
Conference on Disarmament

4 March 2010

English

Final record of the one thousand one hundred and seventy-fifth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 4 March 2010, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Mikhail Khvostov..... (Belarus)

* Reissued for technical reasons on 4 September 2012.

The President: I declare open the 1175th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I should like to give the floor to our distinguished guest at today's meeting, Her Excellency Ms. Chinami Nishimura, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. The particular seriousness with which the people and Government of Japan approach nuclear disarmament issues is truly unique, and your presence today in the Conference has reaffirmed the role played by your country in matters of strategic importance for the entire international community. Excellency, you have the floor.

Ms. Nishimura (Japan): Mr. President, it is my great honour to be given the opportunity today to address this august body of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. With the forthcoming Global Nuclear Security Summit and Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), this year is a critical juncture in moves towards the realization of "a world without nuclear weapons". Japan believes that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should be globally tackled in a focused and practical way, and we are determined to play an active role in this area.

It should be applauded that last year the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, overcame 11 years of paralysis and adopted a programme of work. The international community pinned great hopes on this move. It was regrettable, however, that after this development, agreement could not be reached on implementing the programme of work that the Conference itself had adopted. To ensure concrete progress in the Conference on Disarmament, member States should concentrate their efforts on the early adoption of a programme of work based on last year's agreement through serious discussions among member States and in a spirit of cooperation. For dealing with the current situation, Japan hopes the six presidents of 2010 will continue to take initiatives, for which we will provide our utmost support.

While the current international community is under the threat of nuclear weapons development and the risk of nuclear terrorism, it is critical for the whole world to make steady efforts in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. At the United Nations Security Council summit last September, Prime Minister Hatoyama talked of Japan's moral responsibility as the only country that has ever experienced atomic bombings and expressed our determination to take the lead in the pursuit of the elimination of nuclear weapons. In this connection, let me note some of Japan's activities in the pursuit of this goal. At the General Assembly last year, we submitted a resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons with 87 co-sponsor countries, and it was adopted with the support of an overwhelming majority. We have promoted the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and contributed to the technical aspects associated with the setting-up of its verification system. We have been active in reinforcing the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards system and taken initiatives to universalize the Additional Protocol to the safeguards agreements. Japan has also promoted disarmament and non-proliferation education in civil society. Furthermore, we launched the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament as a joint initiative with Australia, which issued its report last December. Japan has rendered its highest support to the Commission.

Japan shares the view that the threat of nuclear weapons is one of the most serious issues that humankind faces. We believe that it is essential to strengthen international cooperation to bolster fundamentally the current international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons require a long-term approach and in this process we must implement practical and concrete measures. I would like to highlight the following three points.

First, nuclear disarmament by all States that possess nuclear weapons is crucial. Japan anticipates that the United States and the Russian Federation — who have actively undertaken nuclear disarmament efforts — will soon conclude a follow-on treaty to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and thus demonstrate concrete results in nuclear disarmament to the international community. Furthermore, we call not only upon the United States and the Russian Federation, but also upon all States possessing nuclear weapons to carry out additional nuclear disarmament efforts in a transparent manner. We should emphasize that applying the principles of irreversibility and verifiability is also important in these efforts.

Second, the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a matter of great significance. Japan strongly desires the prompt ratification of this Treaty by all the Annex 2 countries, including the United States and China. Japan for its part will continue its ongoing efforts to promote the Treaty's entry into force by appealing to countries that have yet to ratify or accede to it and through technical and human resource cooperation. In addition, pending the Treaty's entry into force, we definitely demand the continuation of the nuclear-testing moratorium.

Third, last year the programme of work including the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty was agreed to by consensus. It is expected that this treaty — through prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes — will restrict the production of nuclear weapons by the existing States holding nuclear weapons, prevent the emergence of new States holding such weapons and greatly contribute to both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, as well as nuclear security, which is also increasing in importance. Such a treaty is therefore a must-have step towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Japan strongly appeals for the early commencement and conclusion of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty within the Conference on Disarmament. Any issue, including existing stocks, should be dealt with within the process of negotiations. Pending the entry into force of such a treaty, Japan urges all States possessing nuclear weapons to declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes.

To overcome the problems that the NPT regime faces and enhance its credibility, the NPT Review Conference of this coming May is a critical moment that requires every country to make unified efforts. As was confirmed in the joint statement last month by the foreign ministers of Japan and Australia, Mr. Katsuya Okada and Mr. Stephen Smith, the two countries intend to pursue a package proposal of practical nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures for the NPT Review Conference, taking into account the report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. For that purpose, we will work with other partner States as well.

The NPT Review Conference should not be the venue for confrontation between the nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States, but a place for cooperation. To this end, Japan aims to demonstrate leadership and contribute to the best of its ability, in order to achieve a meaningful agreement on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

As tomorrow marks the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT, we are once again reminded of the Conference on Disarmament's illustrious record of negotiating and producing some of the key international disarmament and arms control treaties. Even in the midst of the cold war, the Conference negotiated such vital instruments as the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and of course, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Members of the Conference, now is the time for the Conference to get down to work and to fulfil its primary role, its *raison d'être*, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in the world. In this regard, Japan hopes that

the Conference on Disarmament will agree on and implement a programme of work at the earliest date. Japan pledges to continue its efforts and cooperation in this regard.

The President: I thank Ms. Nishimura for her statement, which is of significance for the continuation of the work of this Conference, and I should like to suspend the meeting for a few minutes in order to escort our guest from the conference room.

The meeting was suspended at 10.30 a.m. and resumed at 10.32 a.m.

The President: I should like to resume our meeting and ask whether there is any delegation wishing to take the floor today.

I see none and wish to make the following announcement: a formal plenary meeting will be held in this conference room tomorrow, 5 March, at 10 a.m., and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Mr. Kanat Saudabayev, will address the Conference at this plenary meeting. This meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.