

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.1009  
2 March 2006

ENGLISH

---

## FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 2 March 2006, at 3.20 p.m.

President:                      Mr. PARK In-kook                      (Republic of Korea)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1009th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference will continue its debate on nuclear disarmament. I have the following speakers for this plenary meeting: Cuba, the United Kingdom, Chile and Sweden.

I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba, Mr. Oscar León González.

Mr. GONZALEZ (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Thank you, Mr. President. Since I am taking the floor on behalf of my delegation for the first time during your term, let me congratulate you on taking up this position. I would also like to express my congratulations and appreciation to the outgoing President, the Ambassador of Poland.

Firstly I should like to stress that Cuba, as a member of the Group of 21, reaffirms its commitment to the positions and ideas expressed by the Ambassador of Iraq on Tuesday 28 February 2006 in the statement he made on behalf of the Group. I must also point out that the Ambassador of Cuba, Mr. Juan Antonio Palacios, in his statement to this body on 9 February 2006, reiterated Cuba's positions on the four main issues being debated in the Conference, namely nuclear disarmament, FMCT, PAROS and negative security assurances.

Having said that, I propose to make some comments on various elements and pieces of information which have been heard during our thematic debate. Much emphasis has been placed on the fact that there has been a reduction in the numbers of nuclear weapons, and figures are cited to show that sufficient progress has been made on this matter and that things are going well. It is astonishing that some should feel pleased that there are still thousands of nuclear weapons in existence and that these figures should be seen as positive results.

Two atomic weapons launched by the United States of America against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with an approximate capacity of 21 kilotons of explosive, caused between 400,000 and 500,000 casualties, of whom between 200,000 and 250,000 died - almost 100 times the total number of deaths resulting from the criminal and horrendous terrorist attacks of 11 September in New York, and more than 1,000 times the number who died in Madrid at the hands of similar evil terrorist murderers.

But this is a calculation based on the power of the obsolete atomic bombs used in 1945. As we well know, current nuclear weapons are hundreds of times more powerful than they were, which means that if two of the modern bombs were used now, the victims would be numbered in their millions. While there were about 400,000 victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two of today's nuclear bombs could affect 40 million people - more than half the population of France, almost four times the population of Cuba, and almost three times the population of the Netherlands, to mention just a few examples. And I repeat - we are speaking of the number of victims that could be caused by just two nuclear bombs. There are now thousands of nuclear weapons in existence with this capacity to deal out death and destruction.

(Mr. González, Cuba)

So to say with satisfaction that there has been a reduction in the number of nuclear weapons down to several thousand is, to put it mildly, a bad joke. So long as even one of these lethal weapons continues to exist, millions of people will be potentially threatened. The only solution to eradicate this danger lies in the total elimination of these weapons, and that is why Cuba calls for an immediate start to negotiations in this Conference with a view to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and we would like the results of such negotiations to be the adoption of a legally binding international treaty which would totally eliminate those weapons. I think, on the basis of what I have said, that there are sufficient reasons to initiate such efforts in the near future.

In a few days, in the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the States parties to that Convention will pursue their search for solutions to meet humanitarian concerns among other aspects which are related to the weapons regulated by that international instrument. Reference is quite rightly made there to the need to strengthen the implementation of international humanitarian law as a response to the thousands of victims of the use of various conventional weapons. However, none of those conventional weapons could be compared with the destructive potential of modern nuclear weapons. Accordingly, we here in the Conference on Disarmament would have much greater reason to work for a definitive solution to the problem of nuclear weapons.

There has been no lack of specific proposals to reach agreement on a programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament, ranging from the Group of 21's initiative to proposals such as that of the five Ambassadors set out in document CD/1693/Rev.1, including contributions from representatives of various groups in this body. And indeed, this last proposal managed to secure consensus support from the vast majority of members of the Conference. While Cuba believes it is not perfect and in some respects falls short of our expectations, we decided nevertheless to endorse the position of the G-21 and go along with the consensus on that proposal. We saw this as a measure of flexibility to take account of all the interests of members of the Conference on Disarmament and to bring this body out of the stalemate where it has lingered for more than eight years.

But to our surprise, a small number of members of the Conference on Disarmament oppose the five Ambassadors' initiative and rejects the mandate proposed under it for nuclear disarmament, namely the establishment of an ad hoc committee "to deal with nuclear disarmament. The ad hoc committee shall exchange information and views on practical steps for progressive and systematic efforts to attain this objective and, in doing so, shall examine approaches towards potential future work of a multilateral character".

Some nuclear Powers say on the one hand that they are committed to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, but on the other hand refuse to address the subject, let alone negotiate it, in the framework of the Conference. An ad hoc committee, as proposed in the five Ambassadors' initiative, would provide an opportunity to determine - with participation by all - which measures could be adopted to develop phased negotiations. It would also provide us with an opportunity to draw up a road map which would lead us to the final objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It would establish a dynamic and progressive climate which would enhance

(Mr. González, Cuba)

the mutual trust that is so necessary for any negotiation to be undertaken. We are sure that this climate would promote progress on present and future proposals submitted in accordance with the Conference's agenda. It would also be a lever to curb any attempt to violate the international norms and regulations pertaining to disarmament and non-nuclear proliferation.

Quite frankly we see a contradiction between statements to the effect that there is a commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons and, at the same time, a rejection of the idea of exchanging views and collectively seeking measures to attain that objective. Positions based on these concepts lack credibility, and furthermore existing nuclear weapons are being refined and military doctrines are being adopted whereby this type of weapon will be given greater capacity for use, even for pre-emptive purposes.

We would like to know what are the real reasons why some nuclear Powers reject the five Ambassadors' proposal even at the risk of falling into these contradictions. We believe that those who are really committed to nuclear disarmament should have no fear of addressing the issue in any setting or in any circumstances, particularly if this would help to strengthen multilateralism and international peace and security.

It is our hope that this anomalous situation can be corrected as quickly as possible so that we can agree on a programme of work which will set the Conference on Disarmament to its task.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cuba, Mr. González, for his statement and kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ms. Paterson.

Ms. PATERSON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. President, our forum has achieved significant results in the past, and we need to use the CD purposefully now if we are to meet key arms control and disarmament challenges. During the last three sessions various delegations have recognized efforts already made towards nuclear disarmament, but have called for greater transparency on the part of the nuclear-weapon States with a view to strengthening confidence and encouraging progress within the CD.

The United Kingdom welcomes the opportunity again to set out our record of engagement and progress to date. I am happy to be able to draw on points we made at the 2005 NPT Review Conference to illustrate this.

Over the last 13 years the United Kingdom has made substantial progress with regard to our nuclear disarmament obligations as set out in article VI of the NPT. Action has included the withdrawal and dismantling of our maritime tactical nuclear capability; the withdrawal and dismantling of the Royal Air Force's WE177 nuclear bomb; and the termination of the nuclear Lance missile and artillery roles that we undertook with United States nuclear weapons held under dual-key arrangements. As a consequence, we have reduced our reliance on nuclear weapons to one system, namely Trident. We are the only nuclear-weapon State to have done so. Our nuclear forces patrol on reduced readiness. Only a single Trident submarine is on deterrent patrol at any one time, and it is normally retained at a reduced alert status. The missiles are not targeted at any country.

(Ms. Paterson, United Kingdom)

The United Kingdom holds fewer than 200 operationally available warheads - the minimum level necessary for the United Kingdom's national security. In all, the explosive power of United Kingdom nuclear weapons has been reduced by 70 per cent since the end of the cold war.

Since 2000 we have been pursuing a programme to develop United Kingdom expertise in verifying the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons internationally, with the overall aim of finding potential methodologies which could be used in a future nuclear disarmament verification regime. We have undertaken this work as part of our commitment to making progress towards meeting the requirements of the disarmament provisions of the NPT.

The United Kingdom is committed to the maximum degree of transparency about our nuclear and fissile-material stockpiles compatible with the requirement of our national security. In 1995 we announced that we had stopped the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. We call upon others, including those States not party to the NPT, to follow this example.

In 1998 we were the first nuclear-weapon State to declare the total size of these stocks. We then voluntarily placed all our fissile material no longer required for defence purposes under international safeguards, where they are liable to inspection by IAEA. We remain committed to transparency of our fissile material stocks.

As is well known, the United Kingdom has both signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and remains firmly committed to that Treaty. We have not carried out a nuclear explosive test since 1991.

In September 2004, the United Kingdom signed the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT in New York. This committed us to take measures to facilitate the signature and ratification process of the CTBT, and dedicated us to realizing the goal of the entering into force of the Treaty. We urge all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify it as soon as possible.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom, Ms. Paterson, for her statement. The next speaker will be the Ambassador of Chile, Mr. Juan Martabit.

Mr. MARTABIT (Chile) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you and, through you, to commend all the Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament for the year 2006 in advance for the innovative and constructive initiatives that have been adopted. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to your predecessor, the Ambassador of Poland, Zdzislaw Rapacki, for his tireless efforts. I would also like to pledge my delegation's full cooperation throughout your term, particularly in our capacity as a friend of the Chair.

(Mr. Martabit, Chile)

The early adoption of the agenda of the Conference without a tedious discussion was a first positive signal. The initiatives for this year involving coordinating the Presidential terms, creating a mechanism of friends of the Chair and finalizing a timetable for the holding of a focused and structured debate are undoubtedly encouraging.

We welcome the emphasis placed on continuity, which can play a role in reactivating this multilateral disarmament body. Chile supported the above-mentioned initiatives from the outset, and we will certainly continue to do so. In this respect, we will spare no effort that could serve as a basis for breaking the present stalemate. We view this process as leading to the adoption of a substantive programme of work that would have the support of all members of the Conference. Our country's participation in the context of the five Ambassadors' initiative was in keeping with the same spirit. We were pleased that the majority was prepared to work on this basis. The initiative marked the point closest to consensus that we have managed to reach. It is the outcome of a history of efforts and a reflection of delicate balances. It is in itself a basis for negotiation.

Having made these general comments, I shall focus on the issue before us today. In this respect we associate ourselves with the statement made by the delegation of Iraq on behalf of the G21. My country views nuclear disarmament as part of a triad, together with the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Unfortunately, progress along this triple track does not always proceed evenly. Our country has done all in its power to move towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Chile has signed and ratified all the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation instruments at the regional and universal levels.

We recognize the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the multilateral disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. Nonetheless, we all noted with regret the outcome of the Seventh Review Conference last year. The Conference on Disarmament is responsible for this situation. Let us remember that the Sixth NPT Review Conference explicitly called on this Conference to begin negotiations on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and to establish a subsidiary body to deal with the nuclear issue. Almost six years have passed and we have made no headway.

Another fundamental instrument is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We urge its early entry into force, particularly through the inclusion of those States to which it explicitly refers. For Chile, prohibition of the production of fissile material is a fundamental step. For that reason we advocate an early start to the negotiation of a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We could even consider the possibility of agreeing to incremental negotiations on a verification mechanism in the near future.

With respect to negative security assurances, Chile supports the negotiation of a universal instrument to codify the pledge made by nuclear-weapon States not to attack non-nuclear-weapon States with this type of weapon. My country does not accept that *de facto* nuclear States which are not parties to the NPT should not be legally bound to grant negative security assurances to States which do not possess such weapons and which have repeatedly expressed their commitment not to possess them.

(Mr. Martabit, Chile)

In the context of confidence-building measures, we are in favour of the submission of reports whereby States would promote transparency and monitoring of their actions. In this spirit, contributions from regional or subregional mechanisms are important for global security. Instruments such as the Antarctic, Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba treaties, which establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, make an extremely important contribution to nuclear disarmament. Examples that we consider should be followed in the Middle East and South Asia.

Chile asserts the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. It is crucial for developing countries to have the security and certainty of appropriate scientific cooperation and transfer of technology. We are aware that this right is being challenged, given the risk of diversion towards clandestine programmes or that sensitive materials might fall into the hands of terrorist groups. This shows the importance of verification and monitoring mechanisms. In this context it is important to insist on the signing of the Additional Protocol to expand and strengthen IAEA's verification instruments. Nor can we fail to mention United Nations Security Council resolution 1540, which my country supported in its capacity as a non-permanent member. It constitutes a turning point in the prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

As I conclude my statement, I wish to reiterate that it is important for us to be receptive to contributions from and participation by civil society, which has been kept aside from virtually all the disarmament negotiations and deliberations. Let us draw positively on the professional specialist knowledge that they can bring to bear on our work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Martabit of Chile for his statement and analysis and for the kind words addressed to the Chair and the presidencies. The next speaker will be the representative of Sweden, Ms. Annika Thunborg.

Ms. THUNBORG (Sweden): Mr. President, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to further the interactive debate on nuclear disarmament. Let me first thank those nuclear-weapon States that have provided specific and detailed information on their nuclear arsenals. We very much look forward to these statements in written form so that we can look at the information provided more carefully, and we look forward to similar detailed information from other States possessing nuclear weapons as well as answers to our questions put forward on Tuesday.

I would now like to touch upon some measures that could be taken in the near future to make the world safer from nuclear disarmament. Some of these are very much in line with what has been said by other delegations, and in this context, I would especially like to commend a very interesting proposal put forward by Ireland on transparency, something that can be pursued directly in the Conference on Disarmament.

As to the specific measures, firstly, all States possessing nuclear weapons need to declare moratoria on the development of new weapons and new types of nuclear weapons.

(Ms. Thunborg, Sweden)

Secondly, all nuclear forces should be taken off alert. As my Ambassador said on Tuesday, the maintenance of thousands of nuclear warheads on hair-trigger alert, ready to launch within 15 minutes, greatly increases the risk of unauthorized or accidental launch or a launch set off prematurely in each country, based on, for example, flawed intelligence.

Thirdly, a strengthened Moscow Treaty with irreversibility and verification measures, and the commencement of negotiations of a successor treaty, so that the number of the nuclear weapons in the United States and the Russian Federation, as an intermediary step, be counted in the hundreds, and not in the thousands. And in this regard, we welcome the statement earlier today made by the Russian Federation on the plans to go lower, perhaps much lower, than the current Moscow Treaty. Of course, we welcome the Moscow Treaty as a confidence-building and security measure, since it aims at taking a large portion of the weapons off alert. But it is a serious problem that the Treaty does not require the destruction of a single nuclear warhead. In theory the warheads can be refitted on new missiles, and we would very much like to hear information from the United States and from the Russian Federation on concrete plans for destruction, similar to what was proposed by Norway on Tuesday.

Fourthly, we would like to see the commencement of a process that would lead to the establishment of a zone free from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in the Middle East. We believe that such a process needs to be started parallel to the Middle East peace process. As we know from other areas of conflict and tensions in the world, the issues of weapons have to be addressed simultaneously with a political process so that the processes feed into one another. Let me also be clear that it is illegal, according to the United Nations Charter and to international law, when a Member State of the United Nations threatens another Member State with extinction. Such rhetoric has to stop.

Fifthly, we would very much like to see confidence-building measures on nuclear disarmament being pursued between the United States, China and India, and perhaps also the Russian Federation. One example would be that all bilateral agreements should include mutual commitments, for example, the signing and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; declared unilateral moratoria on fissile-material production; agreements to start negotiations on an FMCT; and no-first-use measures.

Sixthly, of course, FMCT negotiations in the CD should commence immediately on a treaty that takes into account both the non-proliferation and disarmament aspects. We would like to continue the dialogue with States possessing nuclear weapons on what concrete measures they plan to take nationally, regionally or internationally to make the world safer through nuclear disarmament measures in the CD session or in the coming CD sessions this year.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sweden, Ms. Annika Thunborg.

This concludes my list of speakers for this afternoon's session. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this time? That does not seem to be the case.

I would like to inform you that I have received a letter from Ambassador Gordan Markotić, the Permanent Representative of Croatia, who is currently the President of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of



(The President)

Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. In accordance with established practice, Ambassador Markotić would like to address the Conference at the plenary meeting on 9 March on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Convention. With your concurrence, in consultation with the regional Coordinators, I will extend an invitation to Ambassador Markotić to address the Conference on that occasion.

You may recall that the then President of the Conference, Ambassador Rapacki of Poland, extended to the Secretary-General of the United Nations an invitation to address the Conference at the opening of its 2006 session when he learned that the Secretary-General was coming to Switzerland and making a short stopover in Geneva. However, due to the very tight schedule of his visit, the Secretary-General could not respond positively to that invitation. The President received an encouraging reply from the Office of the Secretary-General that he may address the Conference at a later stage. Therefore, the successive Presidents of the 2006 session agreed to extend an invitation to the Secretary-General to address the Conference during his next visit to Geneva. This initiative was presented to the Group Coordinators at the Presidential consultations yesterday, and I will send such an invitation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan.

Before closing this meeting, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts on the results of our focused debate on nuclear disarmament this week. During the four sessions, more than 30 countries took the floor. Even though this number might not impress those who expected much more, many member States offered useful suggestions and ideas in addition to their national positions. In particular, some nuclear-weapon States provided useful information on the implementation of their nuclear disarmament efforts, and there were specific ideas and proposals made by many countries for further strengthening nuclear disarmament. Based on these developments, we may run ahead of ourselves and declare it a success, but I feel that unless we continue to maintain this momentum to build upon these improvements, we will end up with not much at the end of the day.

In this vein, with a view to stimulating the general debate on agenda items 1 and 2 next week, I have tried to extricate from all statements the most common elements - which I cannot even call common denominators - to catch the general trend of their arguments and provide orientation for the way forward. At this point, I would like to make clear that these elements represent my own personal observations, without prejudice to the judgement of delegations.

With this understanding, I would like to invite delegations to take into consideration the following elements to make next week's debates more interactive and productive: first, the role of nuclear weapons in security policies; second, the way to strengthen transparency; third, the principle of irreversibility; and fourth, FMCT. I want to make it clear that these are not sub-items, but just indicative guidelines. Also, please be advised that next week I am going to provide the members of the CD with a compilation of the various ideas, suggestions, proposals, etc. made by member States during the previous four plenary meetings on agenda items 1 and 2.

This concludes our plenary meeting for today. The next plenary meeting will be held on Tuesday, 7 March 2006, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.