

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE NINE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 6 September 2005, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Félix CALDERON (Peru)

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I call to order the 995th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. Before I call on the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vasiliev, I would like to make the following statement.

I would like to express my special appreciation for the support that has been provided by the Presidents who have preceded Peru in the Chair during the 2005 session of the Conference on Disarmament, who have tried with dedication and diplomatic skill to overcome the current deadlock. The first President of the year, from the Netherlands, pursued in an energetic and commendable manner various options for making headway, noteworthy among which was the proposal relating to an option referring to the four priorities as a means of finding a solution to the current stalemate. Subsequently, Ambassador Caughley of New Zealand continued the process that Ambassador Sanders started by consulting all the delegations of the members of the Conference on Disarmament as to the actual scope for making headway along the path proposed in the informal document. However, despite the good will and flexible positions of the members of the Conference on Disarmament, it was not possible to come up with a text that was satisfactory to all.

Ambassador Ayalogu of Nigeria devoted his term to holding consultations on the basis of the latest formal proposal for a programme of work based on the five Ambassadors' initiative, and then Ambassador Strømme of Norway proposed and managed to organize four formal sessions on the priority issues on the agenda. The holding of these meetings made it possible to take the pulse of members identifying their priorities regarding the items on the agenda adopted by the Conference. Lastly, in this recapitulation, I would like to express special appreciation to my immediate predecessor, Ambassador Khan of Pakistan, who effectively used the content of the formal sessions organized by his predecessor to hold extensive consultations with the members of the Conference so as to identify clearly the points of convergence and divergence among States' positions, and the possibility of considering in the future the proposal made by Ambassador Meyer of Canada for the holding of a new round of interactive sessions, while retaining, as some delegations point out, the character of the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating body. I would of course hope to have the support of Ambassador Khan of Pakistan and of my successor Ambassador Rapacki of Poland in the drafting of the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as in the repeated efforts to determine whether it is possible to find a consensus in this negotiating forum that would finally make it possible to adopt a programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament.

I would now like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation, Mr. Anton Vasiliev.

Mr. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, first of all we would like to congratulate you on taking over this position of responsibility. We would like to wish you every success and assure you of support and cooperation from the delegation of the Russian Federation. Your wisdom and great professionalism will certainly be needed in this important concluding phase of the 2005 Conference on Disarmament session.

(Mr. Vasiliev, Russian Federation)

On 16 August 2005, in this room, the delegation of the Russian Federation organized and held an open-ended meeting on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a subject which is one of the agenda items of the Conference on Disarmament and a priority for the Russian Federation. This was the second such meeting which we had organized.

This time the meeting was more focused in nature. Apart from the proposal made by Russia and China (CD/1679) on the development of a new international legal agreement on prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against outer space objects, the participants also looked at three thematic papers prepared by the co-authors while drawing up document CD/1679. You will recall that they were related to the problem of gaps in contemporary space law from the viewpoint of prevention of the weaponization of space and issues of terminology and definitions in the proposed new treaty, as well as verification issues.

We are satisfied at the results of the meeting. There was a substantive discussion of all the key issues, and a whole host of interesting and useful ideas and proposals were put forward. The co-authors of document CD/1679 will be using them for further development. It is also our hope that the results of the discussion have provided plenty of food for thought in capitals. This is important since, as we have frequently stated, nothing in the Russian-Chinese initiative is cast in stone. We believe that the new document should and will meet the interests of all States without exception. That is why we think it important to get all interested States on board in the discussion of our initiative from the outset.

We would like to point out that the meeting, which was attended by representatives of more than 50 delegations, saw a great deal of activity on the part of the participants. We also managed to expand the interactive part of the meeting. We think that this shows the great importance of prevention of an arms race in outer space among the priorities of delegations to the Conference on Disarmament, the main point being the sincere desire and readiness to get down to resumption of substantive work in the Conference as soon as possible. The unique intellectual and professional potential of the CD was confirmed for all to see. We also hope that in this context the meeting helped in the search for the long-awaited compromise on a programme of work for the CD. Given the positive response, we intend to continue using this format for our work in the future. Our final aim will be to re-establish as soon as possible an ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in which we can get down to specific work on that subject.

We would like once again to thank the delegations that took part in the meeting, and also UNIDIR. We are especially grateful to those States which sent experts from their capitals. We hope that that too will set a good precedent for the future.

We have prepared and we are distributing today a brief summary of the results of the meeting where we have tried to set down key points of the discussion, comments and proposals. It reflects both views which in principle coincide or were very close, and different points of view. The summary has been compiled by the organizers of the meeting under the authors'

(Mr. Vasiliev, Russian Federation)

responsibility. It is intended to serve as reference material for further work on PAROS by the CD, and does not claim to convey the single or agreed view of all the parties, nor does it claim to reflect absolutely all the ideas which were voiced in the meeting.

In the future, bearing in mind the results of this open-ended meeting as well as other measures and our consultations, we also intend to produce an updated version of the 2003 document under the title "Compilation of comments and suggestions on working paper CD/1679".

We have asked the Conference secretariat to distribute the summary of the open-ended meeting on PAROS as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation for his statement and the words addressed to the Chair.

On the list of speakers I now see the distinguished representative of Iraq. You have the floor, Madam.

Ms. FADHLI (Iraq) (translated from Arabic): Allow me, Ambassador, to congratulate you on your election as President of this session. We should like to assure you of our full support and willingness to cooperate with your delegation. On behalf of my delegation, I wish you every success in your difficult task.

An urgent matter prevented my delegation from attending the previous official session of the Conference. I would like to thank all the delegations which conveyed their condolences to my country following the tragic events on the bridge which collapsed in Baghdad. We should also like to convey our condolences to the people of the United States of America who were affected by the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Iraq. I see no other delegations that wish to speak. This then concludes the list of speakers for today, unless any delegation wishes to take the floor at this stage. If not, I would like now to turn to the timetable of meetings for next week.

We will have a plenary meeting on Thursday, 15 September, followed immediately by an informal plenary meeting during which we will proceed to the first reading of the draft report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly of the United Nations. As we announced at the plenary meeting last Thursday, the draft report will be available in all delegations' pigeonholes tomorrow morning. This concludes our business for today, unless any delegation wishes to take the floor. I see that none does.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 15 September 2005 at 10 a.m. and will be followed immediately by an informal plenary meeting devoted to the first reading of the Conference's draft report.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.