

Conference on Disarmament

English

Final record of the one thousand four hundred and eighty-first plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 14 February 2019, at 10.05 a.m.

President: Mr. Yurii Klymenko..... (Ukraine)

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The President: I call to order the 1481st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, as previously announced, today we will continue discussing the draft programme of work, a second revision of which was circulated by the secretariat yesterday afternoon, 13 February.

I am cognizant that delegations may not have had the opportunity to consult with their capitals on this revised draft and I want to assure you that I will endeavour to consider all comments I will receive in this plenary meeting and/or bilaterally, after the plenary meeting.

Excellencies, dear colleagues, I wish to thank all the delegations that have submitted comments and made proposals thus far, which I have endeavoured to take into consideration in the revised draft of the programme of work before you. In this regard, I would like to share with you the rationale behind the proposed revisions.

Yesterday evening, 13 February, I circulated through the Conference secretariat our second revised draft programme of work, contained in document CD/WP.618/Rev.2. This document constitutes the third attempt of the Ukrainian presidency to come up with a more realistic yet still balanced and comprehensive approach to the fruition of our shared aspiration – the resumption of substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament. In our efforts to reflect, to the extent possible, all existing common approaches among member States in relation to our joint business in the Conference, this second revised draft tries in particular to accommodate the views of many member States on the ripeness of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (paragraph 6 (b) of the revised draft programme of work). At the same time, it includes negotiations with a view to reaching agreement, in accordance with the mandate of the Conference, on all four core agenda items of the Conference (paragraphs 6 (a) to 6 (d)). In this revision, the draft also provides for discussions with a view to finding commonalities and reaching agreement on agenda items 5, 6 and 7 (paragraph 6 (e) of the revised draft programme of work).

Taking into consideration previous concerns of some delegations, document CD/WP.618/Rev.2 more explicitly describes the purpose of establishing coordinators for issues related to the expansion of the membership and the working methods of the Conference – I am speaking about paragraph 6 (f) and 6 (g). In our view, the work of the coordinators is to be specifically directed to bring more clarity and find commonalities regarding the issues explored. As evident from the text – and this is something which has seen a lot of support in this chamber – Ukraine's second revised draft programme of work still emphasizes the need to enhance, capitalize and build upon all the efforts made by member States within the five subsidiary bodies during last year's session of the Conference in order to maintain and preserve this positive and valuable momentum.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, needless to say, accommodating all prevailing views and the immediate priorities of all members, some of which contradict each other, in one programme of work is proving, as our recent deliberations in the Conference and informal consultations have shown, extremely complicated at the moment, perhaps even unrealistic; nevertheless, I would like to underscore Ukraine's openness to all productive approaches, ideas and suggestions for advancing the work of the Conference, encourage your further input, as well as invite all member States to be constructive, creative and mobilize to find a breakthrough.

Excellencies, dear colleagues, at this time I would like to open the floor for statements on the revised draft programme of work. Would any delegation like to take the floor? I see none at this stage. There could be two reasons for that: either the delegations did not have enough time to acquaint themselves with the revised draft programme of work or it is good enough to accommodate everybody. I would obviously prefer the second option, but I invite you at least to express your preliminary reaction to the document we provided. If it is more comfortable for the delegations, we could suspend our official meeting and then resume our work in an informal setting.

I recognize that the representative of Argentina would like to take the floor.

Mr. Martínez (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Mr. President, for your efforts to present us with a programme of work for the 2019 session. As we indicated with respect to the previous programme, we believe that it is a good foundation for our work. In this version, in particular, we note that the references to the programme of work suggested by the Secretary-General of the United Nations have been omitted. We would have preferred to see such a reference maintained; however, in the name of consensus and if it would enable us to advance in our work, we would nonetheless be ready to work on the basis of this programme, and we could also accept the remaining points. What is, I believe, important is for the Conference on Disarmament to proceed with its work in line with its mandate. As you suggest, Mr. President, in view of the fact that perhaps certain delegations prefer to express their points of view in an informal setting, we would also be in agreement with proceeding to an informal meeting.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and for his proposals. Would any other delegation like to take the floor at this stage? If not, I would like to suspend this official meeting and reconvene in five minutes in an informal setting.

The meeting was suspended at 10.20 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

The President: Excellencies, colleagues, I would like to thank you for the comments and proposals I heard during the meeting in the informal setting. I understand that other delegations need to get feedback and instructions from their capitals, so, in the meantime, our delegation will further analyse your comments and proposals and think about what could be done to further improve the text you have now on your tables and how we could at least try to accommodate some constructive proposals that were made. We are very much open to further consultations with all interested member States and will consider the options to further improve the text.

I wish to inform you as well that I intend to convene the next plenary meeting on Friday, 15 February, at 10 a.m. to allow for the continuation of our discussions, which are to be followed by a reception at 1 p.m. in the hall outside this chamber on the occasion of the end of the term of our presidency.

The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.