the 2005 NPT Review Conference in New York. Before departing for the NPT Review Conference, I had hoped that the gaps between the positions of delegations would be somewhat narrowed as a result of negotiations on the key issues during the Conference, so that a proposal reflecting these developments could be tabled for your consideration after the NPT. I must, however, report that the NPT Review Conference appeared to have further widened the gap between the positions held by delegations. The Conference in itself was a complete failure, as prime time was devoted to procedural issues, leaving very little time for negotiations on substantive issues within the Committees, and at the end there was no outcome document. However, in statements by several delegations, the CD was urged to overcome its impasse and address the security challenges before it, by agreeing on a work programme and establishing subsidiary bodies on the core issues. But these exhorting statements could not be said to make the work of the CD any easier as they were not matched by enough political will, that is, in the right direction, to enable us in the CD to reach a consensus.

(The President)

The NPT Review Conference of 2005 having ended the way it did (dismally), the question arises: what should the CD do in order to continue to perform its functions and remain relevant? This question deserves serious consideration by all of us representing the international community and charged with the responsibility of negotiating disarmament agreements. I therefore want to urge CD members not to be frustrated or deterred by the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference but to seize this opportunity to be more committed and yet flexible enough to enable us to break the jinx and reach a consensus on a work programme. Between now and the end of my tenure I intend to continue consultations, this time with a view to identifying any window of opportunity we can see to turn the outcome of the NPT Review Conference into positive and dynamic steps for the CD. I remain open to suggestions and proposals from you, my distinguished colleagues.

I would like to give the floor to members of the Conference who have asked to address the plenary meeting today. I would invite Ambassador Leonid Skotnikov of the Russian Federation to deliver his statement.

Mr. SKOTNIKOV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to assure you of our full support in the discharge of the important duties with which you have been coping so successfully. I would like to commend you for this.

Today I would like to draw attention to an important event which is directly related to our work. This event took place after the end of the first part of the Conference on Disarmament. I refer to the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 April of this year of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Scientific and technological progress, the use of its achievements by terrorists, the emergence of so-called high-tech terrorism and the main threat - the risk that terrorists will gain mastery of WMD, genetic engineering, biotechnology and information technology - make international terrorism dangerous as never before. Of course, the use of the combat component of WMD for terrorist purposes is quite difficult in terms of either manufacturing or theft, and consequently is unlikely. However, improvised WMD systems can become a universal means of exerting pressure on the most important interests of States. Acts of sabotage and subversion at WMD manufacturing, storage and transport facilities are also extremely dangerous. The possible appearance of WMD in the hands of terrorists allows us to consider anti-terrorist activity as inseparable from another important track - non-proliferation. The global character of the terrorist threat proves that security in the modern world is indivisible, and hence the fight against security threats must be a collective one. One area for such collective efforts is further elaboration of new anti-terrorist legal mechanisms as well as the universalization and improvement of existing ones.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism adopted by the United Nations General Assembly was based on a draft introduced by the Russian Federation as long ago as 1997. For the first time a convention against terrorism has been developed by the international community in a pre-emptive manner, in other words, in advance of the commission of a terrorist act using the equipment in question, nuclear material and other radioactive substances. This is the first universal treaty aimed at preventing large-scale

(Mr. Skotnikov, Russian Federation)

terrorist attacks. In a situation where international terrorist groups are seeking to acquire a nuclear potential, the adoption of this treaty is of paramount importance, primarily for maintaining international peace and security.

The Convention creates a solid legal basis for enhancing international cooperation at the interface between efforts to combat terrorism and WMD proliferation. The principal aims of the Convention are as follows: to provide a legal basis for effective action to counter acts of nuclear terrorism, including their suppression and action to address their consequences; to protect both peaceful and military nuclear activities against terrorists and put a stop to terrorist acts involving improvised nuclear devices; and to ensure that the signatories either try or extradite those guilty of acts of nuclear terrorism, guaranteeing criminal prosecution. The Convention will be implemented in close cooperation with IAEA. Adoption of the Convention was the culmination of a difficult negotiating process. We are grateful to all countries which have shown their understanding of the importance of the issues covered by the Convention and accepted very difficult compromises. This made it possible to adopt the Convention by consensus, which is of particular importance. The new Convention will facilitate unity among States in their fight against the challenges which terrorists pose to our civilization. Its adoption has opened up additional scope for the development of anti-terrorist cooperation under the auspices of the United Nations, including the earliest possible agreement on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism proposed by India.

We hope that after its opening for signature on 14 September this year, the first day of the 2005 summit, this unique international treaty will soon gather the 22 ratifications necessary for its entry into force, and will join the ranks of anti-terrorism conventions already in effect. We call upon all States to sign and ratify this Convention without delay.

We are convinced that the Conference on Disarmament could contribute to fighting international terrorism by adopting a balanced programme of work without delay. This would enable us, inter alia, to begin negotiations on the FMCT. Halting and prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices would not only strengthen the non-proliferation regime and constitute the next logical step towards nuclear disarmament, but would also be an effective measure to halt attempts by international terrorists to gain access to such material. We believe that launching the normal work of the CD would also foster opportunities for the consideration in this forum of new additional issues consistent with its status and profile. Russia proceeds from the principle that the Conference on Disarmament is an important and irreplaceable disarmament forum whose unique potential should be fully exploited. In our opinion, the stalemate in the substantive work of the CD cannot be explained either fully or in part by any kind of disfunctionality of its existing decision-making procedures. The Conference is not affected by any kind of paralysis provoked by these procedures. The problem is not the procedures but the positions of States. We should support and develop positive elements and movement towards agreement. Naturally, this will require more political will and readiness for compromise based on mutual respect for the interests and concerns of all member States.

(Mr. Skotnikov, Russian Federation)

The adoption of the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism proves once again that if States have the political will it is quite feasible, even today, to reach collective consensus decisions on the most urgent issues of international security. Russia has already shown its flexibility, and is prepared to work intensively towards a compromise on the Conference's programme of work. It expects corresponding gestures on the part of other member States.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of India, Ambassador Jayant Prasad.

Mr. PRASAD (India): Mr. President, I would first like to mention how happy my delegation is to see you in the Chair and how conscious it is of the burden you are carrying in difficult times. You have, of course, our fullest support in your ongoing endeavour to find a way out of the CD's present impasse.

I have requested the floor today to inform the Conference about the passage in both houses of the Indian Parliament, on 13 May, of the Bill on Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery System. It is now awaiting Presidential assent, when it will be notified as an Act. While being new, this legislation continues, codifies and widens policies and regulations which have been the hallmarks of India's ongoing vocation to ensure safety, security and the strictest possible controls on a variety of goods and technologies related to weapons of mass destruction. India has been exercising controls over the export of WMD-usable materials, equipment and technologies for several decades. We have had a corpus of legislation of direct and indirect relevance to weapons of mass destruction, such as the Explosive Substances Act, the Atomic Energy Act, the Chemical Weapons Convention Act and the Environment Protection Act. We have simultaneously put in place administrative mechanisms to prevent unlawful access to such weapons and their delivery systems. Nevertheless, conscious of its responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State, the Indian Government considered it desirable to introduce overarching and integrated legislation by building upon the existing legal and regulatory framework. This enlarges the scope of the existing system of controls over the export of WMD-usable materials, equipment and technologies and prohibits a range of unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Our system of export controls remains under continuous review. We shall continue to update these controls whenever it is necessary to do so.

The bill is illustrative of India's abiding commitment to prevent nuclear proliferation. It also fulfils the requirement of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540. It seeks to prohibit individuals from dealing with weapons of mass destruction in any form, including manufacturing, transporting, possessing, exporting and brokering. It criminalizes the range of unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. It makes it a serious criminal offence to transfer weapons of mass destruction, missiles specially designed for their delivery and WMD-usable material, equipment and technologies to terrorists or to transfer fissile and radioactive material for use in terrorist acts.

(Mr. Prasad, India)

While introducing the bill in the Indian Parliament, our Foreign Minister reiterated India's commitment to safeguard its security as a nuclear-weapon State. He stated that this in no way diminishes India's commitment to the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We aspire to a non-violent world order, he said, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

India has taken steps to underline that its nuclear policy is one of restraint, responsibility, predictability, transparency and defensive orientation. We have an unblemished non-proliferation record. We are aware that the development of indigenous capacities in advanced civilian and strategic technologies requires greater vigilance concerning its possible misuse. India is determined to use advanced technologies for its security, for the welfare of its peoples and for meeting the nation's developmental requirements. India is equally determined to contribute to global peace and security. India's policy, therefore, has been never to assist, encourage or induce any other country to manufacture nuclear weapons. Our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, asserted in a public statement on 17 May that India would not be a source of proliferation of indigenously developed sensitive technologies. He further stated, and I quote: "We will adopt the most stringent measures to safeguard and secure the technologies that we possess, or those that we acquire through international collaboration."

The strict regulation of external transfers and tight controls to prevent internal leakages should given confidence to the international community about India's commitment and ability to fully secure the technology, equipment or material available to it. We are willing to be partners against proliferation, while ensuring that our legitimate interests are safeguarded. India's strategic programmes, both in the defence and nuclear fields, are indigenous and not dependent on external sources. They cannot be subjected to externally imposed constraints. Within these parameters, India is prepared for the broadest possible engagement with the international non-proliferation regime.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for his kind statement and kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria, Mr. Khelif, to deliver his statement.

Mr. KHELIF (Algeria) (translated from French): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to apologize on behalf of Ambassador Jazairy, who is unable to take part in this session because of some very urgent last-minute business. As I am taking the floor for the first time, allow me to extend to you my congratulations on taking the Chair of our Conference and once again assure you of the full support of the Algerian delegation in assisting you to discharge your duties in the hope of achieving positive results in our work. Your task is a very difficult one given the present international context and the outcome of the seventh Review Conference which you have described as dismal. This context is very hostile to the disarmament endeavour.

The second part of this annual Conference has begun in an atmosphere which makes it very difficult to achieve positive results. As you are aware, the outcome of the seventh Review Conference of the NPT, which wound up its work on 27 May last, frustrated the hopes of the international community as a whole. Indeed, rather than providing an opportunity to build on earlier gains in the field of nuclear disarmament, the Review Conference made no progress in

(Mr. Khelif, Algeria)

that area. If we were to try to temper our despair, we could welcome the fact that the Conference did not cancel out the achievements scored in the field of nuclear disarmament at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences. The resolutions adopted and commitments undertaken remain valid.

The question of nuclear disarmament and ridding mankind of this lethal weapon remains a top priority, to which we must all devote our energies in order to strengthen international peace and security. The arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race, is a source of great concern and, as the international community unanimously declared, in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly in 1978, that race impedes the realization of the purposes, and is incompatible with the principles, of the Charter of the United Nations, especially respect for sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

The world is witnessing the development of nuclear weapons and a steep rise in defence budgets at a time when militaristic doctrines strongly support the deployment of nuclear weapons and there is a growing trend towards militarization of outer space. The persistence and severity of these problems have not been addressed effectively and seriously, as illustrated by the most recent Review Conference, which failed to achieve any significant results. We are more convinced than ever of the importance of the Final Document of the 1978 special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. That document and the programme of action set out therein continue to offer a workable framework for nuclear disarmament. Similarly, the resolution adopted by the fifth Review Conference in 1995 on "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament", as well as the "13 practical steps" that were unanimously endorsed by the member States to the Treaty at the sixth Review Conference in 2000, provide a road map which points us in the right direction - that of putting an end to nuclear weapons.

We hope that the nuclear-weapon States will think about how they can honour the commitments that they so boldly undertook in order to eliminate their nuclear weapons and simultaneously fulfil their obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, particularly the "13 steps".

The lesson to be drawn from the seventh Review Conference is that a unilateral approach to critical issues of international peace and security, based on national security considerations, is no substitute for efforts to reach a negotiated settlement that is acceptable to all. On the contrary, we are more convinced than ever that the multilateral framework is the only one in which these issues can be addressed comprehensively, transparently and definitively. The mandate of the Conference makes it the natural forum for such negotiations.

Mr. President, we hope that you will undertake the necessary consultations in addition to those that you have already held. We thank you for your efforts during the consultations that you have held with various member States of the Conference in order to reach agreement on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work, based on the five Ambassadors' proposal, as well as the ideas that have been added thereto, on the four core issues before us: nuclear



(Mr. Khelif, Algeria)

disarmament; negative security assurances; the prohibition of fissile materials in keeping with the mandate of the special coordinator, better known as the Shannon mandate; and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Finally, we hope that the delegations of member States will demonstrate the necessary flexibility and political will to enable the Conference to proceed with its work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Poland, Ambassador Zdzisław Rapacki, to deliver his statement.

Mr. RAPACKI (Poland): Mr. President, as I am speaking for the first time under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of this high office and to assure you of my delegation's continuing support for your efforts to get the CD back to work.

Today I wish to take the floor on the occasion of the second anniversary of the launching of the Proliferation Security Initiative, also known as the Kraków Initiative. The aim of the PSI, presented by the President of the United States of America on 31 May 2003 at Wawel Castle in Kraków, is to advance international cooperation in the interdiction of shipments of weapons of mass destruction, and materials required to develop such weapons, to State and non-State actors causing proliferation concern. The PSI has no formal structure, headquarters or chairperson. The core of its functioning consists of the voluntary activities of countries that share concerns over international security and are determined to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. I may say that the PSI has grown to a global dimension. Today, more than 60 countries from all over the world have expressed their readiness to support the Initiative. What's important is that the PSI is implemented in consistency with the relevant provisions of international law and the laws of participating countries. The European Union, NATO and the United Nations Secretary-General have confirmed their support for the Initiative. The PSI and the 2003 Statement of Interdiction Principles are in line with the spirit and the letter of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540.

My country has been active in the Initiative's development since its very outset. To date, under the PSI, Poland has organized an information exchange meeting for all Central and East European countries, a ground exercise in Wrocław and a meeting in Kraków for more than 60 countries to mark the Initiative's first anniversary. At present (31 May-2 June 2005) in Ostrava, the Czech Republic and Poland are conducting the "Bohemian Guard" exercise. With assistance from the United States and with strong international participation, this exercise will manifest the decisiveness and readiness of the services and law enforcement agencies of the participating countries to undertake cooperative actions against the smuggling of materials related to weapons of mass destruction. In 2006, we plan to conduct an international sea exercise in the Baltic.

The Proliferation Security Initiative, launched in 2003 in Kraków, is a strong response from the international community to the challenges and threats to security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and by the fact that they might fall into the hands of terrorists.

(Mr. Rapacki, Poland)

I wish to inform you that my delegation has provided the secretariat of the CD with the text of the Polish Foreign Minister's statement on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Kraków Initiative, requesting the CD secretariat to publish it as an official CD document.

Taking this opportunity, I wish to say a few words about the recent events that have been of the utmost importance to disarmament machinery. I assume that the outcome of the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has not been satisfactory to any of the delegations. We regret that the Conference was not able to address the most important issues relevant to today's international security. Let me state that my country, as we said during the Conference, will firmly support the NPT regime and wishes to see it further strengthened.

Let me also assure you that we will spare no efforts to make progress in the Conference on Disarmament. We cannot allow the multilateral disarmament bodies to stand still. Therefore, we should look for ways to overcome the stalemate. In that connection, the Foreign Minister of Poland, Adam Daniel Rotfeld, when addressing the CD in March of this year, proposed to establish a reflection expert group or panel to examine possible ways of creating consensus within this body. Such a panel could also reflect on the overall situation in the disarmament machinery. It could work in a fashion similar to the High-level Panel created by the United Nations Secretary-General. The panel, or group of experts, should focus on possible solutions which would bring the political will to advance work in the disarmament and non-proliferation area. It could also prepare recommendations for a high-level meeting at which such political will would be expressed.

Let me conclude by saying that there is no time to waste. We should all make every effort to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and make the CD work again. We owe it both to past generations who created this and other multilateral disarmament bodies, as well as to future generations who have the right to live in a more secure and peaceful world.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Poland for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Turkey, Ambassador Türkeul Kurttekin, to deliver his statement.

Mr. KURTTEKIN (Turkey): Mr. President, taking the floor for the first time under your chairmanship, allow me to convey my delegation's full support for your efforts to bring an end to this lengthy period of inertia in the CD. We hope that this second session of the CD under your able leadership will herald a new beginning.

As the distinguished Ambassador of Poland has pointed out, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) was launched two years ago, on 31 May 2003, by 11 countries. It aims to fill the gaps in existing international agreements, control regimes and national export systems relating to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and other related materials. United Nations Security Council resolution 1540, dated 28 April 2004, which calls upon United Nations Member States to take the necessary measures to curb trade in weapons of mass destruction, strengthen their national legislation and controls and develop international cooperation, serves to bolster the Initiative.

(Mr. Kurttekin, Turkey)

Since its inception, there have been significant developments related to the PSI. The number of countries that have announced their support for the Initiative has exceeded 60. In addition, the “Statement of interdiction rules”, which constitutes the basic text of the Initiative and outlines the measures to be taken, has been adopted.

Turkey announced, on 2 December 2003, its support for the PSI. Since then, Turkey has been following it very closely and supports all activities conducted within the framework of the Initiative, including prevention exercises. Turkey, meanwhile, continues to take all the necessary steps in connection with United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 and the PSI, including developing coordination between its relevant institutions.

We aim to increase our contribution to the Initiative in the coming years. In this context, it has been decided to hold a joint land, air and sea exercise in 2006 in the Eastern Mediterranean, under Turkey’s auspices and lead. The preparatory work for this exercise has commenced through the joint efforts of the Turkish General Staff and other relevant institutions.

Turkey attaches great importance to playing its part in the PSI, which constitutes a noteworthy effort by the international community in its struggle against terrorism. Knowing all too well the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, Turkey will continue its efforts in this vein in all forums.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Turkey for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. This concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. SHEIN (Myanmar): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for the warm words of welcome that you have extended to me. I assure you of my fullest cooperation with you in the discharge of your duties. At the same time, I also look forward to working closely, together with the distinguished representatives of this body.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Myanmar, and I give the floor to the Ambassador of Argentina.

Mr. VALLE FONROUGE (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): As this delegation is taking the floor for the first time, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment as President of this forum. On behalf of Ambassador Alberto Dumont I would like to express his appreciation for your kind words and the warm welcome extended to him by this forum.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Argentina. Again, does any delegation wish to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case.

This concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting will be held next Thursday, 9 June 2005, at 10 a.m. in this conference room.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.