

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 18 May 2006, at 10.10 a.m.

President: Mr. Doru-Romulus COSTEA (Romania)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1019th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Today we shall continue our focused, structured debate on an FMCT. In accordance with the schedule of the meetings, this morning will be mainly devoted to the consideration of the issues related to stocks. Delegations are also invited to make statements of a general nature also bearing on the FMCT.

I have the following speakers on my list for this plenary meeting: United States of America, South Africa, Nigeria and Brazil. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States of America, Mr. Stephen Rademaker.

Mr. RADEMAKER (United States of America): Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to appear again in this chamber before the Conference on Disarmament. When I last spoke to this body three years ago, I chose as my theme “The commitment of the United States to effective multilateralism”. I explained how, with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction having become the pre-eminent threat of the post-cold-war era, the United States is convinced that multilateralism is today more important than ever. Because of the crucial importance of effective multilateralism in confronting today’s threats, I underscored the determination of my Government to provide the international leadership necessary to ensure that multilateralism does not fail in those cases of vital importance to our security. Finally, I cautioned against confusing leadership designed to ensure that multilateralism succeeds in such cases with so-called “unilateralism”.

Regrettably, the challenges to international peace and security today are no less great than when I spoke here three years ago. In a moment I will address some of those challenges, but first I want to emphasize an important aspect of multilateralism that is overlooked in many discussions of the subject.

In the view of the United States, effective multilateralism begins at home. In confronting the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, the fundamental building block of success is national efforts to control the dangers of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and the delivery systems for such weapons. Multilateral institutions and multilateral instruments cannot by themselves substitute for the exercise by sovereign governments of their responsibility to prevent the proliferation of these weapons. Multilateral institutions and multilateral instruments can establish norms, provide assistance and encouragement to those requesting help complying with the norms, and impose consequences for violations of the norms. But sovereign States also have the responsibility and, in most cases, the capability to stem WMD proliferation. Blind deference to multilateralism should not be considered an acceptable excuse for the failure of governments to do everything within their power at home to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

For these reasons, a hallmark of the Bush Administration’s approach to proliferation issues across the board has been to promote exercise of the sovereign responsibility of States to act against WMD proliferation. A clear example of this approach is the work programme adopted with United States support at the conclusion of the Fifth Review Conference of the

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Biological Weapons Convention in 2002. Rather than adopting a new multilateral instrument or establishing a new multilateral institution, the States parties to the BWC agreed in 2002 to focus from 2003 to 2005 on steps that individual governments could take to better exercise their sovereign responsibility to prevent the development or spread of biological weapons. Those steps included such things as criminalizing the development or use of biological weapons by their nationals or on their territory, improving security measures applied to dangerous pathogens, and strengthening codes of conduct for scientists.

This approach also is reflected in our vigorous support for the development and adoption of a plan of action to promote national measures to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention.

United Nations Security Council resolution 1540, adopted in 2004, was an even more direct effort to promote the exercise of sovereign responsibility to prevent proliferation. By requiring all States to criminalize WMD proliferation and to adopt and enforce controls on exports of sensitive WMD-related technologies, resolution 1540 ended once and for all the debate about the propriety of such controls. Today it is clear that effective export controls are not just good policy, they are legally required of all Members of the United Nations.

Consistent with resolution 1540, a coalition numbering over 70 countries, including the United States, has been working through the Proliferation Security Initiative to interdict proliferation-related shipments that export controls fail to stop. Needless to say, we see the PSI as another example of the exercise of sovereign responsibility, albeit an exercise that sovereign governments carry out in coordination with one another.

These kinds of measures are essential to successfully preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, and they can be extremely helpful in preventing governments from developing such weapons in violation of their legal obligations. In the case of governments that are absolutely determined to acquire such weapons, however, these kinds of measures are not always enough. In such cases, effective multilateralism requires not only that existing multilateral mechanisms be utilized, but also that they function as they were designed to confront the proliferation threat.

An obvious case in point is Iran. On 24 September of last year, the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency adopted a resolution formally determining that Iran was in non-compliance with its safeguards obligations due to its "many failures and breaches". This determination was based on a three-year long investigation by IAEA of previously undeclared nuclear activities in Iran extending back over a period of 18 years.

As a result of this finding by the IAEA Board, as well as a separate finding by the Board in that same resolution that Iran's nuclear programme raises questions that are within the competence of the United Nations Security Council as the main organ bearing responsibility for international peace and security, Iran was formally reported to the Security Council in February of this year. On 29 March the Security Council, acting by consensus, adopted a Presidential statement calling on Iran to suspend its uranium-enrichment-related activities, cooperate fully with IAEA's ongoing investigations, and enter into good-faith negotiations on measures to

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restore international confidence in Iran's nuclear intentions. Iran's response to this statement was to announce two weeks later that it had met with initial success in uranium enrichment and was planning to expand rapidly the scale of its enrichment work. Lest this response be misunderstood, Iran also rejected repeated requests for transparency and cooperation.

The United States expects the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility under the United Nations Charter to address the threat to international peace and security posed by Iran's illegal nuclear weapons programme, and it will be a defeat for effective multilateralism should the Council fail to live up to this responsibility.

I do not need to recount the long history of Iran's clandestine activities which have slowly been brought to light by IAEA, nor the many areas in which, even today, Iran is failing to cooperate fully with IAEA in its investigation of Iran's nuclear programme. I do, however, want to make a few observations about the justification that Iran offers for its continued pursuit of the capability to enrich uranium.

Iran claims that it is pursuing uranium enrichment because of the high value that it attaches to its energy independence; Iran says it does not want to be dependent on foreign sources of fuel for nuclear power reactors. There are many flaws in this argument.

First, Iran today does not have any operational nuclear power reactors. Russia is building one power reactor at Bushehr, but Iran has no reason to worry about how it will be fuelled, as Russia and Iran have negotiated a contract obligating Russia to provide roughly 12 years' worth of fuel for the reactor. Russia has further offered to provide Bushehr's lifetime fuel needs. Russia has strongly advised Iran against seeking to manufacture its own fuel for Bushehr. Russia has pointed out that Iranian production of fuel for Bushehr will not be economically viable. In addition, Russia has warned Iran that if it attempts to introduce its own fuel into Bushehr, this will void Russia's warranties of safe operation for the reactor, meaning that Russia no longer will be responsible if a nuclear accident occurs.

Second, in contrast to Iran's vast oil and gas reserves, Iran does not have sufficient reserves of uranium to support its claim to nuclear power ambitions. According to information provided by Iran to OECD in 2003, Iran's known uranium reserves would provide less than one year's worth of fuel for the nuclear power programme that Iran says it intends to build - that is, seven 1,000 MW reactors by the year 2020. Even if Iran's unproven and speculative uranium reserves are also taken into account - reserves which are only a geological possibility, but have not been found, and again drawing on numbers provided by Iran to OECD - Iran still would have no more than 10 years' worth of fuel for its intended nuclear power programme.

Third, even if Iran had sufficient uranium reserves to support such a programme, calculations show that the cost to Iran of indigenous fuel manufacture will far exceed the price at which reactor fuel could be purchased on the open market.

Finally, if Iran genuinely were concerned with its energy independence, it would be investing in additional petroleum refinery capacity to address a critical energy vulnerability that exists today - that is, its dependence on foreign imports for 40 per cent of its gasoline

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consumption. Instead of investing to eliminate a large and growing energy dependence that exists today, Iran is investing somewhere in the order of \$1 billion to develop a uranium enrichment capability to protect against a relatively small energy dependence that may arise in the future. The Bushehr reactor will not even begin to produce electric power for at least another 18 months, and it will be many more years before Iran completes any additional nuclear power plants.

All of these points underscore the economic illogic of Iran's investment in enrichment: an indigenous nuclear fuel cycle in Iran simply will not make any substantial contribution to Iran's energy independence.

In addition to Iran, of course, there is the case of the DPRK. The DPRK has withdrawn from the NPT, is pursuing enrichment and reprocessing of fissile material, and has declared that it has manufactured nuclear weapons. At the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks in September 2005, the DPRK stated its commitment to abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, and to return at an early date to the NPT and to IAEA safeguards. It is imperative that the DPRK avoid steps that would be contrary to the purpose of the joint statement issued at the end of the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks, including any transfer of nuclear material, testing of a nuclear weapon or of missiles, or the continuing reprocessing of plutonium. The next round of the Six-Party Talks should focus on the steps required for complete, verifiable, and irreversible elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes.

The Conference on Disarmament and its predecessor bodies have been the international community's principal multilateral negotiating forum for addressing weapons of mass destruction and other arms control, non-proliferation, and security issues for the past four decades. In that time, the CD has successfully negotiated a number of multilateral treaties, most notably the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Chemical Weapons Convention. In the view of the United States, this Conference retains its potential as one of the world community's primary instruments for promoting a safer and more secure world. Regrettably, we have seen little evidence of that potential in recent years.

When I last spoke before this Conference three years ago, I lamented the fact that the CD had, for six years, failed to agree on how to address the dangers of weapons of mass destruction, or any other dangers, for that matter. Today, I could repeat those words, except that I would have to substitute "nine years" for "six years".

The fundamental problem today is the same as it was when I last spoke here. Over the past decade, this body has permitted itself to become deadlocked by a lack of consensus on a work plan, thus reducing most CD meetings to nearly meaningless exercises in rhetoric.

The source of the deadlock is twofold. First, there has developed here an unconscionable tolerance for hostage-taking. For years, worthy proposals to which no one objects have been taken hostage by proponents of less worthy ideas that do not command consensus. So ingrained is the acceptance of hostage-taking here that, today, most of the complaints are directed not at

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the hostage takers, but at those who refuse to “ransom” the hostages by agreeing to proposals that their governments do not support. Second, far too many members remain committed to an outmoded and unrealistic agenda that dates back to the cold war.

How, then, should this Conference proceed? Surely, it is time for delegations finally to acknowledge that the package approach to a programme of work will never succeed. For nearly a decade, well-meaning CD member States, groups of members, and individual representatives acting in their personal capacities have developed a series of these packages, such as CD/1624, known as the Amorim proposal; CD/1693/Rev.1, known as the A5 proposal; and CD/1757, circulated by the Peruvian presidency near the end of last year’s session. All have focused on the same group of issues, and none has been able to elicit consensus support from this body. To date, our delegation has seen no evidence that continuing to look for a package deal is any more likely to succeed this year.

My Government believes that the only possible avenue for progress is for the Conference on Disarmament to concentrate its efforts on the one topic on which we most likely shall be able to take action. That issue, of course, is the one that consistently has garnered overwhelming support in the United Nations General Assembly, and always has been considered the top priority on the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. It is also the one and only proposed agenda item that all members of this Conference profess to support. That is a fissile material cut-off treaty, or FMCT.

Today, the United States is tabling the text of a draft FMCT, a draft mandate for FMCT negotiations, and a paper summarizing United States views on an FMCT. Our delegation requests that these texts be circulated as official documents of the Conference. The treaty text that we are putting forward contains the essential provisions that would comprise a successful, legally binding FMCT. Our draft treaty has a straightforward scope: it bans, after entry into force, the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. This is the fundamental objective that an FMCT should achieve.

Our draft clearly defines fissile material and related production methods in a manner consistent with established practices and past thinking on that subject. For example, the production of fissile material for non-explosive purposes, such as naval propulsion, would not be prohibited by an FMCT. Existing stocks of fissile material also would be unaffected. Our draft also spells out the mechanisms needed for a treaty. Entry into force, dispute resolution, implementation, signature, accession - it’s all here.

Consistent with our conclusions regarding the verifiability of an FMCT, which Ambassador Sanders announced to the Conference in July 2004, our text includes no provisions designed to provide verification. This does not mean that compliance with the treaty would be unverified, but rather that the primary responsibility for verification would rest with the parties using their own national means and methods - or, said another way, through the exercise of the sovereign responsibilities of the parties to monitor compliance.

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This draft treaty is a way forward for this body and for the maintenance of international peace and security. Our delegation looks forward to explaining our proposed text, whether at this time or at the negotiating table. Therefore, we propose that an ad hoc committee, or even this plenary itself, begin immediate debate on our text, with the objective of approving a text for signature by the end of this year's CD session.

I am aware that the traditionalists here will say that it is inconceivable that progress will be allowed on one proposed agenda item without simultaneous movement on other proposed agenda items. As I noted earlier, the acceptance of hostage-taking is deeply ingrained here. It is not surprising that individual delegations would use procedural devices such as hostage-taking to advance their pet ideas. What is surprising is the tolerance of hostage-taking that has been on display here for nearly a decade.

My Government, as all delegations know, has its own pet idea. Two years ago we called on the CD to negotiate a treaty banning the sale or export of persistent landmines. I am reliably informed that we still have some work to do if we want to achieve a consensus to commence such a negotiation. If we were unprepared to do the hard work of trying to persuade others of the merits of our idea, we could adopt the approach of others here in threatening to block all work until our idea was accommodated. If we were to do that, I would expect us to be widely criticized for standing in the way of progress. What I do not understand, and what I have a hard time explaining to the proponents of our landmines idea back in Washington, is why that kind of behaviour would be condemned here if we engaged in it, but is not condemned here when others engage in it. I have an even harder time explaining why it is that many delegations here seem to assign the principal blame for inaction at the CD to those of us who refuse to acquiesce in hostage-taking by others.

Our delegation believes that the CD could continue to discuss other, so-called "traditional" issues as it conducts FMCT negotiations. We also support the discussion of so-called "new" issues, with the aim of identifying any that might be ripe for more serious consideration. The United States is always prepared to consider proposals designed to confront modern security threats with the seriousness that they deserve. Our delegation sees no need at this time, however, for the negotiation of new multilateral agreements on nuclear disarmament, outer space, or negative security assurances. Not only are such negotiations unnecessary, but we believe that after nine years of inactivity, this body simply is not able at this time to deal in depth with more than one issue.

The United States views 2006 as critical to the continued existence of the CD as a meaningful international negotiating forum. The long-lived deadlock at the CD has raised questions in many countries as to the continued viability of this forum. As a result, since the 1990s, most CD member States have withdrawn their CD-specific delegations as their governments have shifted their priorities and resources to more productive venues.

Despite what other governments have done, President Bush last week renewed America's commitment to the CD by nominating a new United States Ambassador to the Conference. Christina Rocca, our former Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, is a highly qualified replacement for Ambassador Jackie Sanders. She has been nominated to come here in

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the hope that the time is now ripe for progress on an FMCT and other United States priorities. I urge all delegations to work with us in order to ensure that she does not serve as the last United States Ambassador to the CD.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States, Mr. Stephen Rademaker, for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa, Mr. Johann Kellerman.

Mr. KELLERMAN (South Africa): Mr. President, I think we have just heard a very important statement, probably the most important in the last three, four, five, six years. It seems to me most appropriate if you would allow delegates who wish to react to this statement to take the floor, because I guess that the list of speakers is in a way a continuation of our general debate that we have been engaging in since Tuesday. I would back you to allow reactions to this important intervention by the United States.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. We have listened to this proposition, and I would suggest that we continue our debate as per delegations who would like to speak. Please indicate that and we will give the floor accordingly. I would like to call to your attention that we have already three speakers on the list, so perhaps we should ask their indulgence, if they agree, to allow speakers to step in their stead, if we were to concentrate on the statement that we have just heard. The delegate of South Africa graciously accepts that. Nigeria, also, thank you. The Ambassador of Brazil? Thank you. Are there speakers who would like to take the floor regarding the statement we have just heard?

We will proceed with the representative of India, Ambassador Jayant Prasad.

Mr. PRASAD (India): Mr. President, I would like to recall my statement of yesterday, when I outlined India's basic approach to the issue of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. In the discussions over the past three days, several proposals have been covered in the Conference to advance our work on FMCT. The United States has presented its initiative just now. We hope that further discussion on these ideas and suggestions will help us collectively to move towards a consensus.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of India for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador John Duncan.

Mr. DUNCAN (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary Rademaker for a very interesting exposé and particularly endorse what he said about the importance of multilateral diplomacy and multilateral forums for addressing the world's problems, surely the most cost-effective in both economic and political terms of the ways of meeting those challenges.

As you know, the United Kingdom has long attached great importance to the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT. With this long-held position in mind, I welcome the initiative taken by the United States to table a draft treaty text for negotiation and welcome

(Mr. Duncan, United Kingdom)

too the mandate for discussions which they have tabled alongside this. The United Kingdom believes that an FMCT is the next logical step towards disarmament. We should seize the opportunity now before us to move forward to negotiations.

In his recent visit to Geneva, our Minister of State Dr. Howells recalled the events occurring in the outside world that impact on this chamber and that need tackling as a matter of urgency. He welcomed all discussion and all suggestions, and I echo that now. He pointed out, too, that many variant positions adopted by those countries represented here will not be easily reconciled and that agreement will not be reached overnight. He said that the package approach to dealing with issues has not been successful, as Mr. Rademaker has also pointed out. And I echo that.

We should not use excuses to absolve ourselves of the responsibility of negotiating an international instrument that the world wants and needs. The proposed mandate, which of course we have only just received and cannot comment on in detail, appears neither to rule anything in, nor anything out, and thus meets our requirement for negotiation without preconditions. No country should, therefore, have a problem in agreeing to it. We believe that all issues can be discussed and resolved within negotiations.

With these thoughts in mind, I urge my colleagues to engage in discussions of substance and to dismiss a disabling linkage that has prevented us so far from beginning such negotiations, and to grasp the opportunity presented to us to allow this chamber to do the work for which it was formed.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Duncan of the United Kingdom for his statement, and I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Hamid Eslamizad.

Mr. ESLAMIZAD (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, since it is the first time my delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, I would like to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference and excellent guidance of our deliberations on the FMCT.

I intended to ask for the floor rather at a later stage today. However, in response to your invitation for reactions to the statement made by the representative of the United States, I have asked for the floor now.

Mr. Rademaker's statement today reminds me of his last presence in the CD in late January/early February 2003, when in his statement on the American vision of multilateralism he talked about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and its links with the 9/11 events. A couple of weeks later Secretary of State Powell said similar words in the Security Council and a couple of months later the American troops had invaded Iraq.

Later on the American institutions themselves said that they neither found any weapons of mass destruction there, nor al-Qaeda camps.

(Mr. Eslamizad, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The American way of dealing with questions before the international community has led to the withdrawal of one State from the NPT and the current situation in Iraq.

Today Mr. Rademaker in his statement on FMCT talked about Iran's case in Vienna. I could not find its relevance to the FMCT, but I hope it will not be an omen of repetition of past experience with the American way of dealing with questions before the international community.

I would like to caution other delegations not to take words as facts.

On the question of Iran, I would like to recall that the very fact that the Agency has confirmed in its report that there has not been any diversion of materials towards prohibited use is in itself a witness to our peaceful intentions. And should there be peaceful intentions in the minds of others, the remaining questions too can be resolved in the Agency.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Eslamizad of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement and for his kind words to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Johannes Landman.

Mr. LANDMAN (Netherlands): I am not able to formulate such a carefully drafted statement as my dear friend from the United Kingdom has done, but I am authorized on behalf of my authorities to express appreciation for the fact that after a prolonged silence, the United States has indeed reconfirmed its commitment to this body, in a way in a double sense, by the announcement of a new Ambassador to this body, which is important, and secondly, by submitting for our attention - and that is really a most welcome thing - an illustrative treaty text and an illustrative mandate, which definitely are most helpful tools in order to focus on this indeed, as so many have said repeatedly, very important subject.

I do agree, rapidly going through the text put on the table and having listened carefully to what has been said by the distinguished representative from the United States, that indeed this proposal and a negotiating framework in which this would be dealt with would allow us to express and submit other proposals and concerns which we know exist. It is of course obvious that not everybody is convinced in advance that verification is to be excluded totally, so we should and we will and we can discuss that. So this is all extremely positive, and I really do hope that we will be able - and we can start particularly in this focused period on FMCT - to look at these texts seriously, and that indeed we will be able to agree on a mandate to make this body again operational.

A last remark, although I really do not want to engage in any sort of polemics, but I have heard, indeed one cannot but hear, the very strong opinions expressed about linkages, translated here as hostage-taking. We could agree to this position, but I could only agree conceptually, because in practice the insistence on not discussing anything else than FMCT is exactly the same approach as insisting on multiple subjects to be on the table. Anyhow, I took note of a practical argument, and that is that indeed after 9 or 10 years of inactivity, one could understand the expression of doubts as regards the capacity of this body to deal with different complex issues at the same time, which at least does not exclude the possibility of treating and dealing with them in a consecutive way.

(Mr. Landman, Netherlands)

But again, I want to conclude by underlining the importance of this American initiative and the most helpful aspects that it contains to bring us further and to make this body alive again.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Netherlands for his statement, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Dong-hee Chang.

Mr. CHANG (Republic of Korea): My delegation appreciates the presentation made by Mr. Rademaker about the United States policy on global issues and global security and disarmament. And my delegation also appreciates the United States initiative to table the draft treaty on the FMCT. My delegation would like to interpret it as a good intention on the part of the United States to move forward the discussion on the FMCT.

However, from the methodological perspective, there is some concern about whether it is pertinent or not to pre-table a draft treaty when we have not yet reached a meeting of minds on the important issues, especially when we are engaged in discussions on focused issues or in symmetric discussions under the common leadership of the six Presidents. This year the six Presidents have agreed on discussions on the important issues. When we have reached a meeting of minds on the important issues, I do not think it is so different to wrap it in the form of the treaty. I would like to accept the United States initiative as a good gesture to move forward the discussion and I hope that the United States initiative will give us another momentum to move forward our discussion and even to strengthen our discussion on the focused issues.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea for his statement, and I give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Australia, Ms. Caroline Millar.

Ms. MILLAR (Australia): I take the floor to respond to the United States statement made moments ago. As you know, Australia has long supported the goal of a fissile material cut-off treaty, and for this reason we very much welcome the United States decision to table a draft FMCT today.

It is true that this text differs from what we may have tabled ourselves. Like most delegations in this chamber, Australia believes an effective FMCT should contain appropriate measures to verify States' compliance with their obligations. But Australia also shares the United States view that our priority in the CD should be to negotiate a treaty that secures the commitment of States parties to end fissile material production for nuclear weapons.

And as we suggested on Tuesday, measures to verify compliance could be left to subsequent largely technical negotiations. The effectiveness of this approach has been demonstrated very successfully by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which contains the principal commitments of States parties, with the verification system set out in secondary agreements with IAEA.

(Ms. Millar, Australia)

We welcome the constructive spirit in which the United States has offered their text. While it may not include verification provisions or indeed some other provisions dear to the hearts of some delegations in this chamber, it is of course open to delegations to raise any issues of interest to them during the course of negotiations. For this reason, we reiterate our strong support for starting, without delay and without preconditions, the negotiation of an FMCT.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Australia for her statement and I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy, Ambassador Carlo Trezza.

Mr. TREZZA (Italy): My delegation has listened carefully to the United States statement. We appreciate the bold and, as far as I recall, unprecedented initiative of presenting a draft treaty on a nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issue, the FMCT, which is the priority for my country. We shall study carefully the text of a draft treaty and of a draft mandate and hope that they will contribute to bringing the Conference on Disarmament back into negotiating mode. We believe that the United States initiative is a valuable contribution to our present discussions on FMCT.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador for his statement, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Japan, Ambassador Yoshiki Mine.

Mr. MINE (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Rademaker for explaining the United States position on important issues, in particular multilateralism, the importance of the Conference on Disarmament and an FMCT, to which we attach great importance. And as I heard it, I thought there were positive elements in his explanation.

Certainly, as to the content of the draft proposal, we would like to study it very carefully. I should not make any quick comment at this moment. But I hope that the proposal will stimulate the member countries of the Conference on Disarmament in a constructive manner. I hope the negotiations on an FMCT will be started as quickly as possible.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Japan for his statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Spain, Ambassador Gerardo Bugallo Ottone.

Mr. BUGALLO OTTONE (Spain) (translated from Spanish): I would just like to reaffirm what I said on Tuesday, just a couple of days ago in this chamber, and I think it is particularly relevant now given the proposal presented by the United States. In particular I would like to underscore the need to overcome the concept of linkage among issues, which I think it is clear is a guarantee of the ineffectiveness of this Conference, and to do so as a matter of urgency.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Spain, Ambassador Bugallo Ottone, for his statement and I give the floor to the distinguished representative of France, Ambassador François Rivasseau.

Mr. RIVASSEAU (France) (translated from French): In his statement of 19 January 2006 at Ile Longue, the President of the French Republic emphasized my country's wish to see the initiation of negotiations on a "cut-off" treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. I had an opportunity to present France's approach to this question here, the day before yesterday.

It is a good thing that the American delegation has chosen to come here to present their national position on the FMCT to us in detail and in a precise manner by illustrating it. This is a new stage in the revitalization of the Conference which you, Sir, and the other five Presidents began this year, and for which I would like to commend you once again. We hope that this initiative will be a useful contribution to the ongoing debate on the FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament, and my delegation too will be interested in conducting more in-depth discussions on our various national positions.

If I may recall, I was chargé d'affaires here with Jean-Michel Despax in 1998 when the joint efforts of Australia and France led to the establishment of an ad hoc committee on the FMCT. In the spirit just referred to by the Australian delegation, we are ready, today as in the past, to begin the negotiations on the FMCT without further delay. We hope that this moment is approaching.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of France for his statement and the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Masood Khan.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): We appreciate the statement made by Assistant Secretary Stephen Rademaker in regard to a fissile material treaty and the important initiative that the United States has taken. We commend the United States for its renewed commitment to multilateralism.

The United States proposal includes several important elements but also excludes some elements that are important to our delegation and to several other delegations. However, it is a significant initiative and it addresses one of the concerns that no movement in the Conference on Disarmament was taking place.

As we go along, we will consult with the United States delegation here in Geneva and in Washington and in Islamabad. I believe that neither the United States approach nor the content of the text that they have presented is intended to support the notion that it is a "take it or leave it" text. We understand that they are ready to engage other delegations and negotiate with them in good faith with a view to reaching consensus.

Pakistan's position on linkages, existing stocks and verification is very well known, and this position was explicated by our delegation in our statement on 16 May here in the Conference on Disarmament. We are not reiterating these positions in order not to polemicize the CD session today.

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

We commend the United States for its initiative. We will refer the text to Islamabad and we will refer the important statement made by Mr. Rademaker and the text of the FMT that the United States delegation has circulated.

The United States proposal will be given most serious consideration in Islamabad, which it deserves. If this proposal helps break the logjam in the CD, we will contribute actively to that process. We would especially like to engage the United States on the issues which stem from broad consensus for an effectively and internationally verifiable treaty. We believe that all issues can be raised once the negotiations on a fissile material treaty start. It is only fair to assume and say that we need more time to absorb and assimilate the important statement that Mr. Rademaker has made today.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Pakistan for his statement and I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany, Ambassador Bernhard Brasack.

Mr. BRASACK (Germany): Mr. President, thank you very much for allowing this focused debate as an immediate reaction. Also, Germany would like to commend the initiative by the United States. Certainly, having received the text only minutes ago, I am not in a position to enter into details as far as that is concerned, but Germany is of the view that an FMCT would cut off the production of the most dangerous nuclear fissile materials, those for nuclear explosions. Capping the production of fissile materials that are designed for nuclear weapons is the next logical step, as was mentioned by another delegation, and this stepwise process includes the CTBT as far as Germany is concerned. Certainly, it has to be seen in that context.

But on the other hand, it is also mentioned - and I have mentioned this earlier - that often it is said - and we agreed to this in the post-11-September environment - that nuclear terrorism is a threat that the world community faces. Some say this is the threat of the twenty-first century, so one yardstick about what we do, has to do with the extent to which the proposed FMCT treaty is of assistance as far as these threats are concerned. In the German view, it is very important to secure fissile material stocks worldwide and to introduce reliable material balances and better accountancy. This is certainly something that Germany will look for in the future negotiations which hopefully can start. As far as that is concerned, it is known that together with EU countries, Germany advocates an immediate start to FMCT negotiations without preconditions - without preconditions either with regard to what shall be negotiated or with regard to the expected and desired outcomes.

We are also happy about some elements of flexibility that were indicated as far as the mandate itself was concerned, but also as far as the draft proposal that was presented today is concerned.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Germany for his statement, and I now give the floor to the representative of Venezuela, Mr. Ibarra Martínez.

Mr. IBARRA MARTINEZ (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, as my delegation is taking the floor for the first time during your term, I would like to congratulate you on the way in which you have been conducting our debates and confirm that you have my delegation's support.

We would like to welcome the United States initiative and assure the United States delegation and all those present that this proposal, both the draft mandate and the draft treaty, will be referred to Caracas for due consideration.

My delegation would like to underscore two principles of the foreign policy of the Government of my country on these matters which we are discussing and in the light of what we have heard in this room. First of all, we emphasize the right of all States to make use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Secondly, a programme of work, if it is to be adopted by the Conference on Disarmament, must address the concerns of all States parties.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Martínez of Venezuela for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Chile, Mr. Camilo Sanhueza.

Mr. SANHUEZA (Chile) (translated from Spanish): I am taking the floor to express the appreciation of the delegation of Chile for the initiative that has been communicated to us by the Assistant Secretary for Disarmament and International Security of the United States. We have expressed our country's position, traditionally in a spirit of flexibility, so as to prompt this body to begin substantive negotiations as quickly as possible. In this connection, the proposal that has just been put to us by the United States is in keeping with the objective being pursued by this structured debate. This type of proposal was what we hoped to encourage in this room.

We were favourably struck by the reaffirmation by the representative of the United States of three concepts which we consider to be fundamental: the commitment to multilateralism, the commitment to the importance of this body, the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral forum responsible for negotiating instruments of this type, and the commitment to the importance of beginning negotiations on fissile material as soon as possible.

Chile will carefully study the draft treaty that has been submitted to us, as well as the draft mandate.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Chile for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium, Mr. Werner Baowens.

Mr. BAOWENS (Belgium): Belgium's general position on FMCT was presented yesterday. Today we have been presented with a number of concrete ideas by Assistant Secretary Rademaker regarding an FMCT. We recognize two very concrete elements - a draft mandate and a draft treaty text - in his statement.

With regard to the draft mandate, allow me to state that Belgium welcomes this text and stands ready to start working immediately, without delay, on this basis with a view to formalizing the mandate. While agreeing to such a mandate for negotiation of an FMCT,

(Mr. Baowens, Belgium)

Belgium underlines that this in no way undermines the importance we attach to other subjects as well. Secondly, with regard to the draft treaty, we will study the text we have just received very carefully.

It is well known that we attach the utmost importance to including elements of effective multilateral verification. However, as others have said before me, these elements may be discussed at a later stage and in an ad hoc format.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Belgium. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of China, Mr. Cheng Jingye.

Mr. CHENG (China) (translated from Chinese): I should also like to welcome the statement just made by Mr. Rademaker, Assistant Secretary of State of the United States, setting out America's draft proposal concerning a treaty to ban the production of fissile material.

With regard to the production ban treaty, I have already made my delegation's position clear in my statement yesterday, and I will not repeat it here. I only want to recall what I said yesterday: that China supports the purposes and objectives of the production ban treaty. It supports the reaching by the Conference of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work so that substantive work on such issues as a production ban, preventing an arms race in outer space, nuclear disarmament and ensuring the security of non-nuclear-weapon States can begin as soon as possible. We hope that all the parties concerned will make a positive and concerted effort to this end.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of China for his statement. I give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Valery Loshchinin.

Mr. LOSHCHININ (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): We have listened carefully to the important statement by Mr. Rademaker, and we understand that the statement will be circulated among the members of the Conference, since it will also require careful study. The initiative of the United States itself also deserves our attention. The question of the prohibition of the production of fissile material is one of the priority issues, of course, and it must be borne in mind that during our discussions at recent meetings of the Conference a number of serious ideas have been put forward. Russia's position has also been put forward, and our view of the situation is that the draft treaty presented by the United States delegation is not the final word. It is open for ideas and comments. We intend to study the document carefully, but in any case I would like to express our appreciation to the United States delegation for this initiative. At the same time, we believe that introducing a draft treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile material cannot and must not serve as an obstacle to consideration of other urgent issues on the agenda, including PAROS.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Russian Federation for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Petko Draganov.

Mr. DRAGANOV (Bulgaria): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on assuming your position. I am certainly glad to see you in the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, and let me assure you of my delegation's support in your activities that already seem to begin to be bearing fruit.

I would also like to use the occasion to welcome the statement by Assistant Secretary Rademaker and express the support of my delegation for the initiative that was introduced by the American delegation, the draft mandate text. And even though the draft treaty at first glance may not contain every element that my delegation would have liked to see, we certainly are ready to start negotiations straight away, and it certainly corresponds to my country's priority in the area of disarmament.

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

Mr. KHELIF (Algeria) (translated from Arabic): First of all, allow me to thank the Government of the United States of America for the interest they have shown in the multilateral framework for disarmament, and we thank Mr. Rademaker for taking the trip to Geneva to express that interest. The delegation of Algeria has taken note of the proposal or initiative of the Government of the United States of America regarding the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and we hope that this endeavour or initiative will be communicated to the parties concerned so that they can study it and express their final opinions. The Permanent Representative of India, like others, expressed a number of views on the subject yesterday and the day before yesterday, and we are convinced that the discussions within the Conference on the subject of FMCT, on the basis of what was put forward by the representative of the United States and the proposals and ideas of other countries - all of this should help us to strike the necessary balance among the positions of all countries on this issue so that we can come up with a position reflecting all the elements which States parties consider to be important.

But at the same time, these discussions should revolve around this topic and their relationship to the three other subjects under consideration, and the clear-cut mandate of the Conference on Disarmament since its establishment should not be made hostage to the positions of any particular country.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for his statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Canada, Mr. Paul Meyer.

Mr. MEYER (Canada): Mr. President, I want to join with other colleagues in welcoming the statement of Assistant Secretary Rademaker this morning and the renewed commitment it shows in this forum, both in terms of the news about the nomination by the President of a new Ambassador to the CD, but also in the provision of the draft mandate and text for an FMCT. These are items which we will convey forthwith to Ottawa for further study. As for the Canadian approach to an FMCT, I expressed that in my statement of 16 May and I won't repeat that now.

(Mr. Meyer, Canada)

I think that we have to recognize that if there is to be any official negotiation though on the FMCT, it has to figure as part of an agreed programme of work, and that has been a problem for this forum for many years now. Assistant Secretary Rademaker voiced some pessimism about whether any package approach here could work. But I wanted to clarify a point in his statement, and unfortunately we don't have the benefit of a distributed text, but I think I noted correctly that he indicated the United States saw no need for negotiation of any new agreements on outer space, nuclear disarmament or negative security assurances, and of course that is a legitimate opinion for the United States to hold, but I would recall that for the major proposals, compromise proposals before this body, like the A5 proposal and others that were referred to, insofar as outer space and nuclear disarmament are concerned, only discussions are currently suggested and Americans don't normally shy away from a good discussion, a good open debate on matters, and I think if the United States was willing to signal an openness to listen to the views of others on those subjects, secure in the knowledge that they could not advance to the negotiation stage without the explicit approval of the United States, it would make an important contribution to bringing this body back into the productive channels that I know we all wish to see here.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Canada for his statement. I see no other delegation wishing to make a statement at this stage on this particular matter. Allow me to thank once again the delegations of South Africa, Nigeria and Brazil for their willingness to allow other delegations to take the floor in their stead. I am now going to give the floor to the representative of South Africa, Mr. Johann Kellerman.

Mr. KELLERMAN (South Africa): Mr. President, I would just like to point out that I would limit my intervention purely to the question of stocks within the context of a fissile material treaty.

Virtually since the beginning of deliberations on a treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, divergent views have existed on the question of whether or not to include stockpiles of fissile material within the ambit of such a treaty. Some argue that a fissile material treaty should only halt the future production of fissile material, whilst others hold the view that stocks should also be addressed. In this connection, it could be said that these different approaches also relate to the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation aspects of the treaty.

South Africa's historical experience with the destruction of its limited nuclear deterrent programme and the consequent "completeness" investigation carried out by IAEA has given it some insight into what might be expected in terms of a treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

In order for a future fissile material treaty to be truly credible, it should include stockpiles in the scope of its application. Unless this is done, stockpiles of fissile material for nuclear weapons would imply that an area exists where verification of a "cut-off" cannot take place, as stockpiled material could be used for the production of further nuclear weapons. In this regard,

(Mr. Kellerman, South Africa)

it is clear that a complete halt in the production of fissile material would nevertheless leave enough of the material available to further increase - and not decrease - the number of nuclear weapons. South Africa furthermore holds the view that the inclusion of stocks would give an FMT a true nuclear disarmament character.

Our working paper on an FMT addresses the issue of stocks without ignoring the realities posed by the production of fissile material over a period of time, particularly, a long period of time. In this regard, the paper also addresses the question of weapons material that has been transferred from military use to peaceful nuclear activities, that is to say material that has been declared to be in excess. Such material would be included in the starting inventory of States and would be subject to the verification mechanism incorporated into the treaty. Additional material that is declared as excess after the entry into force of the treaty would then be added to the starting inventory in an irreversible manner.

The present divergent views and clear lack of agreement over the inclusion of stocks in an FMT need not result in negotiations on a treaty being stalled until the matter has finally been resolved to the satisfaction of all. The question can and should certainly be discussed during negotiations, and the outcome of the stocks issue should be determined by the outcome of negotiations, in the same manner as other aspects of the treaty will also be negotiated and agreed upon.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of South Africa for his statement. I will now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria, Mr. A.M. Kadafa.

Mr. KADAFU (Nigeria): Mr. President, since this is the first time the Nigerian delegation is taking the floor during your tenure, I offer you very warm congratulations on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I wish to assure you of our cooperation and support during your tenure. Let me also take this opportunity to commend your predecessors, the Ambassadors of Poland and the Republic of Korea, for guiding our work during their tenures. Together the P6 have injected life back into the CD.

The issue of fissile materials has been as controversial as nuclear disarmament. Since my arrival in Geneva, I have not heard a single voice against the commencement of negotiations on fissile materials. The differences have been whether we should adopt a minimal or a maximal approach to the issue and whether we should adopt a comprehensive and balanced or a selective approach to the issues of disarmament. Negotiating a fissile material treaty is critical to both those who want a focus on nuclear disarmament as well as those who favour actions against the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Nigerian delegation believes that fissile materials ought to be addressed in a comprehensive way to speed up nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives, with a view to enhancing international security. In this regard, my delegation believes that the questions of definition, production histories, stockpiles, safe storage, and present and future production should be covered by our work on fissile materials. In addition, any convention to be developed on fissile materials should be universally applicable and effectively verifiable with compliance mechanisms. We understand that no verification can be 100-per-cent perfect, but it could be made effective.

(Mr. Kadafa, Nigeria)

It has been argued that it would be difficult and intrusive to account for production histories and stockpiles, and therefore, our work should exclude them. There have also been arguments for the exclusion of verification and compliance mechanisms. In other disarmament instruments, stockpiles, verification and compliance mechanisms have been incorporated because of their importance in achieving the set objectives of such instruments. Why should these elements not be covered by our work on fissile materials? Several experts, including those who have made presentations to us during the thematic debate we started this week, have argued that it is scientifically possible to cover these elements in a fissile material treaty. The coverage of this element is very important for transparency and confidence-building, which are very, very essential to the success of our effort. Nigeria believes that any attempt to exclude stockpiles, for example, would create distrust and suspicion. Some will view it as an excuse or licence to enable holders of such stocks to continue with qualitative research and development of a new generation of nuclear weapons, as well as the modernization of existing ones. Verification is essential to ensure compliance. Nigeria believes that a treaty on fissile materials for weapons purposes that does not have provisions for verification and compliance will not help us in advancing our objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and their proliferation, including theft and illegal diversion to non-State actors. If there are no provisions for verification and compliance, how do we deal with concerns and/or suspicions of cheating? Let us learn from the experiences of other conventions whose provisions on verification and compliance are not effective. Almost immediately after such instruments come into effect, negotiations on protocols are started to address the shortcomings. In this regard, Nigeria believes that it is essential for the scope of our work on fissile materials to be comprehensive in order to cover definition, stockpiles, safe storage, present and future production, a verification and compliance mechanism that is effective and universally applicable. Nigeria is eager for the CD to commence work on fissile materials, as proposed in the A5, or any other proposal that may gain consensus in the CD.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Nigeria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Brazil, Mr. Carlos da Rocha Paranhos.

Mr. da ROCHA PARANHOS (Brazil): Mr. President, as this is the first time that I take the floor under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you on presiding over the Conference on Disarmament and to assure you that you can count on the fullest cooperation of the Brazilian delegation. I would also like to express our satisfaction and welcome Ambassador Tim Caughley in his new capacity as Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

My delegation attaches great importance to the process that was established by the six Presidents at the beginning of this year's work with a view to ensuring structured, focused debates on all the issues on our agenda, in order to reach a programme of work and start substantive negotiations at the CD. In this connection, I would also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Park In-kook, for his efforts in organizing very useful discussions on the issue of nuclear disarmament, which is a key priority for my delegation, and for the useful compilation of important issues raised that he circulated among members.

(Mr. da Rocha Paranhos, Brazil)

As our Special Representative for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues stated a few weeks ago in this chamber, “as we have witnessed during the structured debate held ... on items 1 and 2 of our agenda, there are innumerable ... issues that can form a substantive framework for discussions in an ad hoc committee to deal with nuclear disarmament”.

Within the context of the process agreed by the six Presidents, we warmly welcome your initiative to hold both formal and informal plenary meetings, coupled with interactive discussions with experts on the issue of fissile material. This wise combination of political considerations and technical expertise can certainly contribute to deepening the examination of all aspects related to the proposed negotiation of a fissile material treaty. The need to adopt an international instrument banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons is all the more relevant in an international environment in which there is a growing danger that such material could fall into the hands of non-State actors.

My delegation - and I would like to state it clearly - favours the start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In this connection, the scope of such a treaty must be clearly defined in order to ensure the preservation of the inalienable right of States to develop the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The negotiation of a fissile material treaty (FMT) should be undertaken on the basis of the parameters established in 1995 by the Shannon mandate. In other words, we believe that a fissile material treaty should be non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable. Nonetheless, as we indicated previously during the first phase of our work this year, the fact that there are different positions on the specific aspect of verification should not impede the start of negotiations.

The recent submission of a number of interesting and very useful working papers will certainly contribute to a more focused discussion of all the complex issues that will have to be dealt with during negotiations, such as definitions, scope, stocks, etc.

For our part, we are of the opinion that an FMT should address the issue of existing stocks. Such an approach would lead to the negotiation of a multilateral instrument that would be the natural and necessary corollary to the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, and thus would encompass both disarmament and non-proliferation concerns.

Let us hope that the same degree of interest and interactive debate can be maintained in the coming weeks in our Conference. The dynamics developed with the six Presidents' structured debates process should help us to achieve the much-needed political agreement on a programme of work that will allow us to move forward from the stage of discussions to the phase of negotiations.

We must be able to show that the CD remains a politically relevant forum in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

(Mr. da Rocha Paranhos, Brazil)

Finally, I would like to thank Assistant Secretary Rademaker for his presentation. As other delegates have indicated here, we think it is an important statement. We will study his proposal for a treaty carefully. We will certainly transmit it to Brasilia, but we think that it is important to stress, as others have already done, the commitment to the CD, the commitment to multilateralism and the commitment to negotiate - I think this was stressed in his speech, too - while debating all the other issues on the agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Brazil for his statement and for the kind words and encouragement addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Yoshiki Mine.

Mr. MINE (Japan): While we are still in formal mode, I would like to make a few remarks to formally register our thinking on stocks.

One general point and two concrete points. The general point is concerned with two important concepts. One is existing stocks and what that means, and the other is to include them in the scope. We think that these two concepts should be clarified. Having said this, I would like to proceed to the concrete points.

First, the transfer of stocks of nuclear weapons to a third country should be banned. Although we have to wait until discussions converge on whether to include a ban on stockpiling (in other words, imposing future reduction and elimination obligations), it would be worth examining the addition of transparency-enhancing measures such as voluntary declarations based on State accounting and control, as well as the realization of physical protection obligations.

Next, the diversion to nuclear-weapon purposes of stocks from conventional military use must be banned. It has been indicated that verification of non-diversion is difficult from the perspective of military confidentiality. However, it would be possible to examine obligations not to transfer stocks to a third country, or to strictly control such transfers; voluntary declarations based on State accounting and control; as well as physical protection obligations from the perspective of strengthening nuclear security.

As mentioned above, the reversion of stocks declared as excess to nuclear-weapon purposes (nuclear-weapon use and conventional military use) should be banned. In addition, for stocks once declared as excess, it would be possible to examine obligations to place such stocks under verification and to reduce and eliminate them in the future.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Japan for his statement. This would conclude the list of speakers as I have it in a revised edition for today. Does any other delegation want to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case.

I would like to thank you very much for your understanding and cooperation and the statements that you have presented.

(The President)

Before adjourning this formal plenary, I should like to address some organizational aspects of the meetings for the remaining days of my presidency. As you are aware, next Thursday, 25 May, there is a United Nations holiday and the Palais des Nations will be closed. Accordingly, our plenary meeting should be scheduled for another day, unless we want to meet somewhere else. You may also have learned that UNIDIR has been planning a two-day seminar for next week on “Building on the NPT 2005 Review Conference”. In an effort to accommodate both events, that is, the plenary meeting of the Conference and the UNIDIR seminar, I should like to suggest that next week the Conference hold its plenary meeting on Monday, 22 May, starting at 3 p.m. That would be the last week of my presidency, and the plenary meeting on Monday might be devoted to wrapping up the focused structured debates on FMCT. Should the number of speakers be longer than the time allowed for that meeting, we would resume the work the next day at about 9.30 a.m., that is, on Tuesday, but that is just a contingency plan. I would like to emphasize that we have taken into account the possible desire of delegations to speak on this occasion, and as I have said, we would not like to have to reject or refuse demands for the floor because of time limitations.

In this connection, I should like to ask your advice on whether there is a need to hold Presidential consultations before Monday morning. If groups believe that such consultations are necessary, I am ready to convene them either today or tomorrow, but not on Monday, as they would be useless.

The next plenary meeting will be held today at 3 p.m. in this room. In accordance with the schedule of meetings, the Conference will have the opportunity to address any topic relevant to the FMCT.

As there are no more speakers for the plenary meeting today, I adjourn the meeting and convene an informal plenary meeting on stocks. The informal plenary meeting will be open as usual to the members of the Conference, observer States, as well as experts who are part of their delegation. I would also like to announce that this informal meeting will start at 12.10 p.m.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.