
Conference on Disarmament

26 May 2009

English

Final record of the one thousand one hundred and thirty-seventh plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 26 May 2009, 10.10 a.m.

President: Mr. Idriss Jazaïry (Algeria)

The President: We have a full house and a full programme today, so I suggest we start our business now and declare open the 1137th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

(spoke in French)

Before giving the floor to the speakers on my list for today, I should like on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf to take this opportunity to bid farewell to two of our distinguished colleagues, Ambassador Samui Tarui and Ambassador Johannes Landman. During their time in Geneva, these two eminent Permanent Representatives have represented their countries with distinction and displayed exemplary professionalism. I should like to thank Ambassadors Tarui and Landman warmly for their many contributions to our work and our discussions during their terms of service in Geneva. On behalf of the Conference on Disarmament and on behalf of the members of the team of six Presidents (P-6), I should like to wish our colleagues and their families every success in the future. We have a long list of speakers today, some 15 so far.

(spoke in Arabic)

I give the floor to the Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Hamoui (Syrian Arab Republic) *(spoke in Arabic)*: Thank you, Mr. President. Allow me at the outset to join you in expressing my most sincere wishes to our friends Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman. I should like to tell them that we will greatly miss their courage and audacity and the constructive role that they have always played in the Conference on Disarmament. I wish them and their families every success and happiness.

I should also like at the outset to offer you and the members of your Mission in Geneva my sincere congratulations and gratitude for your commendable efforts and the broad consultations that have led to the drafting of document CD/1863, with the support and cooperation of the other five Presidents, who also deserve gratitude and congratulations.

I should also like to pay a tribute to the important statements made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Mourad Medelci, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which have given strong encouragement and support to our Conference.

The world today is going through a significant transition. There is an increased desire for dialogue, interaction and negotiation to eliminate the threat that the possession of nuclear arsenals by some States poses. This offers a promising glimmer of hope. A certain degree of détente is becoming apparent in the international climate, and constructive dialogue is beginning.

My country, like all countries in the Group of 21, of which it is a member and which it strongly supports, wishes to make tangible progress towards eliminating nuclear weapons, in particular those in the arsenals of States in volatile regions such as the Middle East. It is convinced that if they remain, such lethal weapons will compound the risk that conflicts and wars may break out and exacerbate the existing tension in the region.

Your document is the result of many dedicated and constructive efforts made over a period of years with a view to achieving tangible progress towards implementing the four pillars of the Conference. Perhaps one of the foremost positive aspects of document CD/1863 is its focus on the following important points:

1. Negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty are to be a disarmament measure and not only a non-proliferation measure;

2. The creation of working groups as a new mechanism for the launching of negotiations and discussions is a good idea and in keeping with the rules of procedure of the Conference;

3. Future negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty will focus on the Shannon initiative and the five Ambassadors' initiative, both of which are based on the principle of verifying and eliminating stockpiles;

4. The fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations do not exclude the principle of eliminating stockpiles and contemplate the drafting of a legally-binding international instrument.

We were hoping, as were a number of other Member States, that the document would place greater emphasis on the issue of negative security assurances and the Paris Convention, but we all realize that it is impossible to arrive at an integrated document that satisfies the priorities and aspirations of 192 States. Accordingly, Mr. President, my delegation supports CD/1863 and will work with you and the other five Presidents to achieve substantive progress that will satisfy everyone and end the stalemate that the Conference has long endured.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Thank you very much. I give the floor to the Ambassador of the Republic Korea.

Mr. IM Han-taek (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to you and the other P-6 members for your dedicated efforts to get the Conference on Disarmament back to substantive work by producing a consensus on the programme of work. I also convey my sincere gratitude to Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman for the excellence and the wisdom they have both demonstrated in their work in the Conference. It is particularly regrettable for me to see these two seasoned diplomats, whom I hold in respect, leave at this critical phase in the Conference's work.

Today I would like to make two points: first, on the nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and then on the draft programme of work tabled by the P-6.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, following a long-range rocket launch on 5 April in contravention of United Nations Security Council resolution 1718 (2006), announced that it had conducted a second nuclear test on 25 May, disregarding the repeated warnings from my Government and the international community. This nuclear test not only poses a serious threat to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and in North-East Asia and beyond, but also represents a grave challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. In addition, the test is an unacceptable act of provocation, which denies the obligations stipulated in the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and Six-Party Talks agreements and clearly violates Security Council resolution 1718 (2006), which demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not conduct any further nuclear tests.

The Republic of Korea believes that the international community should send a clear and strong message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for its blatant violation of the Security Council resolution. To this end, the Republic of Korea will maintain close cooperation with the other participants in the Six-Party Talks — namely, the United States of America, Japan, China and the Russian Federation — and the international community to ensure that appropriate measures are taken by the Security Council.

The Government of the Republic of Korea further urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and all nuclear programmes, immediately return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

regime, and faithfully comply with international norms as a responsible member of the international community.

The nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reminds us once again of the serious challenge that nuclear proliferation poses to the peace and security of the international community and also of the responsibility that this Conference bears for coping with that challenge.

Now, I would like to state my delegation's views on the current state of play in the Conference. First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you and the other P-6 members for your collective efforts to present CD/1863, containing a draft decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session, as an official document of the Conference.

All the recent developments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, including the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference in New York, point to the urgency and importance of reviving "a new multilateralism", as rightly emphasized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon. Particularly encouraging to the Conference on Disarmament is the overwhelming sense in disarmament circles that the Conference should be galvanized into life, ending more than 10 years of stalemate. My delegation believes that the member States of the Conference should respond to these paramount calls by taking appropriate action in a collective, responsible and timely manner.

My delegation is pleased to express its support for CD/1863. We believe this draft decision embodies a balanced and realistic approach to the seven agenda items of the Conference, in particular the four core issues, for which my delegation has been among the strongest advocates. We hope the Conference will reach a consensus on CD/1863 and get back to substantive work as soon as practicable, based on genuine political will and mutual trust among member States.

In concluding, Mr. President, I assure you of my delegation's full support for the P-6 efforts to implement CD/1863.

The President: I thank you for that statement, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Japan.

Mr. Tarui (Japan): Mr. President, first of all, thank you for your kind words addressed to me, and since this is the first time — and regrettably the last time — that I will be taking the floor under your presidency, allow me to begin by offering my warmest congratulations to you, Ambassador Jazaïry, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you that my country will support your efforts to the fullest extent at this crucial time.

Before making a short farewell speech, allow me to deliver a statement on the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and a statement on Japan's position on document CD/1863.

Yesterday, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that it had succeeded in conducting an underground nuclear test. A nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, combined with its build-up of ballistic missiles that could serve as the means to deliver weapons of mass destruction, constitutes a grave threat to the security of Japan, seriously undermines the peace and security of North-East Asia and the world, and is totally unacceptable. Japan strongly protests and resolutely condemns this nuclear test. Such behaviour is a clear violation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1718 of 14 October 2006 and is a grave challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The members of the Security Council have decided to start working immediately on a Security Council resolution concerning this matter. Japan will contribute proactively to the discussions in the Security Council as well as other forums together with the international community, in particular the members of the Six-Party Talks. Furthermore, Japan demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fully comply with its obligations under United Nations Security Council resolution 1718 (2006) and other relevant resolutions and statements.

In line with the purpose of today's plenary, I will now detail Japan's views on document CD/1863. The key difference in our opinion between document CD/1840 and CD/1863 is that under the former, negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) are to be conducted without any conditions, while the latter aims to negotiate a verifiable FMCT. Effective verification may indeed present difficult technical issues. Nevertheless, Japan's position has been consistent on this issue and we have submitted a working paper suggesting possible ways for verification in an FMCT (CD/1774). Hence, we welcome negotiations that seek a verifiable treaty.

In promoting disarmament, it is a logical necessity that discussions on each issue of the Conference's agenda should advance independently, and it is inappropriate to impede areas that have potential for progress just because one specific area of issues is advancing at a slower pace. Having said this, however, document CD/1863 is comprehensive and balanced in our view, since it allows for the substantive discussion of the other three core issues in subsidiary bodies, with a focus on the possibility of their future negotiation. Therefore, my delegation would like to express its acceptance of the current proposal and to strongly call upon all other delegations to join the consensus.

On the other hand, even if we commence negotiations on an FMCT this year, their conclusion within the 2009 session cannot be considered realistic. Even though Japan is ready to start negotiations at any time, it may be an idea to agree this year to a negotiating mandate and a work schedule for the sessions from next year and beyond.

What is important for strengthening international nuclear disarmament is to produce and bring into force an FMCT as quickly as possible. As such, we should find some way to maintain negotiations until their conclusion. Although rule 28 of the rules of procedure stipulates that "the Conference at the beginning of its annual session shall establish its programme of work", we believe this does not necessarily exclude the possibility of the Conference making a consensus decision to carry over this year's agreement on a programme of work into the next, until negotiations are concluded. In this way we can continue the negotiations under the same mandate up to their finalization. Alternatively, as a more practical solution, we could include in the annual report the Conference's intention or strong expectation to carry over this year's programme of work to next year.

Please allow me now to deliver my farewell speech. Today is my last plenary meeting, and I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to make a number of personal remarks, as a way of bidding farewell to all of you.

Looking back at my two and a half years as my country's representative on disarmament, I leave Geneva with a small degree of regret. It has been an exciting period here in the Conference, with great changes happening around the world that have enlivened our work. Also, we have been able to observe a momentum of movement within the Conference towards a return to the core business of negotiating disarmament treaties. It is my wish that these positive movements translate into more constructive results at the Conference.

In this connection, I would like to pay tribute to the past and present P-6 for their contribution to this progress, through their sustained and coordinated efforts over the past few years. A far more productive atmosphere has been developed. I would also like to

commend the coordinators of the various issues for their tireless efforts to guide the discussion on our agenda.

One of the main pleasures that I have had during my time in Geneva has been to host each year the Nagasaki High School Peace Messengers. Their youthful exuberance has left me with a strong sense of the responsibility that we bear at the Conference on Disarmament. This programme is just an example of efforts outside this body that reveal an intense interest in disarmament, which we have seen growing stronger in recent years. Now is the moment that the Conference must make progress, no matter how small. Besides, we diplomats are considered experts at seeking ways forward, and it is incumbent upon us to do so. Like all matters though, time is an issue, and we must act with a sense of urgency before events pass us by.

As I wrap up this statement, I would like to conclude by saying thank you to all my dear colleagues in this chamber for their good humour, advice and cooperation. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, the recently retired Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Tim Caughley, the secretariat staff, the interpreters who have the incredible task of breaking down the language barrier, and all the civil society representatives in the gallery who remind us that the outside world is watching and waiting. In this context, I welcome the convening of the informal session this Thursday, devoted to gaining input from civil society on the Conference.

Without going any farther, I wish you all the best, and I sincerely look forward to seeing you again.

The President: A special thanks to you, Ambassador Tarui, for your statement, which is your valedictory speech in this chamber. The distinguished representative of Canada has the floor.

Mr. Grinius (Canada): Mr. President, as this is the first time that I have taken the floor under your presidency, I would like to congratulate you for the distinguished way that you are working as President. Let me also take this opportunity to thank you and the other members of the P-6 for preparing the draft decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session, as contained in CD/1863.

Developments in recent months have provided a new momentum and positive environment for the renewal of multilateral approaches to disarmament and non-proliferation. The Conference on Disarmament needs to seize this opportunity, and there is no better time than now.

We have carefully considered the newly tabled draft decision, CD/1863, and feel that this is a balanced compromise. I should emphasize that it is a compromise. Canada can certainly support the draft decision as the basis for work in the Conference on Disarmament. We hope that other delegations will approach this document with the same constructive spirit of compromise in order for the Conference on Disarmament to reach a consensus and resume its substantive negotiating work.

Separately, I would like to say that we have noted the positive international climate with respect to both disarmament and non-proliferation that is necessary to get to a world free of nuclear weapons. In this context, however, we take note with considerable concern of the latest nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which represents a threat to international security and is specifically troubling for stability in North-East Asia.

Finally, and on a personal note, I just wanted to thank both Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman for not only their magnificent work in the Conference on Disarmament, but also their tolerance and patience in educating me in the ways of this august body.

The President: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Canada and now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Turkey.

Mr. Üzümcü (Turkey): Mr. President, since this is the first time that I have taken the floor, allow me to warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and express my appreciation for your able leadership.

I would like to commend you for presenting last Tuesday the draft decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session, as contained in document CD/1864. We appreciate your tireless efforts in this context, as well as those of your P-6 colleagues. This collective work once again demonstrates the virtue of the P-6 platform in this context.

My delegation views document CD/1863 as the culmination of the combined efforts of all Conference members, which have gained momentum in recent years, to overcome the 12-year deadlock. Turkey had the opportunity to contribute to these efforts by presenting document CD/1840 on behalf of the P-6 last year. Indeed, the process that we have been engaged in includes the A5 proposal and documents CD/2007/L.1, CD/1840 and now CD/1863. Now, this process ought to accelerate.

I would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to envisage that any compromise would fully satisfy the expectations of all. Yet I believe that we should now strive to focus on the common denominators that would help us to achieve a breakthrough. We should aim at bridging our remaining differences. Flexibility on the part of all delegations is required not only for reaching consensus on CD/1863, but for the course of action that we should follow eventually. This would mean bringing the Conference back to its fundamental role in promoting global peace and security, as an arms control and disarmament negotiating forum. Such is the wish of many, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations. You can count on Turkey's support to carry this process forward.

As the views of my delegation on the seven agenda items are well known to this body, I see no reason to repeat them today. Nevertheless, allow me to refer to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which finished its work in New York two weeks ago. The constructive atmosphere in the Preparatory Committee was promising. The current international environment is more favourable than ever for the advancement of multilateral arms control and disarmament. As such, I think it is now high time to avail ourselves of these opportunities.

I believe that commencement of negotiations on FMCT, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and, hopefully, a follow-up to the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START I), all of which were among the 13 practical steps of 2000, could play a catalytic role for a successful outcome in 2010. Recent events have reaffirmed the significance of the CTBT. On this occasion, I should like to reiterate the importance that my country attaches to this key treaty, which was successfully negotiated here in this body.

The Conference on Disarmament is able to play a historic role at this juncture, provided that a spirit of flexibility and compromise is there. Progress in our work here will not only provide the much needed impetus to the NPT regime, but will also have wider implications for other multilateral disarmament activities within the United Nations or elsewhere. In this context, I welcome your statement last Friday that the P-6 were envisaging holding meetings with the regional groups with a view to further seeking their responses to the proposal. It is my delegation's sincere wish that the Conference move forward, and we shall spare no effort to that end.

Before I conclude, I wish to express my regret at seeing two eminent colleagues and friends leave Geneva. Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman have made very

valuable contributions to our work in the Conference. I wish them all the best in their future lives.

The President: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Turkey, and I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to Ambassador Landman of the Netherlands.

Mr. Landman (Netherlands): Mr. President, may I beg your indulgence. My wife asked to be present on this occasion, and since she is the most important person in my life she was held up because the movers arrived too late today, so she had to wait for them — I would greatly appreciate it if you could give precedence to any other speakers who would like to take the floor this morning.

The President: There is a French proverb that says, “*Ce que femme veut, Dieu veut.*” So, I have to comply with your request, and will put you at number 17 on the list. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Mundaraín (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you Mr. President. Let me begin by endorsing all the words of acknowledgement addressed to the distinguished Ambassadors Tarui and Landman. Let me also take this opportunity to express our concern at the events in the Korean Peninsula; we expect that efforts to guarantee peace and security will be made.

Mr. President, my Government is particularly pleased to see you, Ambassador Jazaïry, Permanent Representative of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, performing this important role. Let me assure you that you will have my delegation’s full support.

During your presidency we have seen a new momentum in the Conference on Disarmament. This optimistic atmosphere has been confirmed by the presence last week of eminent persons in this very room: Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Mourad Medelci, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, and Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. For us, the participation of these important guests is yet another example of the positive atmosphere prevailing in the sphere of disarmament.

Mr. President, my Government would like to see the prompt adoption of a programme of work so that we can overcome the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament and resume substantive work, and so that the Conference can resume its role as the international community’s sole negotiating body on disarmament. Ever since this impasse arose we have been constructive and flexible, supporting all official and unofficial efforts designed to promote agreement on the necessary programme of work. Last year my delegation, as one of the six Presidents for 2008, supported the submission of document CD/1840 in a further attempt to move the Conference forward.

In the same spirit, we have received document CD/1863, which identifies important elements that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has supported in the area of disarmament and arms control. Mr. President, we welcome the way in which you have encouraged these procedural efforts, ongoing dialogue and the broad consultation process that has made it possible to harmonize positions. This has led to the agreed wording that can be seen in the different mandates that have been proposed, based on the work of the agenda item coordinators. We are very grateful to the coordinators for their efforts in the informal meetings they held and for their reports.

After having carefully reviewed this text, my Government gives it its support in yet another demonstration of the spirit of consensus. We believe that document CD/1863 contains the elements necessary for an agreement among all members of the Conference on Disarmament to adopt a programme of work, something that has evaded us for a long time.

Just as the Venezuelan Government has repeatedly demonstrated flexibility, my delegation would urge other delegations to do likewise and to adopt conciliatory positions. Working Groups could then be set up to begin work, as you have described, on:

- Exchanges of views and information on “practical steps for progressive and systematic efforts to reduce nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal of their elimination”
- Negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299
- Substantive discussions, without limitation, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space
- Substantive discussions, without limitation, on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

Furthermore, the Conference can appoint special coordinators for such topics as “New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons”, “Comprehensive programme of disarmament” and “Transparency in armaments”.

Acknowledging the atmosphere of understanding that now prevails in the Conference, we invite everyone to overcome this lethargy. It is time to get back to substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament.

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Larson (United States of America): Mr. President, as this is the first time I have formally taken the floor under your leadership, let me congratulate you on assuming the role of President of the Conference. I also wish to commend the service of Ambassador Le Hoai Trung of Viet Nam and Ambassador Chipaziwa of Zimbabwe for their service as President of the Conference earlier this year. The collaborative efforts of the entire P-6 team have led us to a point that is a Conference first for many in this room and one at which we join others in urging the final collective efforts to achieve agreement.

I would also like to join those who have acknowledged and expressed thanks for the dedicated participation of Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman. Their energy, commitment, counsel and experience will be missed, and we wish them well in their onward endeavours.

My delegation and Government have been quiet — but not inactive — during the first part of the Conference’s deliberations this year. We have listened attentively to the statements in this chamber, engaged in dialogue with the Conference’s members and, most importantly, begun a careful and thoughtful review of how to advance international security and the national security of the United States. Between our sessions here, President Obama and other senior members of his Administration began to set out how disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, will play an important role in our national policy and in our international relationships. They have also made clear that they expect that this Conference will resume its important contributions to international disarmament, most immediately through the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

For us, the polestar is President Obama’s speech in Prague on 5 April, when he announced that “the United States will seek a new treaty that verifiably ends the production of fissile materials intended for use in nuclear weapons”. Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller further clarified a month later, at the meeting in New York of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, that “the negotiation of a verifiable FMCT is the top

US priority at the Conference on Disarmament". As members are well aware, this characterization of a *verifiable* FMCT marks a significant gesture on the part of the United States in its determination to move the process forward.

We are under no illusions that negotiation of an FMCT will be quick or easy. It will take the focused effort of all States in the Conference to work through the difficult issues that lie ahead. We now have in front of us, in document CD/1863, a means by which those negotiations can begin, as well as serious discussions on the range of other disarmament matters that reflect the ongoing concerns of Conference members. From our point of view, while we supported the approach outlined in CD/1840 — and, if pressed, would prefer the clarity of its wording — I recognize that this current text reflects the considerable effort exerted by the P-6 to produce an evolved and finely balanced document which now has a solid prospect of achieving full consensus. It appears, however, that we are not quite there yet, as under the fundamental guarantee that protects the security interests of every member in this chamber, full and complete consensus is required. But we are close, and I am gratified to state that the United States is prepared to join that consensus as soon as it is reached under the existing text.

My delegation looks forward to the early adoption of a serious and focused programme of work, leading to the resumption of fulfilling the Conference's mandate as a negotiating body, and once again, Mr. President, allow me to express to you and the entire P-6 our gratitude and admiration for your tireless efforts in bringing us to this point.

The President: I thank the distinguished representative of the United States for his contribution, and I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to my distinguished colleague, and member of the P-6, Ambassador Millar of Australia.

Ms. Millar (Australia): Mr. President, speaking in my national capacity, I would like to thank you for your efforts in guiding our work during your presidency, and in both my national capacity and as a fellow P-6 member, I would like to thank you for developing, in consultation with member States of the Conference the draft decision on a programme of work, as contained in CD/1863. We fully support this proposal, of course, and look forward to its early adoption. It seems to us, as the previous speaker has just noted, that consensus is indeed very close.

Like other delegations, we welcome the improved international atmosphere on non-proliferation and disarmament more broadly, as demonstrated, for example, in recent statements by Presidents Obama and Medvedev, and at the recent session of the Preparatory Committee. That is why it is particularly disappointing and deeply troubling that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted a nuclear test on 25 May. The Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Rudd, and the Australian Foreign Minister, Mr. Smith, have condemned this test unequivocally. The test is in flagrant breach of United Nations Security Council resolution 1718 (2006). We welcome the Security Council's swift response.

Finally, I should just like to take this opportunity to join others in thanking Ambassador Tarui of Japan and Ambassador Landman of the Netherlands for their important contributions to the work of this Conference. We have enjoyed working with them very much, and we wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Liufalani (New Zealand): Mr. President, let me at the outset express my delegation's sincere appreciation to you and other members of the P-6 for your tireless efforts aimed at gaining agreement on a programme of work for the Conference. CD/1863 represents a good basis for the future work of the Conference, and New Zealand is pleased to lend its support to this proposal.

I would also like to take this opportunity to speak briefly on the recent nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. New Zealand strongly condemns the announcement yesterday that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted another nuclear weapons test. I draw members' attention to the statement made by New Zealand foreign minister Murray McCully on this matter yesterday.

This test is a deeply provocative act that risks destabilizing the Korean peninsula and the wider region. It also goes against the positive momentum we have witnessed on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in recent months.

As a long-standing support of the Six-Party Talks process, New Zealand urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately re-engage in this dialogue to resolve issues on the Korean peninsula.

New Zealand has registered its disappointment in the past for the actions taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to develop its nuclear programme, including through support for measures adopted by the United Nations Security Council in response to those actions.

New Zealand will now join the international community in considering what measures should be taken in response to the latest announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Let me also take this opportunity to express the fond farewell of the New Zealand delegation to Ambassador Tarui and to Ambassador Landman. We have enjoyed a close working relationship with you both, and we wish you all the very best for your future endeavours.

The President: Thank you very much.

(spoke in Arabic)

The Ambassador of Egypt has requested the floor.

Mr. Badr (Egypt): Mr. President, I would like to express my delegation's great appreciation for your efforts during your tenure as President of the Conference. Such efforts have borne fruit in document CD/1863 that we have before us today, which is a clear reflection of the momentum generated in international disarmament affairs in light of recent political developments. Egypt views this document as one that has captured many of the positive elements contained in document CD/1693 of 2003 — which Egypt supported — and that also successfully manages to avoid some of the stumbling blocks found in CD/1840 of last year — which Egypt did not oppose — which made reaching consensus on the document not possible.

It is important to note that Egypt, like the majority of member States, attaches special priority to achieving general and complete nuclear disarmament and to the realization of this common objective: the provision of legally-binding security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Those are objectives which Egypt will continue to actively pursue and which hold a particular significance for our region, the Middle East, where the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone remains an urgent priority.

Egypt welcomes the visit of the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the opening plenary of the second part of the 2009 session of the Conference, and recognizes this to be in recognition of the commendable efforts of the P-6 and, in particular, the current President in working to revitalize the work of the Conference. In that regard, we also welcome the visit of the foreign minister of Algeria and the foreign minister of Switzerland and the valuable contributions they have made in pushing our agenda forward.

We reiterate the call contained in paragraph 113 of the final document of the 2009 Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement Coordination Bureau held in Havana, which “encouraged the member States of the Conference on Disarmament to consider positively the proposal made by Algeria on 26 March 2009, in its capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, within the efforts to agree on a balanced and comprehensive program of work”. Egypt will spare no efforts to achieve this common goal.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our sincere appreciation for your tireless efforts in this regard and those of your fellow Conference presidents. I would also like to seize this opportunity to join in expressing our appreciation for the cooperative role of both Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman, who will be leaving us shortly. I wish them all success and prosperity.

The President: Thank you very much. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of France.

Mr. Danon (*spoke in French*): First of all, like other speakers, I should like to say that we are going to miss our colleagues Sumio Tarui and Johannes Landman very much. I commend them for their work, it has been an honour for me to count them as my friends, and I am very sorry to see them go. I should next like to say, Mr. President, how much I admire the work you have done. In order for the Conference on Disarmament to get moving again we needed a confluence of historic circumstances and a personality like yours, one that is capable of benefiting from those circumstances. This is what is finally happening today, then, and since you are fond of French quotations, Mr. President, I shall without much ado cite this one, which will doubtless make you blush: “a destiny is nothing more than an exceptional encounter between history and an important figure”. Thanks to your efforts and those of the P-6, the machinery has every hope of starting up again on the basis of the draft decision setting out the proposed programme of work in document CD/1863, which you submitted to the Conference. My delegation took careful note of the various statements made in support of that proposal. We welcome in particular the change in position of certain delegations that had heretofore been unable to join in the consensus on the earlier proposal for a programme of work. Their support represents significant progress towards a consensus on the programme of work for the Conference and thus towards the launching of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. This prospect holds out great hope for the international community, and we welcome it. As you know, France would like negotiations on such a treaty to begin immediately and without preconditions. In a statement delivered in Cherbourg on 21 March 2008, the President of the French Republic drew attention to this priority once again. We would urge all delegations that have not yet taken a position on your proposal to do so. You may rely on my country’s support for your efforts to achieve consensus and make it possible for us, after 13 years of stalemate in this forum, to begin negotiations on the treaty at long last.

The President: Thank you very much. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Loshchinin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Thank you, Mr. President. First, I should like to express sincere gratitude to the Ambassador of Japan, Sumio Tarui, for the excellent contribution he has made to the work of the Conference and to our joint efforts. We would like to wish him every success in his future work.

I should also like to extend warm and heartfelt greetings to my good old friend, Johannes Landman. Old, because we have known each other for many years – we worked together in Vienna and in recent years here in Geneva; this is why he is for me an old friend. Although in person this man is full of optimism, knows how to create a good atmosphere and is extremely nice, Johannes is an excellent diplomat with vast experience and deep knowledge. What is especially important is that he knows how to share his

experience and his knowledge in a positive way, something that not everyone can do. And he does all this with his own characteristic and keenly developed sense of humour. I value his professionalism and impeccable competence highly, and it is a great pity that we are parting. We shall miss you greatly, but we look forward to meeting again in the future.

Coming back to the work of the Conference, we should like to stress that we greatly appreciate your own efforts and the efforts of the Algerian delegation to lead our forum, and we are grateful to all six Presidents for the draft programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament for 2009.

Our delegation has carefully studied document CD/1863. We cannot say that it is entirely consistent with our approach. In particular Russia's priority in the Conference is, as you know, agenda item 3: "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". We are convinced that the crux of a settlement of this large and extremely important problem lies in the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space. In this connection, our delegation would like to see a draft programme of work that more clearly sets out the negotiating processes for the preparation of that treaty, the draft of which was submitted in 2008 by the delegations of Russia and China. Nevertheless, in the interests of compromise we would not object to a possible consensus decision by the Conference to adopt and approve the programme of work contained in the aforementioned document. To this end, we are prepared to continue in-depth substantive discussions to consider the draft programme of work, and we are grateful to those delegations who have expressed their support for moving in that direction.

On 25 May, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia issued a special statement concerning the nuclear test carried out in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The statement notes, in particular that such actions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot be considered other than as a violation of Security Council resolution 1718 (2006) which, inter alia, demands Pyongyang not carry out any nuclear tests. We would recall that this resolution was adopted under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which means that compliance with it is compulsory for all States Members of the Organization. The carrying out of nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a serious blow to international efforts to strengthen the NPT and undermines the CTBT, the international standard for the prohibition of such tests. The latest steps by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea may well lead to an escalation of tension in North-East Asia and undermines stability and security in the region. Noting the legitimate concerns of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we do not see any real alternative for ensuring its security than the political-diplomatic route, through the relevant regional institutions with the involvement of all the parties concerned.

As we know, the Security Council adopted a consensus resolution condemning the nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We call upon our partners in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take a responsible approach grounded in the interests of supporting stability in the region and the sustainability of the NPT regime, and respect for and compliance with the decisions of Security Council resolutions. We continue to believe that the nuclear problem in the Korean Peninsula can be solved only within the framework of the six-party negotiation process.

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador Loshchinin, for your contribution. I now give the floor to Ambassador Akóts of Hungary, to whom I would like to renew our good wishes of welcome.

Ms. Akóts (Hungary): Mr. President, since it is the first time that my delegation has taken the floor under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the post of President of the Conference on Disarmament.

As a new ambassador to the Conference, I would like to thank you for your welcome address to me. I would like to assure you and the other P-6 members of my delegation's full support in your efforts to guide the work of the Conference with a view to adopting a programme of work based on document CD/1863, entitled "Draft Decision for the establishment of a Programme of Work for the 2009 session".

Let me underline that my delegation fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union last week. Still, I am obliged to express our deep concern at the recent nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We hope that all members of the Conference will join the emerging consensus, and that we will be able to get the Conference back to work again.

The President: Thank you very much. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Colombia.

Mr. Camacho (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Mr. President. As this is the first time that my delegation has spoken under your presidency, we would like to congratulate you on the work you have done and remind you of Colombia's support.

May I also, on behalf of my delegation, acknowledge and express our appreciation for the work that you and your team together with the other Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament for 2009 have done to formally submit a draft decision, CD/1863 of 19 May, to this important forum for the consideration of all its members. We also believe that the past Presidents also deserve our recognition: their hard work lay the foundations for reaching the point at which we find ourselves today.

Colombia supports this proposed programme of work and, while it does not fully cover everything we would like in the items, the proposal in its current form is a balanced one that can equally satisfy or dissatisfy everyone, which we think is the key to any consensus. We have to realize that this proposal absolutely must be supported so that the stagnation that has paralysed this forum for the last 12 years can be brought to an end.

Colombia has been flexible and open on numerous occasions, and has played a constructive role, as we did in the case of the five Ambassadors' proposals and as we have demonstrated over the past three years with our support for every proposed programme of work put forward, always bearing in mind the urgent need for this forum to take on the role for which it was established: the negotiation of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties or agreements. This year, we have told you and the other Conference Presidents for 2009 that Colombia supports your programme of work. The presence here of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria last week reminded us of the excellent opportunity we have to achieve consensus with this proposed programme of work.

We cannot disappoint them or our foreign ministers and national authorities who are calling the Conference to begin its work immediately. Colombia hopes that we may soon be able to take our seats in this forum to begin a discussion or exchange of views on the organizational arrangements that will be required after we adopt a programme of work.

Lastly, the delegation of Colombia would like to express its appreciation for the constant constructive and positive participation of Ambassador Landman of the Netherlands and Ambassador Tarui of Japan in this forum; we would particularly like to pay a tribute to Ambassador Tarui and his delegation for their constant involvement in and assistance with issues of disarmament and other subjects of great importance to Colombia, such as small arms and light weapons. The talents, knowledge and wisdom of both Ambassadors have been greatly appreciated, and we wish them and their families all the best in their future endeavours.

The President: I thank the distinguished representative of Colombia for his contribution and for his flexibility, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of the Netherlands.

Mr. Landman (Netherlands): Mr. President, first of all I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for the kind words addressed to me and my departing colleague.

The Netherlands has shown a keen interest in security matters ever since our neutrality was violated and we regained our freedom after the Second World War. Together, with the promotion of European integration, security became one of the two central pillars of our foreign policy. The Netherlands Constitution is unique in the sense that it proclaims the pursuit and promotion of the international rule of law as a fundamental obligation of our nation. Reinforcing the rule of law and strengthening international security and stability have been for decades the bedrock of the Dutch approach to the outside world. The Netherlands, in fact, was one of the first countries to be invited to become a member of the Conference on Disarmament, or the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament as it was then called. As early as 1969, the Government of the Netherlands appointed Ambassador Eschauzier as its first permanent representative to this body. And ever since the early 1990s, we have maintained an independent mission at the Conference.

However, on 23 March, I was informed that the Netherlands Government wished to save taxpayers' money for better purposes and had chosen this particular juncture in time to decide on the abolition of the Netherlands mission to the Conference, to reduce its staff by half and to integrate the remainder into the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva.

Under the prevailing mood of optimism that arms control, at last, is back centre stage on the world agenda, this can be seen as an act of audacious foresight – as if to say that, anyhow, nothing will come out of it, and surely not in the Conference on Disarmament.

Another reason might be that my performance in these four years has been evaluated and led to the conclusion that it was substandard, or, anyway, without much relevance to the Dutch national interest.

Whatever, the fact is that even now the Conference on Disarmament, after all the change we have witnessed at the global level and after all the efforts you personally, Ambassador, have put into this, building on the collective efforts of your predecessors – after all that, the Conference appears to this very day to continue to ponder instead of to decide.

However, personally speaking, I think there is reason to be optimistic now, although it would not be the first time that success eluded us at the very moment everybody thought we had it in our grasp. We are clearly on the brink of the breakthrough we need: “The fierce urgency of now”, to speak like the Financial Times. The events of yesterday underline that point even more. Indeed, we need it now, if we really want to be able to start these negotiations and have these substantive discussions in the foreseeable future. We all — let's face it and be honest about it — we all, and even more so our capitals, will need time to get our act together. We have lost the habit, we have lost the manpower and we have lost the expertise to tackle the issues at hand efficiently and conclusively. In retrospect, this interval of over 12 years has been far too long a period indeed.

Thus, even if we take the required decision, as we must and are expected to do in the forthcoming days, we have still a long path of preparation ahead of us before we will be really operational and ready. We have to work out in more detail the rules to follow in

implementing, in good faith, our programme of work, choose our chairpersons, decide on the duration of their mandate, etc.

All this and more is required as a preliminary step to allow us to really start next January or so. But nothing of the sort will happen if we do not give a clear signal NOW of our common determination to that effect by taking a decision on the draft proposal you have submitted to us on behalf of the P-6.

Having come so far, it is only fair to look back a moment at where we came from. When I arrived in Geneva in September 2005, the Conference was at an utter stalemate. It was not possible to discuss anything other than an FMCT, and that, on a basis which was rejected by most of the member States.

It was thanks to the then incoming Polish Chair, Ambassador Rapacki, and his innovative idea of a common platform of the six presidents of the forthcoming year — what we now call the P-6 — it was thanks to his courage and persistence in tenaciously preparing from as early as September 2005 for 2006, and thanks to his efforts to establish a schedule of debates fixed in advance on ALL the subjects of major concern, not only FMCT, that the Conference was able to gather momentum again. It took another decisive person to take this process further: Ambassador Mtshali of South Africa, with the astute, painstakingly methodical and emphatic way she prepared her presidency one year later, while initially not convinced and even rather sceptical about the new P-6 approach and the advisability of pursuing it. These two ambassadors in particular provided the basis on which you have been able to make this hopefully final jump.

We live in a world of twitter and tweets, of news headlines and instant satisfaction, while arms control and disarmament are of a long-term nature. Moreover, such negotiations are often technical and do not lend themselves to snappy sound bites. Worse, their only chance to succeed is in the quiet of confidentiality. Woodrow Wilson's "open covenants of peace openly arrived at" do not work here. For participating States far too much is at stake: their security, they feel, as sovereign nations, their very existence. What one State party considers legitimate protection of its own security is often seen by another as a potential threat, opined one expert from the foreign ministry in The Hague as far back as 1979, complaining and explaining why disarmament negotiations represent one of the most difficult kinds of international bargaining. Public diplomacy does not work here. It is counterproductive. Too bad for us that we are called on to perform such a great job in such thankless environment!

The purpose of diplomacy is not to outwit the opposing nation, but to engage it in a web of common interests, thereby serving the interests of one's own nation. Diplomacy, as I found in Freeman's *The Diplomat's Dictionary*, diplomacy, like war, is too important a subject to be left to blundering amateurism. It marks the phase of policy prior to war; it makes and breaks military alliances; it ends war. There is much lore, or profound knowledge, to it; it is a subtle calling. Diplomacy is too portentous to be entrusted to the politicians but it is too political to be left to the generals. Those who may be fatally affected by diplomacy's failures have every reason to demand that only its most skilled, professional practitioners represent their interests.

I do not want to end this farewell speech, leave this gilded hall, Jose Maria Sert's temple of peace and harmony, without having mentioned two colleagues, who left last year and whom I particularly appreciated because they possessed exactly the outstanding qualities of consummate diplomats that I have just described. They combined patriotism and a keen notion of the national interest with empathy and understanding of the other's position, as we are all citizens of this one world, the survival of which we collectively have an interest to protect and to defend. I am referring to Ambassador Masood Khan of Pakistan and Ambassador Jingye Cheng of China. I owe them in particular a lot.

I wish to express my thanks also to the Secretary-General of the Conference and personal representative in our midst of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze. I have greatly appreciated his continuous interest in our work and tremendously enjoyed our contacts, his sharp insights and wit and his observations.

My heartfelt thanks also go to the secretariat, which continues to improve, and to the interpreters, who have had to put up with my often unexpected improvisations. And as regards civil society, I think my Japanese colleague really spoke in an elegant and convincing manner. Their importance cannot be overestimated. And finally, I wish to thank my wife, because without her extraordinary support, I would not have been here now and my career would not have evolved in the way it has done.

I belong to the generation that believed in the axiom "Trust but verify". Verification is indeed of irreplaceable importance, but without trust we cannot do anything at all. These days trust and confidence are surging again. It is surely sad to leave at the very moment when things are starting to move again, as I am confident they will. But I shall always remain grateful for the time spent here, for the friendship and goodwill I found from all sides. To paraphrase a great eighteenth-nineteenth century German poet, scientist and explorer, born in the Champagne region in the eastern part of France and, above all, a great European and citizen of the world, who practised the art of outreach between cultures and civilizations long before the word was even invented, Adelbert von Chamisso, alias Adelaide de Chamisso de Boncourt, when he had to leave for good what was dear to him: "You will always live in my heart, although I cannot be there any more ... As for me, I commence anew. I am going, with my music instrument in hand. Travelling and exploring, singing from country to country. Maybe I will meet you on the way again."

The President: Ambassador, I think you can feel how much empathy there was in this chamber for your valedictory statement, and we want to thank you very much for it and for the wonderful mind that your statement has been the expression of. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil, who will be speaking on behalf of both Brazil and Argentina.

Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil): Mr. President, as you said, my statement is made on behalf of Argentina and Brazil.

The Brazilian and Argentine Governments condemn vehemently the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 25 May. The test violates resolution 1718, adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 14 October 2006.

Brazil and Argentina expect the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to rejoin, as soon as possible, and as a non-nuclear-weapon State, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Moreover, the Brazilian and Argentine Governments call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign, at the earliest opportunity, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to comply strictly with the moratorium on nuclear tests. Brazil and Argentina also expect that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will resume, in a constructive spirit, the Six-Party Talks, with a view to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, and appeal to all parties to abstain from acts that may worsen tensions in the regional and global contexts.

This ends the statement on behalf of Brazil and Argentina, and now, if you would allow me to speak in my national capacity, I will briefly address the departure of our colleagues, the ambassadors of Japan and the Netherlands. I could speak about the excellence of their contribution as diplomats to the Conference on Disarmament. Indeed, the success that I hope we reach under your guidance and that of the other five presidents of this year's session will be due also to the work done by the ambassadors of Japan and the Netherlands. But I would also like to mention two values that are both oriental and western.

I learned them from both of our departing colleagues and we became friends. So, Sumiosan, thank you, and Johannes, thank you.

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Awanen (Nigeria): Mr. President, my delegation takes the floor this morning to thank you for your leadership and to congratulate you and your P-6 colleagues on the important proposals in CD/1863. These are carefully crafted proposals, and we commend you for your vision and sense of balance. The Nigerian delegation appreciates the painstaking efforts and wide-ranging consultations that went into the framing of the ideas in document CD/1863, which contains a draft decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the Conference.

It would be hard for my delegation to celebrate document CD/1863 as the “silver bullet” to the many challenging tasks before the Conference. The immediate source of our disappointment is the low priority document CD/1863 attaches to negative security assurances. It goes without saying that, for Nigeria, a negotiating mandate on a legally-binding international treaty on negative security assurances, along with irreversible progress in disarmament, remain core priorities. Nevertheless, Nigeria is happy to support the proposals in document CD/1863 in the hope that it will allow the Conference to move forward in its work.

Mr. President, you may count on Nigeria’s support in the difficult tasks ahead.

The President: Thank you very much. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Slovakia.

Mr. Pinter (Slovakia): Mr. President, allow me to start by echoing your words of farewell to Ambassador Tarui of Japan and Ambassador Landman of the Netherlands. May I express my personal thanks to those two distinguished colleagues and friends for their contributions to the Conference on Disarmament and wish them both much success in their future endeavours.

Since I am taking the floor for the first time during your presidency, let me join all those who have congratulated you on assuming this function. May I also assure you of the continuing support of my delegation at this crucial stage of your endeavours to get the Conference back to negotiations and other forms of substantive work.

My delegation fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union last Friday. However, I consider it important at this juncture also to express our national position on the draft decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session, as contained in document CD/1863.

Our gratitude for submitting this timely document goes to you, as well as to the other members of the P-6. I do not intend to echo many reasons why this document deserves to achieve consensus among members of the Conference, as we have already heard them from a number of speakers. Let me in this respect express the support of Slovakia for its content, both in substantive and procedural terms, and recall the wise words of the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, who in June 2006 told this Conference that “The hour is late, and the choice is clear.”

Let me also add that the stakes are extremely high, not only for the Conference on Disarmament itself but for the whole process of making the world a safer place. Therefore, we hope that all members of the Conference will join the consensus on this very well crafted compromise on where we should go in the period ahead so that we can collectively deliver on what is expected from us.

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Norway.

Ms. Skorpen (Norway): Mr. President, as it is the first time my delegation has taken the floor during your presidency, let me first express our gratitude for your efforts and those of the other P-6 members on the draft decision on a work programme, as contained in CD/1863. We consider this a balanced compromise and urge all to show the necessary flexibility so that finally we may break the deadlock and start substantive work.

The many statements from heads of State and leading international leaders underlining their commitment to rid the world of nuclear weapons have led to a changing atmosphere that we now must capitalize on, also here at the Conference on Disarmament. The changing atmosphere was quite evident at the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference in New York, putting us on a good path for that Review Conference.

In this context, the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in violation of Security Council resolution 1718 (2006), is particularly regrettable. The nuclear test is a serious breach of the norms against nuclear testing in the non-proliferation regime and could contribute to undermining the work for non-proliferation and disarmament and nuclear weapons. We must therefore redouble our efforts to ensure that this does not become the case. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has a particular responsibility in this respect. The nuclear test demonstrates the urgency of achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. It also underlines the importance of commencing negotiations on an FMCT and achieving progress on the other three core issues of the draft programme of work. To let this opportunity slip may well spell the end of the Conference on Disarmament.

Finally, let me also express my delegation's appreciation for the contributions of Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman and wish them all the best for the future. I also have to express a particular thank you for the wonderful and emotional and heartfelt farewell speech we have just heard. We will very much miss that eloquence. Ambassador Landman mentioned such words as "trust", "confidence" and "outreach". They are so important. He talked about what makes a good diplomat. I think they are what make a good diplomat, and that is what both of the outgoing ambassadors have brought to this forum that is so important.

The President: I thank the distinguished representative of Norway and now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of China.

Mr. Wang Qun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Like other colleagues, my delegation would like to express its sincere thanks to distinguished Ambassadors Johannes Landman and Sumio Tarui, who during the past few years have made painstaking efforts to promote progress in the Conference on Disarmament. We shall remember the major contribution they have made.

With regard to the nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on 25 May which clearly set out our position of principle on this matter. Given the nature of the Conference, I shall not repeat what has been said before. It is the hope of my delegation that all the parties concerned will remain calm and endeavour to solve the problem peacefully through consultation and dialogue.

The President: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of China. I give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Germany.

Mr. Brasack (Germany): Mr. President, please allow me also at the outset to bid farewell to two dear ambassadors, my dear companions since I arrived here, Ambassador

Landman of the Netherlands and Ambassador Tarui of Japan, one from a close neighbouring country, one from a rather more distant neighbouring country of Germany. I would also echo what was said by my colleagues here about their efforts in the Conference and about the impressive farewell statements that we heard today. Certainly I would express my best wishes for their futures and the futures of their families, and hope we will see each other again in the future.

Now, as this is the first time I have taken the floor under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the post of President of the Conference on Disarmament during its 2009 session. I would like to assure you and the other P-6 members of my delegation's full support in your efforts to guide the work of this Conference so as to overcome finally its long-standing impasse. I would furthermore like to commend you and your fellow P-6 members for all the work and energy you have invested in presenting us with a draft decision for a programme of work.

Germany — this goes without saying — aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union last Friday, 22 May. I would like to underline that the Conference on Disarmament cannot afford again to let the year pass without proving its right to existence. This is especially true when a remarkable and very welcome dynamic in the field of disarmament can be sensed, that has been promoted in particular by the statements of a number of world leaders in the past few weeks, and not least by the United Nations Secretary-General when he addressed the Conference on 19 May 2009.

Over the course of the last three years, the Conference on Disarmament, thanks to the skill and the efforts of the 2006, 2007 and 2008 presidencies, has made considerable progress in bringing us closer to agreeing to a programme of work as a prerequisite to starting negotiations and substantive discussions within the Conference on important issues on the disarmament agenda.

Germany has been working consistently on the adoption of a programme of work and has continuously demonstrated its flexibility. We supported the so-called A5 proposal of September 2003, the draft decision contained in CD/2007/L.1, and the March 2008 proposal for a programme of work contained in document CD/1840. We are ready to continue to demonstrate this proven flexibility in order to overcome the deadlock in the Conference in the hope that equal flexibility will be shown by all members of the Conference with regard to the programme of work. In this spirit we fully support the P-6 proposal for a draft decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session contained in CD/1863. We certainly hope that consensus on this proposal can be reached before the end of this second part of our 2009 session at the latest. But the sooner, the better, in our view.

We therefore urge all members of the Conference to support, or at least not stand in the way of, the adoption of the decision on a programme of work as contained in CD/1863, a carefully crafted and well-balanced compromise that we believe takes into account the views of all parties and, as far as possible, should be acceptable to all of them. We believe that the programme of work is not an end in itself, but just a tool that should enable the Conference to fulfil its functions and serve the international community much better by actually investing our energy in substantive work on the relevant issues, including negotiations where appropriate, rather than in protracted debates on formal and procedural issues.

The President: Thank you, Ambassador. I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Duncan.

Mr. Duncan (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I will be brief, but I would like to join others in underlining our support for your efforts in guiding the Conference to fulfil its

destiny and to get back to work. The United Kingdom subscribes to the statement of the presidency of the European Union given last week. Your efforts to respond to and engage with the political leadership, both past and present, in the world community are particularly commendable.

The events of the past weekend only serve to reinforce the need for the world community to move from common purpose to common action. Responsibility — and it is a heavy responsibility — for delivering that action lies with us, the professional diplomats representing our countries in international institutions, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the NPT. Progress has been achieved over the past three years, particularly in the field of conventional weapons, but we do need to bring progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to conclusion.

The United Kingdom is ready to join consensus in beginning the long-awaited negotiations on an FMCT and to have substantive discussions on other issues on the arms control and disarmament agenda, as represented by your proposal.

Like others, we regret the departure at this particular moment of our esteemed colleagues, Ambassador Landman and Ambassador Tarui, both of whom have been tireless warriors in the diplomatic trench warfare of the past few years. We will miss their wise counsel, and we wish them well in the future.

The President: Thank you very much. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of India.

Mr. Rao (India): Mr. President, since this is the first time I have taken the floor under your presidency, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the important post of President of the Conference and assure you of the continued support of my delegation. We would also like to convey our appreciation to the delegations of Viet Nam and Zimbabwe for the excellent manner in which they discharged their duties as President of the Conference this year.

Let me also join my colleagues in bidding farewell to Ambassador Tarui and Ambassador Landman. Their contributions have greatly enriched the work of the Conference. In their departure, we will miss the mild but firm demeanour of Ambassador Tarui and the spontaneity of Ambassador Landman. We wish them and their families well.

Let me take this opportunity also to convey to you our appreciation for your energetic efforts directed towards achieving the objective that we all share: the commencement of substantive work in the Conference on the basis of consensus on a programme of work. To achieve this objective, we have noted your tireless efforts through consultations with various delegations, including during the intersessional period. We have every confidence that the presidency of the Conference will continue to undertake extensive consultations with the membership to achieve our common goals.

We have taken note of the draft decision on the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session, as contained in document CD/1863. We have transmitted the document to capital, and are awaiting instructions. Our delegation is not in a position to add anything further at this moment. As you are aware, following the recently concluded general elections in India, India's Government was sworn in late last week.

The President: Thank you and congratulations on your elections. We are aware that the Government has just taken over, and we hope that we can get a response in the near future.

I do not have any other speakers on my list. Would the distinguished representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea like to take the floor? I see that such is his intention. I give him the floor.

Mr. An (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mr. President, this delegation would like to respond to the statements made by, in particular, Japan and the Republic of Korea. Yesterday we safely conducted a second nuclear test. We have already announced, through the statement of the Foreign Ministry issued on 29 April, that in connection with the fact that the United Nations Security Council infringed upon our sovereign rights and our rights to economic development by undertaking unjust actions never seen in the history of the United Nations — having questioned the launch of a satellite for peaceful purposes and also started putting into practice the physical sanctions against our country and its people by using presidential statements of the Security Council — we could not but take additional self-defence measures, including nuclear tests and test launches of long-range missiles in order to safeguard our national interests if the Security Council would not withdraw its unjust actions of having violated our sovereignty.

In accordance with this announcement, we followed the moves of the Security Council, and since we did not see any desired action on the part of the Security Council, we acted just as we had announced. As long as arbitrary pressure and sanctions are forced upon us, we will continue to take the necessary corresponding measures for defending our sovereignty and peace on the Korean peninsula by our own strength.

Having said this, I would like to indicate that in view of the national statements made in this chamber by the representatives of Japan and the Republic of Korea, this delegation cannot rule out the probability that those statements might negatively affect the positive consideration in my capital of draft decision CD/1863.

The President: Thank you, distinguished representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Fortunately, our mandate has been quite broad and arduous and the mandate of the United Nations machinery in New York is also comprehensive. If each one can cope with its mandate, I think that will be fine, and I suppose that this issue is one that would be pursued by the appropriate bodies in New York. I hope it will not have any impact on our business here.

We have had an interesting meeting today with about 25 or 26 statements that have continued in the positive atmosphere that we encountered at our last plenary meeting. We are holding our next meeting on Thursday, and I hope that if this trend of either supporting or joining a consensus is further strengthened, we could move to an early decision.

As many of you have mentioned today, anything in any part of the world can create tension that can be counterproductive for achieving our programme of work. Yet, as other speakers mentioned, there is a time to act, and the time is now. If we do not act in the near future, we could compromise the very future of the Conference on Disarmament. So all these elements are an invitation to all of us to be aware of the critical situation in which we now find ourselves, which also explains why the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations was present, as well as the foreign minister of the host country.

I will at this stage update you on the progress in consultations undertaken. As you know, in the first stage, before we submitted the paper, we, the members of the P-6, shared out between ourselves contacts with individual delegations. After getting sufficient encouragement and positive responses, document CD/1863 was tabled. We then moved to a second stage of consultations, which was based on geographic groups. So I have already had the pleasure, with my colleagues from the P-6, of meeting the Group of Western European and Other States, the G-21 and the Group of Eastern European States, and we are meeting with China tomorrow afternoon. We will thus have completed this round of consultations on the regional basis.

If there are any loose ends that have not been considered in the first or second stage of the consultations, any groups of countries, or individual countries, wishing to meet with me and the P-6 members are welcome to do so at any time. I would suggest that any group or individual country that would like to do so should indicate this to the secretariat, and we will make sure that this country or group of countries has the opportunity to express their views, and we will try to address any concerns they might have.

This is by way of conclusion of this meeting. I would appeal to all those who have not spoken or who are awaiting instructions to try to make their contribution. We are expecting a meeting on Thursday and possibly a meeting on Friday, and that will be it. Therefore, I would like all of you to give us the benefit of your contribution. To those who have not spoken yet, and to those who have spoken, I would like to express my deep appreciation, because I must say that apart from two delegations that are still awaiting instructions, all the others have expressed strong support or readiness to go along with this proposal, and therefore we see the possibility of achieving a consensus.

I would also like to express to all of you, on behalf of the P-6 team — and it is amazing how a common purpose has kept us together in this exercise of trying to achieve consensus — on behalf of the P-6 and in my own name, I would like to say to every one of you — all those who have spoken — our deep gratitude for — to use the words of the Ambassador of the Netherlands — the trust, the support and the appreciation that you have expressed to us, which makes us feel even more committed to trying to deliver what you expect from us.

With these comments, I declare this meeting adjourned, and we will reconvene on Thursday morning.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.