

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 29 July 2008, at 10.10 a.m.

President: Ms. Christina ROCCA (United States of America)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1111th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

On the list of speakers today listed so far, we have the Russian Federation and India. I would now like to have these delegates take the floor. I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (spoke in Russian): Madam President, one of the important results of the work of the Conference this year was the draft decision on the programme of work prepared by the six Presidents, document CD/1840. As we have said more than once, we have questions concerning substance and procedure in regard to this proposal by the Presidents. Nevertheless the Russian delegation is ready to support the potential consensus on this draft programme of work of our forum. That would make it possible to start negotiations on banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and carry out in-depth discussions on nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States. The adoption of the programme of work would give us the opportunity to start meaningful work on the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space that Russia and China submitted to the Conference on Disarmament on 12 February this year. Once again, I would point out that for the time being we are unable to begin this important activity in an official format.

Madam President, we are interested in seeing your consultations with States members of the Conference on Disarmament and regional groups, which you intend to continue, be constructive and fruitful. We also are convinced that the search for consensus on the Conference's programme of work would be furthered by the continuation of the in-depth thematic discussions on all agenda items that we began in the winter session. In this connection, we consider the Presidents' proposal for the organization of the concluding stage of the work of this year's session entirely correct.

The issue of prevention of an arms race in outer space is a main priority for the Russian Federation and its delegation to the Conference on Disarmament. The thematic discussions on this issue which were conducted on 7 and 21 February by the coordinator, the Permanent Representative of Canada, Mr. Grinius, were useful. They clearly demonstrated delegations' interest in the continuation of work in the area of the prevention of the arms race in outer space in two ways. First, the holding of substantive discussions and an exchange of views on specific articles of the Russian-Chinese draft treaty, and second, the discussion of concrete proposals in the area of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. Our delegation fully agrees that there is a need to step up the work of the Conference in these two areas, and we suppose that within the framework of the thematic debates on PAROS scheduled for 5 August the coordinator will plan for the further development of discussions on the draft treaty for the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space and on specific steps related to confidence-building measures in outer space. The Russian and Chinese delegations intend to hold on 6 August a special open-ended meeting on the issue of ensuring security in outer space which will be in the format of a side event. We have circulated an official invitation to all

(Mr. Vasiliev, Russian Federation)

delegations to participate in this event, as well as a provisional agenda. We hope for the professional input of experts and capitals. We would like to make the meeting as business-like as possible. We will try to put the main emphasis on inter-active discussions. We expect that concrete questions will be put to the authors of the draft treaty and that comments will be made. Our experts, including representatives of the Russian Ministry of Defence and the Russian Space Agency as well as legal experts from the Foreign Ministry, will be prepared to respond to them. The result of this meeting will be a document summarizing its outcomes that the Russian and Chinese delegations will propose be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament. We invite everyone to participate in the open-ended meeting on space security, which will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on 6 August in Room XII of the Palais des Nations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair and for the support for the P-6 proposals for moving forward for the rest of the session.

I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. RAO (India): Madame President, since this is the first time that we have requested the floor under your presidency, allow me to convey to you our warm congratulations and say how pleased we are with the most efficient manner in which you have been discharging your important responsibilities. We would like to assure you of the full cooperation and support of our delegation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to colleagues who have joined us recently in the Conference on Disarmament: Ambassador Strohal of Austria, Ambassador Hernández of Venezuela and Ambassador Soares of Brazil.

We also look forward to participating actively in the informal discussions on all agenda items that are planned for the third part of the session.

As we begin the third part of this session of the CD, we would like to recall and appreciate the efforts that have been undertaken by you and your predecessors with the aim of finding common ground to enable the CD to commence substantive work. We would also like to recall our statement of 28 February this year detailing our overall approach on this subject. In this context, we appreciate the efforts that seek to build on the commendable efforts and the momentum that was generated last year to move the CD out of its long-standing stalemate. India will work with other delegations to make progress towards our common goal, which is reaching consensus on a programme of work to enable the CD to move forward. We are confident that under your presidency, no efforts will be spared to find solutions taking into account the interests of all stakeholders.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

Are there any more speakers wishing to take the floor? The representative of China.

Mr. WANG Qun (China) (spoke in Chinese): Thank you, Madam President. I should like to welcome you as you assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I should also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the efforts that you and the other Presidents have made during the intersessional period. China will, as always, support the work of the President, and we believe that under your outstanding leadership the Conference will maintain its momentum and retain its atmosphere of constructive cooperation. We note that all parties to the Conference have engaged in extensive and in-depth discussions on the programme of work. We hope that the parties concerned will continue to work together, holding further equal and constructive consultations and addressing the concerns of all parties appropriately in order to bridge differences and reach agreement on a programme of work that is acceptable to all. China is ready to continue its concerted cooperation with all parties with a view to reaching agreement on the programme of work as soon as possible and getting started on the substantive work of the Conference. At the same time, China will actively participate in the informal consultations on the various agenda items in a constructive manner, especially the seminar on outer space to be held on 5 and 6 August, which was just mentioned by the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation. China will actively participate in this seminar and work with all parties concerned to actively explore issues in this area.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

Are there no more speakers on the list? Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this time? That does not seem to be the case.

I would now like to invite the Conference to consider an additional request received from a State not a member of the Conference to participate in our work as an observer during the session. The request is contained in CD/WP.547/Add.5 and was received from Uruguay.

May I take it that the Conference decides to invite Uruguay to participate in the work of the Conference according to its rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 5 August, at 10 a.m. in this chamber.

I would also like to remind you that, in accordance with the schedule contained in CD/WP.549/Add.2, the Conference will convene this week for informal debates on agenda items 1 and 2 on Thursday, 31 July.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.