

# Conference on Disarmament

English

---

**Final record of the one thousand four hundred and seventeenth plenary meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 16 May 2017, at 10.05 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Coly Seck .....(Senegal)

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I call to order the 1417th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Dear Ambassadors, dear members of delegations, it is a pleasure for me to be here with you again, after our six-week break, for the second part of the 2017 session of the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me to begin by welcoming the new Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Farukh Amil, and assuring him of our full cooperation and support in our work here in the Conference.

Before moving to the list of speakers for this morning, I would like to draw your attention to a request from a delegation that — as a non-member State — wishes to participate in our deliberations. This request is contained in document CD/WP.598/Add.6, which you have before you. This document includes all the requests received up to 3 p.m. on Monday, 15 May 2017.

Are there any comments on this request? May I take it that the Conference decides to invite this State to take part in our deliberations in accordance with our rules of procedure?

*It was so decided.*

**The President** (*spoke in French*): Allow me now to suspend the meeting briefly so that the delegation of Angola may take seats in the chamber.

*The meeting was briefly suspended.*

**The President** (*spoke in French*): The meeting is resumed. At the end of this morning's meeting, I will give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Myanmar for an update on the consultations that are being conducted within the framework of the working group on the way ahead, which was established pursuant to the decision contained in document CD/2090.

The following delegations have requested the floor: Pakistan, Malta, France, Austria, Argentina, United States of America, Belgium, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and Germany. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Farukh Amil.

**Mr. Amil** (Pakistan): Mr. President, as this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, let me begin by congratulating you on assuming this important responsibility. You can rest assured of our unstinting support and cooperation. We commend the excellent manner in which your two predecessors, the Permanent Representatives of Romania and the Russian Federation, steered the Conference on Disarmament earlier this year. We also thank the Permanent Representative of Myanmar, Ambassador Htin Lynn, for his sterling work as the Chair of the working group on the way ahead. We also appreciate the invaluable support provided by the secretariat, ably led by Mr. Michael Møller, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, and assisted by his remarkable team, including Ms. Mary Soliman, Mr. Marco Kalbusch and many others working dedicatedly behind the scene.

Mr. President, today, in this beautiful Council Chamber, I am taking the floor for the first time as the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and other international organizations based in Geneva and as the Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament. It is a matter of great honour and privilege for me to represent my country in this august body. I seek the support of all fellow delegations in fulfilling this task, and assure them of my cooperation. I look forward to working closely with all of you as we continue to grapple with the crucial issues on our agenda.

Pakistan views the Conference as a critical component of the international security architecture. As the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the Conference is a vital and indispensable organ of the United Nations disarmament machinery. We attach very high importance to the Conference and remain firmly committed to its effective functioning. The Conference is an unparalleled forum where all militarily significant States of the world participate on an equal footing to find truly sustainable solutions to the myriad of issues associated with the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament, in a manner that promotes international and regional peace and

stability. It is only through adherence to the cardinal principle of equal and undiminished security for all States that we can achieve this goal.

The current direction, Mr. President, is not promising. We need to be working towards cooperative multilateralism enabling all nations to coexist in peace, harmony and prosperity, true to the noble ideals of the United Nations. What we are observing, however, is the continued quest for regional and global hegemony. The discriminatory revisionism of the global nuclear order, driven by strategic and commercial considerations, as against the building of a truly equitable rules-based disarmament and non-proliferation regime, is raising tensions and fuelling instability. As noted by us on many occasions in the past, it is highly unrealistic to aspire for absolute security and unrestrained freedom of action for oneself, while expecting others to compromise on their peaceful coexistence by circumscribing their legitimate security interests.

One of the most unfortunate victims of this situation is the Conference on Disarmament. A multilateral forum where all member States are expected to cooperate for building the foundations of a world free from nuclear weapons is falling prey to the continuing competition in the security domain. The few and the mighty are focused on preserving and enhancing their military dominance at the cost of others' security. The only result of such policies can be a deadlock. The impasse of the Conference is a reflection of this prevailing strategic reality.

Pakistan does not blame the Conference's working methods for this stalemate. If we, the member States of the Conference, exercise the requisite political will to rise above our narrow self-interests, it is this forum that has the right set-up to help us in reaching a viable solution. We witnessed that in the case of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Conference's membership encompassing all the relevant stakeholders and its rules of procedure allowing each one of us to safeguard our vital interests are essential prerequisites for concluding disarmament treaties.

We understand the frustration that is arising from the Conference's stalemate. The solution, however, does not lie in abandoning the Conference and forcing so-called progress outside this forum — and that, too, on a non-consensus basis and without all the major stakeholders on board. Trivializing security concerns, denying the contribution of nuclear deterrence towards ensuring regional and international strategic stability and recasting the discourse in exclusively humanitarian terms is not the panacea. There simply can be no real progress on nuclear disarmament without addressing the concerns of States that rely on nuclear weapons for their security.

Similarly, rather than addressing the real issues preventing the start of negotiations on other agenda items in the Conference, seeking pseudo-progress in limited membership expert groups outside the Conference — again, without all the stakeholders on board and on the basis of tried and tested approaches that have failed in the past — will not lead to any breakthrough.

Mr. President, let me briefly outline the position of Pakistan on the Conference's agenda items.

Pakistan supports the negotiation of a universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable comprehensive nuclear weapons convention in the Conference. As recognized by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the objective of this convention should be equal and undiminished security for all States at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces.

Pakistan also supports the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on an international treaty on negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, jointly tabled by China and Russia, provides a useful basis for the latter.

Pakistan also stands ready to join substantive work in the Conference on legally binding instruments on other contemporary issues affecting international peace and security. These include chemical and biological terrorism, cybersecurity, lethal autonomous weapons systems and other types of destabilizing weapon systems.

As for the issue of fissile material, Pakistan believes that a treaty ignoring the asymmetries in fissile material stocks would be detrimental to international and regional stability and adversely affect our national security. A “cut-off only” treaty, as envisaged under the Shannon mandate, would freeze the status quo to the perpetual strategic advantage of a select few and make no contribution to nuclear disarmament. The asymmetries in our region are being accentuated by the discriminatory policies of certain major nuclear suppliers. Pakistan, therefore, supports a fissile material treaty that covers existing stocks. Our working paper with concrete proposals for dealing with the various categories of existing stocks, contained in document CD/2036, remains on the table. Pakistan is also ready to engage in a process that discards the defunct Shannon mandate with the aim of concluding a new negotiating mandate that broadens the proposed treaty’s scope to cover existing stocks, applying equally to all States without discrimination.

Mr. President, in the absence of consensus on the commencement of negotiations on any issue on the Conference’s agenda, we could productively utilize the time available in the Conference for structured discussions. The informal in-depth discussions held under the 2014 and 2015 schedule of activities were of great value. They allowed an interactive and substantive exchange of views to help build a better understanding of the various perspectives.

In this regard, we would welcome the approach taken by the Chair of the working group on the way ahead in proposing the establishment of various subgroups to undertake discussions on all relevant issues. This offers a platform for building on convergences and narrowing down differences, with the aim of forging consensus on an acceptable basis for commencing negotiations under a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

The recent success of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in New York to agree by consensus on a set of recommendations for the first time since 1999 is a significant achievement. It underscores the potential and the continued validity of the consensus-based United Nations disarmament machinery. There is no reason why we cannot emulate the Disarmament Commission’s success in the Conference.

Before concluding, I wish to add that Pakistan shares the international concern regarding the recent ballistic missile test conducted by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. It is regrettable that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has ignored United Nations Security Council resolutions. While deploring this act, Pakistan reiterates its call upon the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to abide by its international obligations and avoid any measures that undermine regional peace and stability and run counter to the objective of reaching a peaceful solution within the framework of the Six-Party Talks.

Finally, Mr. President, I re-emphasize that my delegation will continue to be an active and constructive participant in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We recognize the benefits of cooperative multilateralism in the Conference to build an equitable and stable global security architecture. I look forward to listening to and benefiting from the professional advice and wise counsel of all colleagues in this chamber. I would rely on your assistance as I bring myself up to speed on the various issues. You can count on my cooperation and close engagement.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of Malta.

**Ms. Kemppainen** (Malta): Mr. President, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia align themselves with the European Union statement.

The European Union strongly condemns the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which seriously violates multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. This and the previous launches constitute a threat to international peace and security as well as to the non-proliferation regime, and further aggravate tensions in the region at a time when de-escalation is needed.

The European Union urges the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to immediately comply with its international obligations. It must stop all nuclear tests and halt

all launches using ballistic missile technology and abandon its nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

The nuclear and missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pose a critical and increasing threat and call for a strong and timely international reaction before the Democratic People's Republic of Korea acquires operational nuclear-weapons capability.

The European Union welcomes the joint statement endorsed by more than 60 States during the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and calls on all States to fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The European Union calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community. The European Union is ready to support such a process for dialogue. The High Representative of the European Union, Vice-President Federica Mogherini, will remain in close contact in the coming days with all of the European Union international partners regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issue.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Malta and now give the floor to the representative of France.

**Ms. Guitton** (France) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, as this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor under your presidency, allow me to assure you of our utmost support for all your efforts.

France associates itself fully with the statement that has just been made on behalf of the European Union regarding the ballistic missile launch carried out by North Korea. I would like to add some remarks in a national capacity.

At the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was held in Vienna and ended last week on 12 May, France and South Korea submitted a statement condemning the North Korean nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programme. The statement was endorsed by 62 States parties to the Treaty, representing all regions of the world. With North Korea coming closer to acquiring an operational nuclear capability that poses a threat to international peace and security, the statement draws attention to the need to strengthen international cooperation and enforce existing sanctions against North Korea as strictly as possible. The statement is all the more pertinent as North Korea launched another ballistic missile on Sunday.

Against such a backdrop, France welcomes the broad mobilization of States parties to the Treaty to preserve the nuclear non-proliferation regime. France firmly believes that the nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes of North Korea constitute a grave threat. It will continue to work within the United Nations Security Council and the European Union — and with its regional partners — to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and ensure that the North Korean regime abandons its nuclear weapons programme in a complete, irreversible and verifiable manner.

I would also like to inform you that France has sent to the secretariat, for circulation as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament, a national assessment of the chemical attack that took place in Syria on 4 April 2017. The findings of this assessment, which have been made public, are based on investigations and analyses carried out with the greatest care and precision by the French intelligence services. We have been able to draw conclusions about three main aspects of the attack: the type of chemical used, the way in which it was produced and how it was dispersed. We invite all members of the Conference to read this document.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of France for her statement and her kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

**Mr. Hajnoczi** (Austria): Mr. President, as my delegation has not yet taken the floor during your tenure, I wish to congratulate you and assure you of my delegation's full support; I also wish to pay tribute to the efforts of your predecessor, the Russian Federation.

Austria is, of course, fully aligned with the statement just delivered on behalf of the European Union. I am taking the floor to add some remarks in a national capacity. Austria strongly condemns the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which represents yet again a serious violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. As the Austrian Foreign Minister, Sebastian Kurz, underlined in his statement on Sunday: "Constant provocations and breaches of international law are not acceptable. Responsible actions and demonstration of willingness to respect international law and enter into negotiations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are urgently needed."

The actions taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea serve to aggravate tensions at both the regional and the global level and pose a risk to global peace and security. We therefore urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with international law and to put an end to its nuclear and missile programmes. The quest for security through nuclear weapons leads only to increased risk for all. The case of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea illustrates the need to step up efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Austria for his statement and his kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

**Mr. Cima** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to assure you of my country's full cooperation during your tenure. Argentina considers that the wide-ranging debate that took place in Vienna reflects the importance attached to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review process by the international community. With that in mind, Argentina believes it would be helpful to mention some of the themes that generated the most interest among the delegations, with a view to the Conference on Disarmament adopting a more constructive and realistic approach as a complement to the process that was launched in Vienna and will conclude in 2020. Those themes are as follows:

1. The Treaty remains the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and equal weight must be attached to all three of its pillars;
2. The 1995 resolution, the Final Document of 2000 and the 2010 action plan continue to provide a solid foundation for the ongoing effort towards effective implementation of the Treaty;
3. Emphasis was placed on the safeguards system provided for in the Treaty and on the support to be provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the implementation of that system;
4. The right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was recognized as an inalienable right of all States, with IAEA playing an important role in providing assistance and cooperation to States in this regard;
5. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is needed as a matter of urgency;
6. The verification of nuclear disarmament is an important part of the implementation of article VI;
7. The negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material is a crucial step that must be taken towards nuclear disarmament;
8. The primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament lies with nuclear-weapon possessor States;
9. The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference resolution to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East needs to be implemented.

Argentina believes that the NPT review process should be viewed as a complementary mechanism that supports and enriches the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The bodies established by the General Assembly, namely, the Group of Governmental Experts on a fissile material cut-off treaty and the conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, should be viewed in the same way. By doing so, we will be able to achieve the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament goals that were agreed upon nearly 70 years ago.

Mr. President, it is when we start to discuss the changes that need to be made that diverging opinions arise. Such differences notwithstanding, I would like to echo the sentiment expressed by Ambassador Van der Kwast at the opening of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference: as diplomats, we must work towards shared objectives. For Argentina, our shared objective is to bring about change.

Lastly, Mr. President, Argentina once again categorically condemns the latest ballistic missile launch by North Korea, which was conducted shortly after the first session of the Preparatory Committee. We see this launch as a further act of provocation and hostility towards the international community.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and his kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): Mr. President, the United States strongly condemns the latest ballistic missile test by the North Korean regime, which is in violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. This recent violation comes on the heels of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee meeting in Vienna during which an overwhelming majority of countries condemned the reckless and dangerous behaviour of Pyongyang. This launch is yet another example of defiance on the part of the North Korean regime. We cannot allow these provocative acts to continue without increasing the consequences for North Korea and its enablers. This latest destabilizing act should serve as a call to all nations to implement more robust sanctions against the regime. It is also imperative that we impose and fully implement more punitive and consequential measures to force the regime to change course. North Korea must be held to account.

Two final points, Mr. President: the United States does not and will not recognize North Korea as a nuclear-weapon State; and, let me reiterate, the United States commitment to the defence of Japan and South Korea remains ironclad.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the United States for his statement and give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

**Mr. Muylle** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, as this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor under your presidency, allow me to assure you of our full support as you guide us in the work ahead. The Belgian delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and would like to add some remarks in a national capacity, in view of the gravity of the situation.

In a statement made on 14 May 2017, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Mr. Didier Reynders, strongly condemned the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, describing it as another violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. The North Korean ballistic missile programme poses a threat to regional and international security, significantly hinders attempts to facilitate dialogue and undermines efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation.

Belgium once again calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to put an immediate end to its illegal nuclear-weapons programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. Belgium requests the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from conducting any further tests and to comply with its international obligations so that dialogue may resume. Belgium encourages the international community to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions and to step up efforts to reduce tension in order that the stated objective of a peaceful, denuclearized Korean Peninsula may be achieved.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Belgium and give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

**Ms. Donnelly** (New Zealand): Mr. President, as this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor under your presidency, please allow me to assure you of the full support and cooperation of New Zealand in your task ahead.

Mr. President, New Zealand adds to the list of voices that unequivocally condemn the most recent ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 14 May 2017. We share the concerns already expressed that such actions are highly provocative and are irresponsible. New Zealand has a long history of opposition to nuclear weapons and testing and long-standing support for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The repeated defiance of international norms and practice by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea seriously undermines the international non-proliferation regime and threatens regional and international security and stability.

We continue to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to refrain from any action that further increases regional tensions. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to re-engage in meaningful dialogue with the international community, in particular within the Six-Party Talks framework.

New Zealand will continue to work with our regional and international partners, including through application of United Nations Security Council sanctions, to ensure that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea understands that its actions are unacceptable to the international community.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of New Zealand for her statement and her kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, my delegation wishes to begin by warmly welcoming Ambassador Farukh Amil of Pakistan to the Conference on Disarmament. We look forward to working closely with him.

The Government of the Republic of Korea condemns in the strongest terms the ballistic missile launch last Sunday by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This missile launch — the seventh such provocation this year alone — clearly violates relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and is a serious defiance of peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and in the international community. The Government of the Republic of Korea notes in particular that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made such provocation immediately after the new administration took office. The Government of the Republic of Korea firmly warns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it should not put to the test the resolve of the Government of the Republic of Korea and the international community for denuclearization and the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, the Government of the Republic of Korea calls once again upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease all forms of provocation and to return to the path of dialogue for denuclearization.

The Government of the Republic of Korea will not tolerate any provocative action by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and will remain steadfast in safeguarding security on the firm basis of its bilateral alliances and in close cooperation with the entire international community.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his statement and his kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

**Mr. Biontino** (Germany): Mr. President, let me at the outset congratulate you on the assumption of your important office and assure you of the full support of my delegation.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the European Union on the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Germany condemns in the strongest possible terms the latest ballistic missile launch, which is a grave violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's



Republic of Korea must stop its illegal ballistic and nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. Furthermore, Germany calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Germany and give the floor to the representative of Italy.

**Mr. Mati** (Italy): Mr. President, since this is the first time I am taking the floor under your presidency, let me congratulate you on the assumption of your responsibilities and assure you of my delegation's full support.

I would like to join other delegations in reiterating that Italy condemns in the strongest terms the latest ballistic missile test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Italy aligns itself with the statement previously delivered by the European Union. This constitutes another clear violation of multiple existing United Nations Security Council resolutions and it comes right after the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee meeting. The missile and nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea represents a serious threat to international peace and security and to the global non-proliferation regime. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must abandon the road taken towards self-isolation and its continual challenge to the international community. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon without delay all its existing ballistic missile and nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, to return to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Italy will continue to contribute to a firm and cohesive response of the international community in its current capacity as Chair of the Security Council Resolution 1718 Committee.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Italy and give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Takamizawa** (Japan): Mr. President, since this is the first time that I am taking the floor under your presidency, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation for the revitalization of the Conference.

Mr. President, last weekend, despite the strong calls from the international community, including at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference last week, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a ballistic missile in clear violation of a series of United Nations Security Council resolutions and against the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. This launch is totally unacceptable. It constitutes a grave and increasing threat not only to Japan but also to regional and international peace and security. We strongly condemn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately and fully implement relevant Security Council resolutions and other commitments without taking further provocative actions.

Japan believes that the Conference on Disarmament has a vital role to play in advancing nuclear disarmament. Therefore, it is imperative that it be revitalized and overcome its deadlock. In this regard, Japan welcomes the initiatives by the Chair of the working group on the way ahead, Ambassador Lynn, and his proposal to hold consultations with regional groups this week. Japan strongly hopes that the discussions and the deliberations in the working group will enhance our common understanding and help lead us to the adoption of a programme of work with a negotiation mandate. Also, I believe that a Geneva-based interactive working relationship with professional knowledge and experience should be contributing to the constructive and substantive discussions.

Japan remains ready to engage in active participation and contribute to the deliberations of the working group.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and his support, and I give the floor to the representative of Canada.

**Mr. Davison** (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, Canada condemns the ballistic missile launch carried out on 14 May by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in violation of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions. This launch, which follows on other provocations of a similar nature, including two nuclear tests in 2016, confirms the extent of the threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to regional and international security and shows that a concerted international response is needed.

(*spoke in English*)

We call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its international obligations, take concrete steps towards denuclearization and re-engage in meaningful negotiations for a peaceful political solution.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Canada and give the floor to the representative of Spain.

**Mr. Herráiz España** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to join the other delegations in congratulating you and wishing you every success in your new functions. We naturally offer you our support as well in our capacity as one of the other member States that will occupy the presidency this session.

Mr. President, Spain associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and strongly condemns the latest ballistic missile launch carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 14 May 2017, which represents yet another blatant violation of numerous Security Council resolutions and a serious threat to international peace and security. Our condemnation of this act is consistent with the statement that Spain recently endorsed, together with 61 other countries, at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Spain urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to engage in credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Spain and give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

**Mr. Van der Kwast** (Netherlands) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, as this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor under your presidency, I would like to wish you every success and assure you of our support.

(*spoke in English*)

Secondly, I would like to welcome Ambassador Farukh Amil in the Council Chamber. With you, Mr. Ambassador, we would like to strengthen cooperative multilateralism. In that framework, we need to address crucial issues in the Conference on Disarmament in order to ensure that the Conference will become a critical component of the disarmament machinery again. That needs courage and political will to address key issues in this body in a free and unconditional way. In that framework, I would also like to thank the delegation of Myanmar and, in particular, Ambassador Lynn for his work to energize this body. We look forward, Ambassador, to the presentation of your report next week and thank you for the work done.

Mr. President, I would like to make a statement on behalf of the Netherlands concerning the missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In addition to the statement made by the European Union, the Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to make the following statement in a national capacity.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands strongly condemns the recent missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The launch on 14 May was already the seventh one this year. The nuclear tests and missile launches performed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea severely threaten peace and stability in the region and should be ceased immediately. The Kingdom of the Netherlands urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately halt its ongoing provocations and re-engage in a meaningful dialogue

with the international community. To ensure this, the international community has the duty to fully implement United Nations Security Council sanctions, for it is only through persistent, joint efforts by all States that these sanctions will be effective. To this end, the Netherlands will continue to work with and through the United Nations and the European Union to make sure that the international community takes united and effective action.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his statement and give the floor to the representative of China.

**Mr. Fu Cong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. President, permit me to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. The Chinese delegation will actively support you in your endeavours to bring the Conference back to substantive work as soon as possible. I would also like to welcome the new Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Farukh Amil. I am confident that his arrival will breathe new vitality into our work and I look forward to working closely with him.

The establishment of the working group on the way ahead is an important outcome of the first part of this year's Conference session. The various thematic subgroups proposed under the working group to engage in in-depth, pragmatic exchanges aimed at moving discussions forward will help all parties to gain a deeper common understanding and bridge differences. With a view to the working group beginning its activities as soon as possible, its Chair, Ambassador Htin Lynn, has for some time now been holding extensive consultations with all parties, and we commend those efforts. China stands ready to take part in these discussions in a spirit of flexibility and openness and with a constructive approach so that the working group may begin its work promptly and yield positive results.

Mr. President, with respect to the launch carried out on 14 May by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the spokesperson of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs made the following statement that same day:

The relevant resolutions of the Security Council contain clear provisions relating to the use by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of ballistic missile technology to carry out launches. China opposes that State's violation of Security Council resolutions in carrying out such launches. The current situation on the Peninsula is complex and sensitive, and all parties should exercise restraint and refrain from activities that could escalate tension in the region.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of China for his statement and his support. I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

**Ms. Hauge** (Norway): Mr. President, my delegation joins others in strongly condemning the nuclear and missile tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Norway aligned itself with the declaration prepared by France and the Republic of Korea on this matter at the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty 2020 review cycle last week.

The actions and rhetoric of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea represent a serious challenge to the non-proliferation regime and undermine a global environment conducive to nuclear disarmament. We are alarmed by its flagrant violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. We support efforts to find a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to this situation, yet it is now up to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to demonstrate genuine commitment in seeking a political solution to this crisis.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Norway and give the floor to the representative of Poland.

**Mr. Broilo** (Poland): Mr. President, allow me first of all to wish you all the best in your endeavours in your capacity as the President of the Conference on Disarmament. Let me also address warm words of welcome to the new Ambassador of Pakistan.

Poland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. Permit me also to express our national position based on the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland. Poland condemns the most recent ballistic missile test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. These actions by the

Pyongyang authorities pose a threat to security and peace in the region and to the international non-proliferation and arms control system. We call on the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to halt provocative actions which constitute a violation by Pyongyang of its international commitments and of many United Nations Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2321 (2016) of 30 November 2016. We urge the North Korean authorities to return to dialogue and to conducting a peaceful foreign policy based on mutual trust. We are prepared to support actions aimed at building lasting security and stability in the region.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Poland and give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

**Mr. Ağacıkoglu** (Turkey): Mr. President, since this is the first time our delegation is taking the floor, I congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of our delegation's support during your tenure.

Turkey condemns the ballistic missile launch conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 14 May 2017. This launch constitutes a flagrant violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. We call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not to disregard existing opportunities for dialogue and to cease its behaviour which serves only to harm peace and security in the region.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Turkey and give the floor to the representative of Finland.

**Ms. Hakala** (Finland): Mr. President, let me start by congratulating you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of my delegation's full support. I also would like to welcome warmly the new colleague from Pakistan.

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement read out by the representative of the European Union. I wish to make some additional remarks in a national capacity. Finland condemns the latest missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The launch, once again, violates multiple, unanimously agreed United Nations Security Council resolutions and is, again, one more addition to its serious violations of international commitments and obligations.

In the recent meeting of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee, Finland joined the statement on the challenge by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Treaty. I would like to underline that in the statement, more than 60 States parties strongly condemned the nuclear tests and missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is getting closer to an operational nuclear capability, poses a grave and increasing threat to regional and international peace and security.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should take these strong messages of the international community seriously. Finland urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to strictly comply with all its international obligations and to engage in credible and meaningful dialogue and cooperation with the international community.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Finland and give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria.

**Ms. Davidova** (Bulgaria): Mr. President, let me first congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of the full support of our delegation. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Permanent Representative of Pakistan and to wish him success in all his endeavours.

Bulgaria fully aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make some additional remarks in a national capacity. The Bulgarian position is expressed in a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 15 May 2017. Bulgaria condemns the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This and previous launches pose a direct threat to regional and international peace and

security and it is yet another serious violation of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

We strongly call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease its provocative actions and to suspend its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must abide by its international obligations and resume dialogue with the international community in a credible and meaningful manner.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Bulgaria and give the floor to the representative of Israel.

**Ms. Yaron** (Israel): Mr. President, as this is the first time our delegation is taking the floor during your presidency, allow me to convey our appreciation for the way you are conducting our deliberations and assure you of our full support in the conduct of your duties.

We would like to add our voice to previous delegations which have expressed their concern over the ballistic missile launch conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 14 May. Israel condemns the provocations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which are in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions and pose a threat to international peace and security.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Israel and give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

**Ms. Bard** (Sweden): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on the assumption of your important function and assure you of my delegation's full support. Let me also warmly welcome our colleague from Pakistan.

I would like to refer to the statement made by the European Union, which Sweden fully supports. I wish to add a few remarks in a national capacity.

The latest launch of a ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a flagrant violation of several United Nations Security Council resolutions. The launch is very likely to further increase tensions in the region. As the Security Council has stated, the actions constitute a threat to international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should immediately abandon all nuclear and ballistic missile-related activities and come into full compliance with its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions.

In order to lower tensions on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, the best way forward is dialogue and negotiations. We strongly encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take that path instead of continued violations of international norms.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Sweden and give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Al Nuqari** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, we wish to congratulate you once again on your assumption of the presidency and to express our appreciation of the excellent manner in which you are guiding the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Allow me also to warmly welcome Ambassador Farukh Amil of Pakistan. We are fully aware of the distinctive role played by Pakistan in the work of the Conference and of the added value that it brings to the proceedings. We are confident that Ambassador Amil will proceed in accordance with that approach.

I have asked to take the floor in order to comment briefly on the statement by the Ambassador of France concerning the French intelligence agency report, particularly the reference in the report to my country, the Syrian Arab Republic. I shall begin by seeking to respond in the precise and professional manner required by this Conference.

The first point relates to international law. It has been established since the end of the nineteenth century, that is to say, for more than 100 years, that international law has primacy over domestic law. It was established in an important case, which I think was

called the *Caroline* case, between the United Kingdom and the United States. In other words, the sources that can be recognized as authoritative in an international context are international rather than domestic. This issue must be clear in everyone's mind.

The second point is that the Conference on Disarmament is mandated, as you know, to negotiate international legal instruments in the area of disarmament. We thus believe in multilateral mechanisms and in their authoritative status. The fact that this Conference acts on behalf of the United Nations indicates that we believe in multilateral mechanisms.

In the light of this understanding and context, my country finds it surprising that our attention has been drawn to a document issued by a State's intelligence agency as an authoritative source. This is inconsistent, number one, with international law and, number two, with the authoritative status of this Conference.

With regard to my third point, which is related to the second point, I can say without any hesitation that the experience of the international community with States' intelligence agency reports has been a bad experience to say the least. You will all remember that Mr. Colin Powell, the United States Secretary of State in 2003, made a statement to the Security Council concerning United States intelligence agency reports on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. You will also recall that he later apologized for the reports, stating that he had been misled. The facts proved the accuracy of this statement beyond doubt. It is unnecessary for us to elaborate further, since the facts proved beyond doubt that the reports were misleading. There is no need to enter into further detail on the topic.

I personally attended the meeting of the Security Council at which Colin Powell provided States with what was considered at the time to constitute evidence of the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. These points undoubtedly raise a very important issue, since experience has shown that when a country refers to its intelligence agency reports, the reference reflects the country's policies towards my country.

Needless to say, the policies pursued by France are hostile to my country. When it comes to the issue of intelligence agency reports and their fabrication, we really do not know who is lying to whom. Are the political authorities lying to the intelligence services, or the intelligence services lying to the political authorities, or are they both lying to their people and then to the peoples of the world in order to justify hostile policies? This is a genuine issue that needs to be discussed, but I had assumed that countries had already benefited from the experience of Iraq and would never again dare to present their intelligence agency reports as an authoritative source.

The French presence, like that of others who are present in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic without the Government's approval, constitutes aggression. It follows that the authority on which the report is based lacks legitimacy and that its actions may be deemed to constitute a violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

We believe that we are required at this Conference to respect the Charter of the United Nations, since we form part of the system of international peace and security. That is the basic function of disarmament. I believe that we must exercise caution when we refer in this international multilateral forum to certain State intelligence agency reports as though they were an authoritative source. I think that this is misleading. We do not agree and we hope that delegations avoid adopting this approach.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement and his support. I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

**Mr. Masmajeán** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, as this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor under your presidency, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of this role and assure you of our full support.

I am taking the floor today in response to the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it conducted another ballistic missile test on 14 May 2017. Switzerland strongly condemns that act. As part of the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, that test constitutes not only a violation of several United Nations Security Council resolutions but also a threat to peace and security within

the region and beyond. It undermines the efforts of the international community in pursuit of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Switzerland urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programme and to resume the implementation of its safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This North Korean crisis also shows that the rules of international law on nuclear testing continue to be challenged and that we must strive even harder to ensure that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty enters into force as soon as possible. Switzerland therefore calls on all States that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the Treaty promptly.

Switzerland firmly believes that the nuclear and security problem in the Korean Peninsula can be resolved only through diplomatic negotiations. It encourages all States to do their utmost in that regard in order to prevent further deterioration of the security situation. In that connection, Switzerland reaffirms its full support for the Six-Party Talks and remains open to considering any proposal that would foster peace and stability on the Peninsula.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Switzerland for his statement and his support for the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

**Ms. Cullen** (Ireland): Mr. President, let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I can assure you of the full cooperation and unstinting support of Ireland in your onerous task. Ireland also expresses its deep appreciation of the work of your predecessors — Romania and the Russian Federation — during the first part of this year's session. Let me also take the opportunity to warmly welcome the new Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Pakistan.

Ireland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I will now add some short remarks in a national capacity, joining with the chorus of condemnation in this chamber of the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea two days ago. The achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons has for more than 60 years been a driving force of the foreign policy of Ireland and of our engagement within the United Nations and one to which our people and our Government remain wholeheartedly committed. Each test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fuels insecurity and fear within the region and, indeed, within the wider world. The ongoing acts of provocation run the real risk of ultimately leading to catastrophic consequences. This is an appalling vista and we must exert all of our diplomatic muscle to persuade the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease forthwith all such hostile tests and to re-engage with the international community.

Ireland urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from actions which flagrantly violate United Nations Security Council resolutions and the country's obligations under international law and which threaten the peace and stability of the region. We reiterate our call to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to urgently re-engage in credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community without preconditions and, in particular, within the framework of the Six-Party Talks.

Finally, Ireland wants very much to see the Conference on Disarmament revitalized and back to work. We support fully the working group on the way ahead under the leadership of the Ambassador of Myanmar.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Ireland for her statement and her support. I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

**Ms. Kuznetsova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. You may count on meaningful cooperation from the Russian delegation. I also wish to welcome the new Permanent Representative of Pakistan to Geneva.

Russia has been watching with concern the dangerous developments in the region, to which we ourselves belong. Of course, we are united in condemning the provocative nuclear-missile activity by Pyongyang. We fully appreciate how our neighbours feel when a missile is launched without warning from North Korean territory, greatly endangering the lives of people as well as air and sea traffic in the region. We find such actions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to be unacceptable, as indeed is borne out by our support for the relevant sanctions resolutions of the Security Council, namely resolutions 2270 (2016) and 2321 (2016).

However, the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula cannot be resolved by mere sanctions and pressure on Pyongyang. In the current circumstances, all parties concerned should keep calm and exercise restraint and avoid steps that have the potential to escalate tension. It is important, in dealing with this situation, to take account of the entire range of issues facing the parties in order to create appropriate conditions for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. This cannot be done without normalizing the overall military and political situation, refraining from building up military infrastructure, reducing the scale of military manoeuvres and creating a climate of trust among States in the region. We believe that there is no other option than a political settlement based on the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks of 19 September 2005.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Russian Federation. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

**Ms. Wood** (Australia): Mr. President, Australia condemns the ballistic missile test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 14 May and the ongoing development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

The ongoing pursuit of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes is a clear breach of United Nations Security Council resolutions and represents an ongoing threat to regional and global peace and stability. This was reinforced in a joint statement by 62 countries, including Australia, at the 2017 meeting of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee in Vienna last week on the nuclear challenge of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Treaty.

The actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea threaten the region and globe, and its provocative behaviour is unacceptable. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should not continue down this path of risking regional and global stability. There is a pressing need to improve the welfare of the impoverished people of North Korea rather than divert resources to develop nuclear weapons and missiles.

The long-term interests of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would be best served by its ceasing its nuclear and missiles programmes and engaging positively with the international community. Australia calls on all countries to redouble their efforts to implement unanimously agreed Security Council sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to press upon it that its current path is unsustainable.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Australia. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): Mr. President, let me congratulate you on the assumption of your role.

I align myself fully with the statement made by the European Union on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United Kingdom will work at the Security Council to address the threat to peace and security posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The United Kingdom also works at the Security Council to address the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime. We heard the Syrian representative speak of his belief in multilateralism. Those are empty words. A State which has signed and ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention and believed in multilateralism would not be using chemical weapons against its own people. That is evidence not based on the report of one intelligence agency but on the reporting of a joint investigative mechanism, an independent body duly established by the United Nations Security Council.



**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the United Kingdom and give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

**Ms. Kroll** (Hungary): Mr. President, Hungary fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. In a national capacity, allow me to refer to the statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary in which it strongly condemns the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and calls for even closer international coordination and active steps to stop North Korea.

Hungary continues to support the international community as it joins forces to stop North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and calls on all States to increase the activity in order to achieve this aim.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Hungary and give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Ju Yong-chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mr. President, since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation in fulfilling your task.

Mr. President, my delegation strongly rejects the groundless accusations made against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by several countries.

The recent situation on the Korean Peninsula once again proves that the United States is the main disturber of peace and security in the region. Last month, we saw the situation on the Korean Peninsula reach the brink of war due to United States military exercises — an open threat and blackmail against my country. The United States conducted the largest-ever joint military exercises, mobilizing more than 300,000 troops and all types of nuclear strategic strike forces. It also revealed during this drill its attempt to launch a nuclear pre-emptive strike against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, unveiling its deceptive argument — what they call “defensive in nature”. Moreover, the United States conducted sudden-strike drills aimed at beheading the leadership and destroying major strategic points by mobilizing special task forces numbering three times more than last year.

The United States said that its missile strike upon an individual sovereign State was a strong warning message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and openly talked about a military option, even diverting the route of the nuclear carrier group towards the waters of the Korean Peninsula. Quite recently, a heinous plot of the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States and the South Korean Intelligence Agency to commit State-sponsored terrorism against the supreme leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by use of a biochemical substance was disclosed. All the military steps taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in its territorial land, air and waters are the exercise of its legitimate right to self-defence to counter such persistent and brigandish nuclear threats and blackmail of the United States and its followers, and are an exercise of a legitimate right to self-defence in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. It is a wanton violation of the sovereignty and dignity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to term these self-defence measures as a provocation and threat to peace.

As already clarified, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will bolster its self-defensive capabilities as long as the United States continues its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and imposes nuclear threat and blackmail.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Al Nuqari** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I had not intended to ask for the floor again. As you are aware, we have invariably highlighted the need to adopt a diplomatic approach out of respect for this forum and for the representatives attending the Conference.

As I have already stated, we are the Syrian Arab Republic and not a “regime” and we are present here as a member of the United Nations. We have always underscored the need to respect this frame of reference. As I noted in my first comment on the Ambassador

of France, the comment was precise and professional. I do not know why a personalized approach was adopted in the statement to which I will now respond.

I was expecting greater precision and self-control than what I have witnessed in this meeting room. I have stated that we respect diplomatic protocol, but we are also entitled to apply the concept of reciprocity. Hence this statement is a response to the delegate of the regime of the United Kingdom, since I have the same right. This is a kingdom that engaged in the colonization and oppression of peoples, a kingdom of darkness that extended across the globe. It killed nations and peoples and violated all provisions of international law. Yet the representative of the British regime starts talking to us about international law. Were you complying with international law when you entered and occupied Iraq? Prime Minister Tony Blair apologized for the conduct and outcome of that occupation. The United Nations, in Security Council resolution 1483 (2003), decided that the action concerned constituted occupation. Does that comply with international law?

It is strange to hear certain persons speaking to me about international law and multilateralism. It is you who have committed the most violations throughout your history. You have set a pattern of violations of international law and abuse of United Nations institutions. When a matter does not suit you, you tend to ignore it.

With regard to the technical aspect referred to in connection with the reports of the United Nations committees, we have never rejected any such reports. In one case, we said that the report needed to be expanded and that additional research was required, but we did not say that the door is closed to cooperation with international mechanisms. We thus continue to believe in the multilateral mechanism in terms of approach and procedure. The issue raised in my second point concerned the French report. With regard to the incident in question, Syria requested an investigation by the international organization mandated to visit and conduct an investigation at the scene of the incident, and at another location from which chemical materials were allegedly launched. We thus demonstrated transparency to the international mechanism. In fact, we were the ones who submitted the request to the international mechanism. You should all be informed that the British regime was one of the parties that impeded this international approach, that is to say, the involvement of the international mechanism. To my mind, we are not in a position to listen to lectures on respect for international mechanisms by the representative of the largest empire of oppression that has abused and killed peoples and that violates the Charter of the United Nations.

I hope I do not have to take the floor to respond again, because I have a great deal to add. As the saying goes, anyone in a position such as that of Britain should not, in my view, have the nerve to level a charge against representatives of any of these peoples or countries because of its sombre history.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic and give the floor to the representative of the United States.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): Mr. President, I would just like to respond to the comments of the representative from North Korea. Clearly, the representatives from Pyongyang have not listened to the calls that were made over the last two weeks in Vienna at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee.

The authorities in North Korea have not listened to the United Nations Security Council on numerous occasions about their provocative behaviour, and it is very clear from today's session, where we heard a large number of voices condemning the provocative actions of North Korea.

It is clear that the regime in Pyongyang is not listening. We, the United States, have said many times that we do not pose a threat to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Let me just close by saying, Mr. President, that the greatest threat to the regime in Pyongyang is the regime itself.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the United States and give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea representative said that he rejects as groundless what, not several, but many of us said today about the launch of ballistic missiles. However, he did not give any grounds for why he is saying it is groundless. Do we not have grounds to say that this provocation was a clear violation of Security Council resolutions? Do we not have grounds to say that this is a threat to international peace and security? Do we not have grounds to say that they have to return to the path to denuclearization? So, what I am asking him to do is to listen to what we are saying and, the next time he rejects what we are saying, that he please read the relevant Security Council resolutions, the United Nations Charter, the many rules and norms that we have at the International Civil Aviation Organization, at the International Maritime Organization and so on, and then provide some grounds for why he is rejecting what we say as groundless.

We are very tired of the repetitive, in Spanish, it would be *huida hacia delante*, in French, *fuite en avant*. I recommend not repeating such kinds of *fuite en avant*.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea and give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I would just say that I am pleased to hear from the Syrian representative that Syria accepts the findings of the Joint Investigative Mechanism.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the United Kingdom and give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Ju Yong-chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to take the floor again. If the regular military exercises or missile test fires of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to strengthen its self-defensive capability are to be labelled as a provocation or threat to peace, what should we call those numerous nuclear tests and missile launch tests by other countries, including the United States?

The United States carried out, quite recently, an intercontinental ballistic missile test fire on 26 April, followed by one on 3 May, but no one ever called these tests into question. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea filed complaints with the United Nations Security Council several times against the hostile United States policy and its provocative and aggressive large-scale joint military exercises, which is the clearest manifestation of the United States nuclear threat and blackmail and which also compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to have access to nuclear deterrents. However, the Security Council turned down every complaint, instead adopting a resolution banning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from taking steps for self-defence for no reason under international law and imposing stricter sanctions on it. What is more serious is the fact that the Security Council has never taken issue with the nuclear threat being posed by a permanent member State to other countries: the missile attack made by the member State on a non-nuclear State and the spy satellite and missile launches conducted by its allies.

The United States is now kicking up its campaign of forced sanctions and pressure against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, pursuing its new policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is called "maximum pressure and engagement". In response, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will speed up the measures for bolstering its nuclear deterrence. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is fully ready to respond to any options taken by the United States and, unless the United States withdraws its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and from nuclear threat and blackmail, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to bolster its military capabilities.

My delegation wants to reiterate its position that we do not recognize any of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and this would be my answer to the question raised by South Korea.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement.

I wish to request that delegations address bilateral issues outside the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

I now give the floor to the representative of France.

**Ms. Guitton** (France) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I will be brief. I wish to respond to the remarks made by the representative of Syria. Allow me to put the situation into perspective. The chemical attack on 4 April 2017 on the town of Khan Shaykhun in Syria killed over 80 people, of whom 50 died instantly, and injured more than 500. The victims died from suffocation, their nervous system paralysed by the gas. It was in response to this horrific attack and repeated violations by Syria of its commitment to stop using weapons that are banned by the international community that France decided to share the information in its possession with its partners and with the general public worldwide. The conclusions of this national assessment, which have been made public, are based on investigations and analyses carried out with the utmost precision by the French intelligence services. We have also provided the technical secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons with a copy of our technical analysis report and all other information that it may need.

It is our collective responsibility, that is to say, the responsibility of the international community as a whole, to preserve the chemical weapon non-proliferation regime, which is based on a convention that has, to date, been ratified near universally, by 192 States worldwide. That regime is a cornerstone not only of international order but also of collective security around the world and in each of our countries. France, in cooperation with its partners, will continue striving hard to preserve this regime, including by raising the issue again, as often as necessary, within the Conference, which is a perfectly legitimate forum in which to address it.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of France and give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Al Nuqari** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, my aim when I asked for the floor was actually to comment on the statement by the British representative in order to make it clear that we had not closed the door to cooperation with multilateral mechanisms concerning this matter. I did not say that we accept the findings, but this does not mean that we reject them. What we stated was that in some cases there was a need to conduct a more in-depth examination of certain evidence. We also underscored the need for broader surveys. I do not know how the representative of the United Kingdom drew these conclusions and how he reached that understanding of my statement.

I shall now comment on the statement by the Ambassador of France. As you know, my country acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and confirmed that its weapons stockpile would be destroyed outside Syrian territory so that there would be no suspicion in the future of the existence of residual material or accusations of the use or possession of such material. Thus, we were the ones who aspired to have the material destroyed outside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. Furthermore, our aspiration to create a world free of nuclear weapons and a region free of all weapons of mass destruction is not a recent development.

When Syria was a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2003, it launched an initiative aimed at ridding the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction. Hence our conviction of the need to cleanse the region is nothing new. We committed ourselves in good faith to the provisions of the Convention. There have now been incidents involving the use of chemical weapons, and the victims, whoever they may be, are undoubtedly Syrians. It is a painful fact. The Ambassador of France points out that there are victims, and this is undoubtedly a painful fact, but we have to ascertain and verify the basic sources of the information provided. The first source was the White Helmets, who were established and are managed by British intelligence, and there is now talk of other sources of intelligence, as I mentioned in my first statement. I shall not repeat what I said in the interest of saving Conference time.

Intelligence sources are not a proper tool or reference. A country's intelligence service is a tool that serves to implement the country's policies. We have experience in this regard, and the international community has experience in this regard. I can say that we absolutely deny any role in the incident and any responsibility for the commission of the crime, which we condemned. On the contrary, with a view to clarifying the circumstances of the crime for international public opinion, we stated that we were sending a large and impartial delegation to investigate what occurred in Khan Shaykhun.

We sponsored that action and we cannot accept X or Z intelligence reports from any State because, as I already mentioned, it has been demonstrated that such intelligence reflects the policy of the countries to which it belongs. This applies, as I mentioned, to French intelligence. Notwithstanding my personal respect for the French Ambassador, I do not think that there is any sane person at this meeting or in the world who is unaware of the fact that France has a hostile attitude to my country. The matter is thus closed. So I hope yet again, as we resume this session, that the Conference on Disarmament will not serve as a forum for political statements.

We have a large number of issues to address in order to effectively fulfil our role of establishing international peace and security in the framework of disarmament. I hope that these points will not be raised on a persistent basis. We are in a position to respond, but we do not think that such discussions serve to enrich or advance, in any way whatsoever, the work or mandate of the Conference on Disarmament.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic and give the floor to the representative of the United States.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): Mr. President, I wanted to intervene just to make a clear point here. As we have heard today, the threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — and I want to be clear about this — this is not a bilateral issue. It is clearly very much a multilateral one. It involves not just regional peace and security but, clearly, international peace and security.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the United States. Do any other delegations wish to take the floor at this stage? That does not seem to be the case.

I will therefore give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Myanmar, as announced in my opening statement.

**Mr. Lynn** (Myanmar): Mr. President, at the outset I would like to congratulate you and your delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Please be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation for your mission.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new colleague, Ambassador Farukh Amil of Pakistan. I wish as well to thank all the delegations that have expressed their support for my efforts.

Mr. President, since being tasked as the Chair of the working group on the way ahead, I have been able to conduct over 50 rounds of consultations — bilateral or multilateral consultations — with the membership. I have met with almost all of you. Based on my consultations, I will be proposing the establishment of subgroups based on the traditional agenda items of the Conference as recorded in document CD/2085. Those subgroups will clearly have a deliberative mandate. I foresee four subgroups with their respective facilitators.

As to the question of expansion which kept arising during my consultations, it will be dealt with in an appropriate format in my proposal. However, at this point in time a couple of questions remain to be answered. In order to secure the maximum possible support from the membership, I will be meeting with groups of the Conference tomorrow to submit the details of my draft proposal and seek your views and guidance on it. Then, I will circulate a draft proposal for your consideration later this week or early next week. If everything falls into place, I will put it to a decision later next week. Very briefly, that is my report to you on my task as Chair of the working group.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Myanmar and commend him on the excellent work he is doing. As I said at the start of the Senegalese presidency, we believe that it is necessary to work closely with you and not put forward any more proposals that might distract the Conference on Disarmament from its task, for the “way ahead” is an excellent initiative that deserves the Conference’s full support and approval.

I would like to remind you that Ambassador Lynn will hold consultations with the regional groups this week.

I would also like to invite you all to attend the reception that will be held on 18 May 2017 at the World Intellectual Property Organization.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 23 May 2017, in the Council Chamber. It will be immediately followed by a meeting of the working group on the way ahead. This concludes our business for this morning.

*The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.*