

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 15 May 2008, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Yevhen BERSHEDA (Ukraine)

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I declare open the 1103rd plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament.

First of all, allow me, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, to express my sorrow over the loss of human lives and the material destruction caused by the natural disasters which have recently struck China and Myanmar. I would like to express our most sincere condolences to the families and friends of all those who lost their lives.

At the start of the second part of this year's session, allow me to wish a warm welcome to our new colleague from Chile, Ambassador Carlos Portales, who has assumed his position as representative of his Government to the Conference. I take this opportunity to assure him of our cooperation and our support in the performance of his new functions.

As the Conference is starting the second phase of its work for the year, I would like to review in brief the substantial work accomplished to date and inform you, in addition, of the results of the consultations which I held during the intersessional period.

(spoke in English)

The first part of this year's session conducted its work in a tolerant and promising atmosphere. During the initial months under my predecessors from Tunisia and Turkey and with the assistance of the seven agenda item coordinators, substantive deliberations took place on each item on the agenda, intended to revalidate and refresh last year's results. Subsequently, in March, the six Presidents of 2008 tabled a proposal in the form of a draft decision, which is contained in document CD/1840. This document is the result of numerous consultations and a considerable amount - many years - of consensus-building activity on the part of all CD members. It represents the outcome of our efforts, undertaken in order to enable the Conference to resume substantive negotiations after a decade of virtual standstill.

Of course, it would have been an exaggeration to assume that everything in this presidential proposal is fully satisfactory to all members. Nonetheless, even if it does not as such uphold the concerns of each and every member, it is clear to the six Presidents of 2008 that it enjoys strong support as a valuable compromise proposal. We believe that it is the closest this body has been to building consensus on its substantive work for a long time.

Encouraged by the positive feedback on the Presidential draft decision, the other 2008 Presidents and I continued our consultations during the intersessional period in order to bring positions together and gain consensus on the way forward. Meetings with regional coordinators, CD members and in the format of the P-6, during April and May, detected in general a positive response to CD/1840. As was pointed out by the parties consulted, the presidential draft decision contains acceptable modifications and is the result of constructive cooperation during the 2008 CD session.

Also, some delegations informed that they were waiting for reactions from their capitals. Each and every delegation consulted expressed its commitment to the commencement of the substantial work of the CD, emphasizing the importance of the comprehensive use of the Conference's potential.

(The President)

Today I would like once again to reiterate my commitment and that of my successors to continuing the efforts of our predecessors and consensus-building in the CD. I hope that members will continue to endeavour to resolve and bridge their differences in bringing about a proposal that is acceptable to all parties.

The six Presidents of 2008 are open to amendment or improvement of the text of CD/1840, which has been widely consulted upon in the Conference and is seen as capable of securing consensus.

The intersessional period in the work of the 2008 CD session was filled with important events in this year of disarmament and non-proliferation, in which most of you took an active part. Discussions during the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT provided us with additional proof of the significance of the CD agenda and the importance of the earliest commencement of this body's substantial work.

As our colleague from the Republic of Korea reminded us towards the end of the first part of the session, we have now arrived at an important crossroads, and we should choose the right direction. Moreover, with this year's session approaching the halfway point, time is not on our side. In conditions of the increasing influence of the time factor on the work of the CD, we need to act swiftly but surely to address all the opportunities to move the Conference into a stage of concrete achievements.

(spoke in French)

I would now like to turn to the list of speakers for today. The speakers for the following countries are listed for today's plenary session: Chile, Slovenia, Belarus, Morocco.

I now give the floor to the representative of Chile, Ambassador Carlos Portales.

Mr. PORTALES (Chile) (spoke in Spanish): As this is the first time I am taking the floor as Permanent Representative of Chile to the Conference on Disarmament, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the efficient way you have been conducting the work of this important negotiation forum and thank you for your words of welcome.

Chile has consistently supported the reform of the multilateral institutions, whose appropriate functioning it considers to be essential for imprinting a spirit of peace and cooperation on international relations in the twenty-first century.

After the 2005 World Summit Final Document we clearly expressed our deep disappointment at the lack of progress in reform on disarmament at the United Nations.

Therefore, Ambassador Bersheda, be assured that the delegation of Chile will support you in all your efforts to break the long deadlock that the CD has been caught in.

My country values the joint efforts made in recent years by the P-6 platform. We are convinced that this ingenious mechanism has contributed to generating a more cooperative spirit. All efforts to build confidence are, we are sure, very important.

(Mr. Portales, Chile)

Chile is ready and eager to help this forum to resume substantive work as soon as possible. We have therefore adopted a flexible and constructive attitude.

Consequently, our country has supported various initiatives to rescue the CD from its unjustified inaction: the Amorim proposal (2000), the five ambassadors' proposal (2002), the "food for thought" paper (2005), the decision of the President L.1 (2007) and, most recently, document DC/1840 (2008).

In this endeavour, we among others were "Friends of the Presidents" in 2006 and this year assumed the coordination of agenda items 1 and 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" and "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters", with a general focus on nuclear disarmament.

Although we have come very close - especially recently - to the longed-for consensus which will get this body moving, the complexity of the world we live in has so far prevented us from finding an appropriate solution. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the appearance of new actors, including terrorist groups, on the international scene, and, indirectly, situations of extreme poverty, civic insecurity, massive violations of fundamental rights and the pollution of the planet, among others, are creating new challenges for the international community and, certainly, the CD.

Obviously, a CD created in the context of the cold war could not foresee the development of such events, far less the threat they pose to international peace and security. Maybe the time has come, therefore, to revise its operating structure, since that is what clearly hampers cooperation between its members and the creation of a climate of confidence so that a substantive programme of work and real priorities can be adopted.

The CD is arthritic and partly antiquated. It cannot be left out of the United Nations system reform process if it is to be able to respond to the security requirements of a globalized world. The fundamental contradiction between the privilege extended to the security interests of the great Powers through the strict application of the consensus rule and the needs of the international community as a whole must be resolved.

We thus appreciate it when greater leadership and breadth of vision is shown by the said great Powers. We value, for example, the statements made in the CD high-level segment, and the P-5 joint statement at the second session of the 2010 TNP Review Conference preparatory committee last week.

Chile, for which multilateralism is an essential political choice for the success of its development strategy, wishes to call for good will to prevail. We are sure that this will bring opportunities and unquestionable benefits to this important multilateral space.

Our country hopes that the key actors who bear prime responsibility for reactivating the CD understand that taking the security interests of the international community into account will strengthen their own security.

(Mr. Portales, Chile)

Therefore the new security challenges have to be tackled with imaginative responses in all areas where reality shows that we need to negotiate. We shall keep working with this purpose in mind.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Chile for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia, who will make a statement on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. LOGAR (Slovenia): Mr. President, I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the EFTA countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

As this is the first time that I am taking the floor on behalf of the EU under your presidency, I would like, first of all, to congratulate you on the assumption of the post of President of the Conference on Disarmament. I would like to assure you of the European Union's full support in your efforts to guide the work of this Conference, especially now, at the beginning of the second part of the 2008 plenary session.

The European Union is encouraged by the interactive informal debates during the first part of the 2008 annual session, wisely guided by the seven coordinators under the auspices of the six Presidents of the 2008 CD session. We are also greatly encouraged by the high-level statements at the CD this year.

We welcome the momentum developed in the Conference on Disarmament since the establishment of the common CD presidency platform approach at the beginning of 2006 and further developed by the six Presidents of the 2007 CD session. This has resulted in the proposal of the six Presidents of the 2008 CD session for the CD's programme of work in the form of document CD/1840.

The European Union would go along with the proposal presented by the six Presidents in document CD/1840 on 13 March 2008, as it stands. In this manner, we call upon all delegations to show flexibility and join the emerging consensus on this proposal.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Slovenia and now give the floor to the representative of Belarus, who will make a statement on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. ALEINIK (Belarus) (spoke in Russian): Mr. President, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States: Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Romania, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus.

(Mr. Aleinik, Belarus)

At the opening of the second part of the 2008 session, allow me to assure you that you and your fellow-Presidents of the Conference this year have the confidence of the Group of Eastern European States. The efforts that you and other Presidents are making, and the notable enthusiasm you are generating for the revitalization of the CD, merit approval and praise.

We deeply value your efforts during the intersessional period, which took the form of numerous open, transparent consultations that gave delegations an opportunity to put forward proposals and concerns. Without question, those consultations furthered the process of consensus-building in the CD with a view to the possibility of commencing negotiations.

Mr. President,

We all witnessed substantial advances in the CD during the first part of this year's session. The attendance of Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, at the opening of the Conference, the large numbers of eminent people who have spoken at the CD this year, the series of important initiatives put forward to the Conference, and the lively discussions on all agenda items under the able leadership of the coordinators - all these were positive factors and helped to enliven the situation.

In this connection we believe that the draft decision on the programme of work put forward by the six Presidents and issued as document CD/1840 is a logical continuation of the work accomplished during the first part of the session and the significant efforts made in previous years. The Group of Eastern European States considers that CD/1840 defines a position on which the stances of all delegations could converge, making an acceptable basis for compromise.

It is our belief that these efforts should not be squandered. Hence the Group of Eastern European States would be prepared to join a consensus on CD/1840, and invites all participating States to take advantage of this opportunity to escape from a deadlock that has already lasted over 10 years, and get down to substantive work.

The Group of Eastern European States is certain that, under the effective leadership of the group of Presidents, and with a responsible, flexible approach on the part of all member States, this is a possibility.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Belarus for his statement and now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. LOULICHKI (Morocco) (spoke in French): Mr. President, allow me first of all to offer my country's condolences to the distinguished representatives of the People's Republic of China and Myanmar for the painful ordeals they have recently undergone, and to welcome our colleague, the Ambassador of Chile.

As this is the first time I have taken the floor under your presidency, allow me, as my predecessors have done, to offer you our congratulations on the manner in which you are leading our work and, also, to offer my congratulations to the other Presidents of the session. The

(Mr.Loulichki, Morocco)

Moroccan delegation reiterates that it supports every effort to allow the Conference on Disarmament to get down to serious, substantive work. We also offer our thanks to the coordinators for their reports on various agenda items. These reflect, in the view of my delegation, their own readings of the discussions, not the position of the Conference, since neither the manner of their appointment nor the substance of the reports have been considered by the Conference.

My delegation has considered the draft decision contained in document CD/1840 carefully and with great interest. It thanks the presidency for its commendable efforts in this regard and also wishes to make the following comments. First, during the discussions in the first part of the session, my delegation nurtured the hope that the Conference would at last emerge from the torpor in which it has remained for more than a decade. It was encouraged to do so by the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, by the significant number of dignitaries who addressed the Conference and, in particular, by the statements of member States, which all focused on the need for the Conference on Disarmament to engage in serious, open negotiations on the basis of a specific programme of work in which the concerns of all member States would be taken into consideration. The wording and structure of draft decision CD/1840 obscure this positive attitude among States. In our view, this draft gives a sense of *déjà vu* and is little more than an amalgamation of documents from last year (L.1, CRP.5 and CRP.6). Second comment, the title of document CD/1840 leads one to believe that a decision will be adopted by the Presidents, while the rules of procedure, more specifically rule 18, state that the Conference shall adopt its decisions. Thirdly, the negotiating mandate for the treaty on fissile material referred to in the draft decision is imprecise and omits any reference to the verification component. And last point, the draft decision treats the items on the agenda differently, in that it provides for a negotiating mandate for the treaty on fissile material and only calls for discussions on other substantive issues such as the prevention of an arms race in space, nuclear disarmament and negative security guarantees.

Starting from these considerations and notwithstanding the limitations of this text, my delegation considers that the draft decision might, with political will and a spirit of flexibility, serve as a starting point for open and universal consultations taking the positions of all States members into consideration. My delegation reaffirms that it is prepared to work with the presidency and the membership at large to reach a draft decision of the Conference, based on consensus, that would pave the way for a real programme of work and truly put the Conference on Disarmament on track. We have no right to dash the hopes that the international community has placed in the Conference on Disarmament as the sole negotiating forum in the field of disarmament.

While the international community copes with crises that are upsetting the international economic order, tangible signs are needed to preserve our collective confidence in multilateralism. The resumption of negotiations on a topic as vital as disarmament would be a powerful message and most significant response to the expectations of the peoples of the world.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Morocco for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. WANG (China) (spoke in Chinese): The Chinese delegation would like to thank the presidency and the distinguished Ambassador of Morocco for their expressions of sympathy and condolences in connection with the severe earthquake in China.

In recent days, many delegations have, in different ways, conveyed their sympathy to China and the Chinese delegation, and we would also like to express our warm thanks to them.

Second, we welcome distinguished Ambassador Portales, the newly appointed Ambassador of Chile, to our ranks. We welcome his arrival and hope he can add to the vitality of the CD.

Third, Mr. President, the Chinese delegation especially appreciates and thanks you for your hard work during the session to move the CD forward. We hope all concerned will continue the collective effort to get over their current differences and arrive as soon as possible at a programme of work that will enable the CD to resume work.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of China. I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ordzhonikidze.

Mr. ORDZHONIKIDZE (Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): Today we started the second part of the Conference on a positive note with statements on behalf of the EU and on behalf of the Eastern European Group. One thing that could not be exactly defined as positive was the statement of my good friend, the Ambassador of Morocco, especially when he referred to rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Conference on Disarmament, in particular with regard to the draft decision proposed by the six Presidents.

To make things clear, and I hope you will understand me, as a lawyer, this is not a decision of the six Presidents of the Conference. It is a draft decision of the six Presidents, presented to the Conference for its consideration and eventual adoption. It can never be considered otherwise, because, otherwise, we could probably have adopted CD/1840 if we entrusted or empowered our six Presidents to do so. So this is a paper that maybe has an awkward or imprecise title that some may understand as the decision of the Conference, but this is not the case. This document is just a draft decision proposed by the six Presidents to the Conference for its consideration and eventual adoption.

I would like to make things perfectly clear. This draft decision does not violate the letter or spirit of the rules of procedure in any way.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): Thank you, Sir. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this point? I give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. KHELIF (Algeria) (spoke in Arabic): First of all, Mr. President, the Algerian delegation wishes to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the Conference and to express its support for you in the performance of your tasks. Through you, it also wishes to thank the group of six Presidents for this year for the efforts which they have made in conducting consultations with the members of the Conference, with the objective of reaching consensus on a programme of work that satisfies everyone.



(Mr. Khelif, Algeria)

The Algerian delegation also wishes to join you, Mr. President, and other delegations which have expressed their regret and condolences to the Governments and peoples of China and Myanmar in the wake of the recent painful events and, also, wishes to express its sympathy to the families of victims.

As the Secretary-General mentioned to the Conference, today we have really sensed positive points, in that we have listened to the group of European Union States and some others through the current President of the Union, Slovenia, and, also, to the Group of Eastern European States, which today declared its support for the proposal of the six Presidents presented to the Conference in document CD/1840. This is really a positive point and shows clearly that we are coming closer to the desired consensus, which, in the view of the Algerian delegation, is perhaps an expression of the kind of optimism that should be the hallmark of our work.

We are coming closer and closer to consensus. However, we have also noted, Mr. President, in your statement, that the group of six Presidents is open and remains open to members of the Conference with the aim of arriving at a document that satisfies everyone. We should not overlook some of the concerns expressed by some member States here and we hope that you will find the appropriate formulation and that we will invest our remaining time in eliminating all differences and bringing together perspectives. We hope that all States parties will show the necessary flexibility in the spirit of multilateral action, which makes it necessary to yield on some things and accept some others in order to achieve consensus. The Algerian delegation expresses its complete readiness to assist you in achieving this aim.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Algeria for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. PUJA (Indonesia): Let me take this opportunity first of all to share the sentiments expressed by the previous speakers in expressing our sympathy and deep condolences to the Governments of China and Myanmar for the calamities that they have recently experienced.

As we resume the second part of the 2008 session of the CD today, I hope that it will be followed up by sustained and constructive discussion and deliberations. I believe that it is our common hope during the second part of this year's session that we will witness somewhat more encouraging and unprecedented developments. Despite our preference for a comprehensive and balanced programme of work, my delegation is flexible in its approach and open to new initiatives. This flexibility is needed if we wish to see the CD back on track and reclaiming its credibility. However, success in addressing the challenges before us would largely rely on our political will, and if we are serious about making progress in our work, a stronger political will is required. I therefore commend you, Mr. President, and your predecessors for the great efforts undertaken in trying to get the CD out of its impasse.

In this context, my delegation would like to reaffirm that nuclear disarmament is the highest priority of the Conference on Disarmament. In order to promote the work of the CD, we are flexible and prepared to discuss further the proposals put forward by the Presidents in document CD/1840. This gesture should be reciprocated as we move in our deliberations. It is our view that all the proposals should constitute a nuclear disarmament measure, an integral step

(Mr. Puja, Indonesia)

leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. My delegation believes that an inclusive and transparent approach would be applied in these efforts in order to ensure the success of our deliberations.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Indonesia. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. KHOKHER (Pakistan): Mr. President, we once again welcome you back after the break. First of all I would like to express our condolences to the peoples and Governments of China and Myanmar concerning their national tragedies. We welcome the Ambassador of Chile to this club.

The Ambassador of Morocco has pointed out certain deficiencies in this document, and I think these are very positive and constructive comments. As you mentioned in your statement today, you are open to ideas, proposals and amendments, so in that spirit we appreciate these comments and we would look forward to an early opportunity to reach a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, as contained in rule 18.

The PRESIDENT (spoke in French): I thank the representative of Pakistan.

Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this point? It seems not. Our work is therefore done for today. The next plenary session of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 20 May at 10 a.m. at the same venue. I would also like to inform you that the plenary meeting of the thirteenth week, the first under the presidency of the United Kingdom, will be held on Monday, 26 May 2008.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.