
Conference on Disarmament

English

Final record of the one thousand three hundred and forty-fourth plenary meeting


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President: Mr. Vaanchig Purevdorj.....(Mongolia)

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The President: I call to order the 1344th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Distinguished colleagues, allow me at this stage to suspend the meeting so that I may go to the Salon Français to welcome our first guest, Mr. Ri Su Yong, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like to extend a warm welcome to our guest today, Mr. Ri Su Yong, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite Mr. Ri Su Yong to take the floor.

Mr. Ri Su Yong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Korean; English text provided by the delegation*): I am pleased to address today this august multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the United Nations, which is growing ever more important in the light of the present international developments.

At the outset, allow me to extend my warm congratulations to Mongolia on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament during its 2015 session. I assure the President of the full support and cooperation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I also appreciate the efforts by Mexico, as the first President of the Conference in 2015, to move the Conference's work forward and I wish the other Presidents of the Conference success in their collective efforts.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is committed to the work of the Conference on Disarmament and has consistently played a constructive role based on the noble idea of contributing to international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea did its best to fulfil its responsibility and role under the principle of impartiality and transparency during its presidency of the Conference in 2011, and continued to support the adoption in the United Nations General Assembly each year of the resolution on revitalizing the work of the Conference and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations.

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, adopted a final document that conferred on the Conference on Disarmament the mandate to negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties of global application towards the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. Regrettably, the overall process of disarmament remains at a deadlock and has done so for nearly 20 years, contrary to the expectations of the Conference's members. While discussion on the issues, such as nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances, has enjoyed no progress in the Conference, nuclear weapons around the globe have been further modernized and their destructive power drastically increased. The number of countries inevitably acquiring nuclear deterrent capabilities has grown, in their effort to defend national security after having long been exposed to persistent nuclear threats by nuclear-weapon States.

In parallel, global stockpiles of fissile materials are steadily increasing and the militarization of outer space has accelerated at a high speed. Nevertheless, the Conference is not yet ready to adopt a programme of work due to the absence of a consensus on deciding the priority for negotiating core issues on its agenda, rendering the work of the Conference virtually paralysed. The reason for the Conference not being revitalized lies above all else in the lack of political will of some countries which are to assume the biggest responsibilities and obligations in the field of disarmament. These countries attempt, in particular, to infringe upon the security interests of small countries, while taking their own interests as absolute positions, against the spirit of multilateral cooperation. Such arbitrariness and double standards bring about negative consequences leading to an arms

race that is far from genuine disarmament negotiations based on mutual trust among Conference members. It is hard to foresee a breakthrough in revitalizing the work of the Conference unless the selfish and double standards of these countries are corrected.

Nuclear disarmament is now at a crossroads. Half a century ago there was intensive debate in the Conference concerning the priority of disarmament and non-proliferation. Some nuclear-weapon States pledged then to strive for nuclear disarmament, thereby adopting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) first.

For 30 years after that, no new nuclear-weapon State emerged. It can be said that non-nuclear-weapon States did faithfully implement the Treaty. However, nuclear disarmament was not fully realized during this period of time. Though the United States and the former Soviet Union reached bilateral agreements to cut the number of obsolete nuclear weapons, the modernization of nuclear weapons accelerated and nuclear threats against non-nuclear-weapon States became ever more evident. In a word, the commitment made by nuclear-weapon States to undertake nuclear disarmament on conditions of nuclear non-proliferation was not honoured. The consequences began to take shape through the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States in the late 1990s. At present, the number of nuclear-weapon States has increased almost twofold compared to 1968, the year when the NPT was adopted.

The nuclear map of the world today is significantly changed. Fewer people in the press or academia devote attention to the issue of nuclear disarmament. If the Conference on Disarmament remains unable to fulfil its mandate any longer, the issue of nuclear disarmament will face the potential risk of disappearing for good from the United Nations agenda.

The Korean Peninsula is a touch-and-go nuclear powder keg, where the largest nuclear-weapon State and the youngest nuclear-weapon State of the world are sharply confronting each other in a state of war. The Korean Peninsula is an exhibition showcasing the consequences of nuclear-weapon States breaking their pledge made to non-nuclear-weapon States at the time the NPT was adopted. Instead of providing security assurances to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which acceded to the NPT in 1985, the United States has intensified nuclear threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea rather than diminishing them. The nuclear threat of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is by no means potential or abstract, but rather a practical and physical matter. Strategic nuclear bombers fly non-stop from the United States mainland or Guam Island to the Korean Peninsula and stage drills of dropping nuclear bombs several times every year. Aircraft carriers and submarines loaded with nuclear missiles constantly enter the waters around and in the Korean Peninsula and take part in nuclear war exercises aimed at "occupying Pyongyang". The joint military exercises being staged across south Korea from 2 March are unprecedentedly provocative in nature and have an especially high possibility of sparking off a war.

In case a war breaks out on the Korean Peninsula, the United States and its subordinate south Korea will be entirely responsible for all consequences. While intentionally bringing the danger of a nuclear war, they are obsessed with surviving the war by setting up the missile defence system.

Threat from one side will provoke a reaction from the other. The hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for over half a century, not just a couple of years, compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to pursue nuclear possession. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot but bolster its nuclear deterrent capability to cope with the ever-increasing nuclear threat of the United States.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea now has the power to deter the United States and to conduct a pre-emptive strike as well, if necessary. The United States should understand clearly that the times when it unilaterally posed nuclear threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are gone for good and that military threats cannot be the means of resolving the issue. The grave reality of the Korean Peninsula proves who is to blame for the global retreat of the nuclear disarmament process. The response of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will depend on whether the United States withdraws its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or not.

This year marks 70 years since the Korean nation was divided by outside forces. In those decades, the world has made tremendous advances and times have undergone dramatic changes, but the Korean nation has not yet achieved reunification, suffering from the pain of division. As long as Korea remains divided, lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula and regional security cannot be ensured. When Korea is reunified, it will definitely constitute fulfilment of a national desire as well as a decisive contribution to the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula, and moreover North-east Asia where the interests of major Powers clash.

The respected leader Kim Jong-un, First Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, underscored in his New Year's address that the North and the South should achieve great national unity — true to the principle of “By Our Nation Itself” — to satisfactorily resolve the reunification issue in conformity with the common interests of the nation. The policy goal of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to achieve the national desire of reunification and the mandate of the Conference on Disarmament have common ground in the sense that both promote international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will not spare its sincere efforts to bring about great change in inter-Korean relations this year.

In concluding my statement, Mr. President, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reiterates that it will make contributions to actual progress in the Conference on Disarmament this year, believing that the Conference will pay due attention to the developments of the Korean Peninsula and give support for the efforts to ease the tension therein.

The President: I thank Mr. Ri Su Yong for his statement and also for the kind words addressed to the President. Allow me now to suspend the meeting for a short moment to escort Minister Ri Su Yong from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like now to welcome our guest, Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite Minister Steinmeier to take the floor.

Mr. Steinmeier (Germany) (*spoke in German; English text provided by the delegation*): We are living in tense times. The Ukraine conflict, Syria and Iraq, the advance of the ISIS terrorist group in the Middle East and Boko Haram in Africa — we face a large number of international crises, a situation we have not had to deal with before in the recent past.

It goes without saying that we have to respond urgently to these crises. Yet at the same time, we have to ask ourselves whether what we are experiencing is a coincidental accumulation of concurrent crises, or whether it is a systematic eruption of forces and tensions in a world in which structures of order are increasingly losing influence. We also have to find answers to this bigger question, for a world that is changing at increasing speed

and becoming more and more closely interconnected needs a new order, an order based on rules and law, an order based on reliability and trust.

I am convinced that, when it comes to this difficult task, disarmament and arms control is a field from which international politics still can learn. In the area of disarmament, the most important principle of international order — multilateralism — has been broadly applied for many decades.

Herein, and in its unique success stories in nuclear disarmament, lies the great significance of this Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. It is and has always been a laboratory of multilateralism, also and especially in difficult times.

This Conference on Disarmament is by no means an event only for when the going is good. In the midst of the cold war, it overcame the rifts between East and West to encourage cooperation between States and strengthen trust. It elaborated rules and tools for an international peaceful order, which we need so urgently today.

Let me just cite two examples.

Firstly, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has made an almost unparalleled contribution to making our world a safer place. This work has to continue, for, although arsenals have diminished by around two thirds since the end of the cold war, a mere fraction of the remaining 16,000 nuclear weapons could destroy our planet.

The proposal made by President Obama in Berlin in 2013 to embark on a new round of disarmament talks offers at least a chance of concrete progress. The talks between France, Germany, the United Kingdom, China, the Russian Federation and the United States (E3+3) and Iran are also advancing well. I would even go so far as to say that in the 10 years of negotiations which I have accompanied in different capacities, I think we have never achieved as much progress as we have made this year. The Joint Plan of Action adopted here in Geneva in 2013 is being implemented. Further progress in negotiations would no doubt also give the NPT Review Conference new impetus that is urgently needed.

Yet, for the steps that lie ahead, we need the cooperation of all participants. We will only be able to move closer towards the final goal of a world without nuclear weapons by working with the nuclear-weapon States, and this also applies to questions concerning the international order as a whole. We can only move forward by joining forces. That is precisely why I want to take this opportunity to state that trust and international cooperation have been shaken by the annexation of Crimea by Russia and its activities in eastern Ukraine. In view of this, we cannot simply return to business as usual.

The Budapest Memorandum — also an aspect of the international order — gave Ukraine a guarantee of territorial integrity after it had renounced its nuclear weapons. I am talking about this example because we have to bear in mind that security guarantees are a key task of this Conference, and they must be protected. Everyone, Russia as well, has to shoulder responsibility.

Given that the future of the international order is at stake, I appeal to my Russian colleague who spoke here yesterday: the path of multilateralism needs a readiness to shoulder responsibility and responsible action from all sides, especially from those who, as members of the United Nations Security Council, are particularly accountable.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is the second example that comes to mind. The prohibition of an entire category of weapons was a true milestone in the history of disarmament. In the Syria crisis it has proved its worth. Soon, the last of the 360 tons of mustard gas from Syrian chemical weapons stocks will have been destroyed in Germany. Syria itself has now acceded to the Convention and is shouldering responsibility and is engaging in obligations. At the same time, I condemn in the strongest possible terms the

repeated use of chlorine gas as a weapon in Syria. The deployment of weapons of this nature is a monstrous crime. Those responsible must be brought to justice. I support the calls of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to this end.

I would like to mention a third important disarmament tool: the Arms Trade Treaty, which recently entered into force. This, too, shows, that even in difficult times we can negotiate complex multilateral treaties which will one day, hopefully, be universally valid.

Yet, and let me stress the word “yet”, at the same time I note with regret that this and other treaties have to be negotiated outside of the very body that the international community envisaged for this purpose: the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. In these times of crisis, we simply cannot afford a Conference on Disarmament that is hampered and unable to act given the threats that we are facing; we cannot afford that. That goes both for traditional disarmament and also for the wide range of new threats. Let us just think about the recent cyberattacks, the use of space — I need only say the words “anti-satellite weapons” — or the area of new automated weapons systems, which raises difficult legal and ethical questions that we need to discuss within our societies. Who is going to be capable of tackling these issues, if not this particular Conference or forums like it?

Maintaining a balancing act between urgent crises and long-term order: that is the situation in which we work and in which the complex, hard, day-to-day work of multilateralism is more important than ever before. Perhaps we can find encouragement in the words of Henry Kissinger, who recently warned that if we insist on achieving the end result immediately, we risk crises or setbacks. Yes, we need to have patience and we need to focus on small steps, remaining driven however by the tenacious desire to see progress.

For this Conference, that means that no State is prevented from expressing reservations during negotiations and no State is compelled ultimately to accede to a treaty which has been adopted. However, no State should hamper negotiations from the outset. I am convinced that you, too, ladies and gentlemen, would like to return to the negotiating table sooner rather than later. Let us all work towards that goal. The world needs a strong Conference on Disarmament.

The President: I thank Minister Steinmeier for his statement. Allow me to suspend the meeting for a short moment to escort Minister Steinmeier from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like now to welcome our guest, Mr. Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite Minister Kurz to take the floor.

Mr. Kurz (Austria): Mr. President, thank you very much for the opportunity to be here and to address the Conference today. In the world after the cold war in which I grew up, most people seemed to stop worrying about nuclear weapons. They were seen as a relic from the past only an abstract danger which did not matter very much. But I think this is fundamentally wrong.

Last month Oxford University published a list of the 12 most serious threats to human civilization. In second place, behind global climate change, was the threat of nuclear war. The nuclear weapons threat still exists and many experts warn that the threat is actually increasing. In this respect, the conclusions of the three international conferences held in Norway, Mexico and, last December, in Austria on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons are clear and alarming. The consequences of a single nuclear explosion would be even more terrifying and long-lasting than we thought, and the consequences would be global and result in an immediate humanitarian emergency of enormous scale.

Humankind has actually been incredibly lucky on several occasions in the past. Nuclear weapons by their very existence endanger the security of all of us. It is therefore in the interests of the survival of humanity that nuclear weapons be abolished, so that they can never again be used under any circumstances. This is why Austria declared at the Vienna conference a clear national commitment. With this "Austrian Pledge", we engaged ourselves to present the compelling evidence of the Vienna conference and to build momentum for urgent action to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. I warmly thank all the States that have associated themselves with the Austrian Pledge so far. We are grateful for their support in this joint effort.

The evidence is clear, but the international community fails to take action. This failure becomes particularly evident in this forum, which is not delivering on its mandate to negotiate legally binding instruments to address this threat. The reason for this is simple. States still possess nuclear weapons and continue to consider them as important for their security and consider that nuclear weapons deter war precisely because of their destructive force. However, this failure endangers every person on Earth, so the conclusion is clear. If we want to stop proliferation effectively and achieve a world without nuclear weapons, we have to fundamentally change this mindset. But it will only change if everybody is willing to look openly at the facts that are now in front of us. We believe that the upcoming Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a crucial opportunity for all States parties to finally acknowledge these facts and take action.

As I already said at the Vienna conference, I think we need to challenge old thinking; we need to listen to the warnings of science and experts; and we need much more global awareness. We all agree that the world would be a better one without nuclear weapons, but it is up to us, the international community, to find the political will that is needed to finally move towards the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

The President: I thank Minister Kurz for his statement. Allow me to suspend the meeting to escort Minister Kurz from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like now to welcome our guest, Mr. Ignacio Ybáñez Rubio, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Spain. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite Mr. Ybáñez Rubio to take the floor.

Mr. Ybáñez Rubio (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a pleasure for me to address such an assembly of representatives of friendly nations in this magnificent chamber, which was donated by Spain in 1936 and which serves as a venue for channelling noble efforts in pursuit of disarmament, peace and international security. The international community today faces serious challenges that we must meet together in order to ensure peaceful coexistence between nations and the progress of our societies. It is therefore necessary to appeal, once again, to our sense of shared responsibility and to call for dialogue among all States.

The Conference on Disarmament, being the sole forum established for negotiating multilateral disarmament treaties, should play a leading role in this endeavour. We therefore regret the state of paralysis in which it has languished for too many years now. Spain would like, once again, to express its strong support for this Conference, and calls upon member States to seek consensus and to find constructive solutions for the benefit of present and future generations. While it is true that these good intentions have already been expressed in the past, albeit in vain, we must move beyond resignation and make a firm commitment to reaching agreements through a negotiation process, all the while reflecting on other ways to revitalize this forum, such as increasing the number of member States or allowing civil society to play a greater role. In the meantime, until it becomes possible to

adopt a new programme of work, Spain believes that document CD/1864 should guide the work of the Conference and lead the way to general and complete disarmament.

The aspiration of the international community is to create the conditions for achieving a world free from nuclear weapons. We must pursue this ambitious aim steadily but also realistically, as it will only be achievable if we enlist the cooperation of those States possessing nuclear weapons. Therefore, we are in favour of taking this matter forward gradually, as simply prohibiting nuclear weapons will not yield progress or lead to their elimination.

If we are to attain this overarching objective, we need to insist that States possessing nuclear weapons make substantial and progressive cutbacks, in accordance with article 6 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and to put in place transparency and confidence-building measures. We therefore call upon those States, especially those with the largest nuclear arsenals, to pursue negotiations on disarmament, and we appreciate the proposal put forward by the United States to reduce strategic arsenals to the threshold set in the new treaty on strategic arms reduction.

Similarly, we call upon the eight States listed in annex 2 to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to sign and ratify the Treaty in order to allow its immediate entry into force. We also call for the progressive reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in national security strategies. Spain also supports the mandate set out in document CD/1299 to begin negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. The mandate is flexible and does not exclude any negotiating option, which would make it possible to initiate the process without prejudicing the course or the final outcome of the negotiations. In the meantime, we encourage States that have not yet done so to place a moratorium on the production of fissile material as evidence of their commitment. We hope that nuclear-weapon States will respect the commitments made to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and we call upon States that have not yet provided such assurances to do so.

Spain supports the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements freely concluded by the States of the region concerned, as they constitute a further step towards achieving the ultimate goal of complete disarmament. Maintaining outer space as a safe and stable environment, and its peaceful use on an equitable basis that is accepted at the multilateral level, constitute an important objective which we must promote. For this reason, we believe it necessary to promote transparency and confidence-building measures, including an international code of conduct for activities in that area.

Against this backdrop, the international agenda for disarmament and non-proliferation will face some major challenges in 2015. These include the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which will be held in New York in April and May this year. Spain hopes that this meeting will serve to strengthen the Treaty and that, pursuant to the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference, it will allow us to move towards the balanced implementation of its three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, Spain would like to express its frustration at the fact that it has not yet been possible to hold a conference for the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We trust that such a meeting will be held as a matter of urgency and that our sense of shared responsibility will prevent this issue from hindering the smooth running of the Review Conference this year.

Spain also attaches great importance to the humanitarian dimension reflected in the preamble to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, which refer to the devastating consequences a nuclear detonation

would have. This is a matter of great concern to the international community and, in our view, one to which we should respond in a pragmatic manner through a step-by-step process towards nuclear disarmament. Similarly, we must not forget other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological weapons. Spain is following with great interest the process of chemical disarmament in Syria, which was conducted with great success by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations and which is still ongoing. However, despite the progress made in implementing Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), there are still elements of concern which we must address. We therefore support the efforts of OPCW to shed light on the attacks involving the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Syria last year, as well as to ensure the complete elimination of the chemical weapons programme in that country, thus avoiding their use against the civilian population or their falling into the hands of terrorist groups.

The international community is also working to reduce the risks associated with biological weapons. The year 2015 marks the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, which serves as a prelude to the eighth Review Conference in 2016. Spain draws attention to the steps taken towards achieving the universal ratification of the Convention, which already has 172 States parties, and welcomes both the progress made in applying it at the national level and the confidence-building and cooperation measures adopted in that connection.

To avoid giving in to pessimism, it should be recalled that, last year, there were grounds for satisfaction in the field of conventional weapons. The entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty on 24 December last year was a great success, as it made it possible to link the control of the export of conventional weapons with respect for human rights and international humanitarian law in the countries of destination. Spain has played an active role in this process, not only as one of the first States to sign and ratify the Treaty, but because it also decided to apply the Treaty on a provisional basis as from the day of its signing. Similarly, we have participated in numerous bilateral and multilateral activities aimed at promoting its effective application. Moreover, Spain considers the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons to be another serious threat to international peace and security and human development, as it is linked to armed conflict and to transnational organized crime and terrorism. For this reason, we welcome the consensus reached during the fifth biennial meeting of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the adoption of Security Council resolution 2117 (2013).

Mr. President, I cannot conclude without underscoring the need to take greater precautions to prevent weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorist groups, or underlining the importance for States to honour the commitments made in Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009). Spain, as President of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), will work actively to devise a strategy for implementing the resolution, which will be presented at the 2016 Review Conference.

The President: I thank Mr. Ybáñez Rubio for his statement. Allow me now to suspend the meeting for a short moment to escort Mr. Ybáñez Rubio from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would now like to welcome our guest, the Right Honourable Baroness Anelay, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the

Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite Baroness Anelay to take the floor.

Baroness Anelay (United Kingdom): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for welcoming me here today. I am the minister responsible for foreign policy in the House of Lords and I am also the Foreign Office minister responsible for United Nations institutions. So, for me it is a very special moment to be in Geneva and also to have the opportunity to address the Conference on Disarmament.

I am particularly pleased to be here in this auspicious room. I have never been here before. Our Ambassador has described it to me very well and it is most impressive. The very walls serve to remind us of the role that the Conference plays in international security and ensuring a safe global environment.

It is encouraging to hear that many States continue to value the United Nations disarmament machinery. The Conference on Disarmament has made the world a safer place through the multilateral agreements that it has negotiated over the years, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We must build on those successes. The United Kingdom is committed to working with all States to make sure that happens.

The Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, held in 1978, states that, “since the process of disarmament affects the vital security interests of all States, they must all be actively concerned with and contribute to the measures of disarmament and arms limitation”. We recognize this. We know we have particular responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State.

We last reviewed our nuclear-weapon policies in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review to ensure that they are in keeping with an ever-changing political and security landscape. The United Kingdom has long been clear that we would only consider using nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances of self-defence, or in defence of allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

As part of the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, we also looked again at our security assurances, and made the promise that the United Kingdom will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to and compliant with their obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

We made a commitment in 2010 to reduce the number of deployed warheads on each submarine to 40 and the number of operationally available warheads to no more than 120. This year, on 20 January 2015, we announced to Parliament that we had met this commitment. The Parliament of the United Kingdom takes a keen interest in the questions of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. In January, the House of Commons debated the question of Trident renewal: 364 members of Parliament from across all political parties voted to keep the deterrent; only 37 voted against. Maintaining and renewing elements of the nuclear deterrent capability of the United Kingdom, such as our submarine programme, is fully consistent with our international obligations under the NPT.

As long as the global security environment makes it necessary for the United Kingdom to retain nuclear weapons, we have a responsibility to maintain the safety and reliability of all elements of our nuclear weapons programme, including through replacing and updating of obsolete elements of the system as they reach the end of their operational life.

The United Kingdom has consistently sought to support the efforts of the disarmament machinery. Last month, the United Kingdom hosted a conference in London of the five NPT nuclear-weapon States (P5), the sixth meeting since the group first met in 2009, and we considered issues including nuclear disarmament. I was pleased to address the

opening session of that conference this year and to hear about the progress that has been made.

One of the reasons the United Kingdom first initiated these conferences was our strong desire to work together with the other nuclear-weapon States to increase transparency and confidence-building measures. No State can achieve individual security when operating in a climate of collective fear and mistrust. We must continue to talk openly and frankly. We must increase transparency. We must create the political and security conditions where those without nuclear weapons feel no need to acquire them and those that have them no longer feel the need to keep them.

In London, the five NPT nuclear-weapon States discussed how to make progress on all three pillars of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We invited, for the first time, representatives from non-nuclear States to one of our sessions. We also held an outreach event, providing civil society groups with the opportunity to engage directly with these nuclear-weapon States.

At the end of that conference, the five NPT nuclear-weapon States issued a strong joint statement that set out their successes in increased transparency, cooperative work, including on the Glossary of Nuclear Terms, as well as our shared resolve to tackle non-proliferation issues such as Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We also discussed the sensitive issue of verification of nuclear disarmament — one of the more challenging hurdles that we will have to overcome as we seek to build a world without nuclear weapons. Working with Norway and the United States, the United Kingdom has committed significant effort and resources to the question of verification. Our ground-breaking work with Norway has shown that verification is not easy. Whether it be instilling trust in inspectors or ensuring that monitoring equipment provides accurate readings, there are many questions still to answer. Doing this without revealing sensitive information or technology is not easy; we are acutely aware of the need to avoid any hint of proliferation ourselves. We plan to continue trying to find those answers, and in that regard we welcome the launch of the International Partnership on Disarmament Verification by the United States.

There has been a high expectation from many non-nuclear-weapon States that nuclear disarmament would be simple and quick. Over the years we have seen growing levels of frustration and disappointment but we are still living under a nuclear shadow. We are well aware that progress on nuclear disarmament has been slow. However, we strongly believe that a step-by-step process is the only way of ensuring long-term peace and security in the international arena.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the essential cornerstone for the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, and it is an essential contribution to international security and stability. The United Kingdom is working hard with others towards achieving a successful NPT Review Conference. The 2010 action plan is an essential component to the success not just of the 2015 Review Conference: we see it as an important road map towards our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Some of the actions will take longer to implement than others, but that does not mean that the action plan is not working.

In 1978, the first special session on disarmament gave a mandate to the United Nations disarmament machinery. The forums which were created — the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly — are as relevant today as they were then. They are mutually reinforcing. We believe a reinvigoration of any one of those bodies has a positive effect on the others.

We share the frustration of others that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to agree a programme of work since 1996. The Conference seeks to address practically all multilateral arms control and disarmament problems and they are incredibly complex issues.

We welcome the efforts made last year at the Conference on Disarmament. The United Kingdom was pleased to have taken on the role of coordinator of the informal discussions on the item of the agenda on preventing an arms race in outer space. It was a small contribution, but often these smaller discussion groups can help to build coalitions of the willing.

We hope these efforts can get the Conference on Disarmament back to work. We look forward to this year's working groups building on last year's progress. The focus must be on getting the Conference back to the important work of negotiations.

Many of you in the room here today will know that the priority for the United Kingdom here is to start negotiations on the early conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty. Ceasing the production of the fissile material required to make nuclear weapons is an obvious and necessary step towards disarmament. We fully support the work of the Group of Governmental Experts, which is considering elements that might form part of a future treaty, and we look forward to the report following the final meeting later this month. I would like to thank the Canadian Chair for her considerable hard work and efforts, and indeed the experts themselves for contributing their extensive knowledge and experiences.

In order to reach our shared goal, the shared global disarmament goals that we need to pursue, we must make a collective effort. The United Nations disarmament machinery provides an effective framework for that effort.

Here at the Conference on Disarmament we must show leadership. We must work together to find solutions that promote a safer world. We must deliver on our responsibilities together.

The President: I thank Baroness Anelay for her statement. Allow me now to suspend the meeting for a short moment in order to escort Baroness Anelay from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like now to extend a warm welcome to our guest today, Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite you to take the floor.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, 70 years ago the United Nations announced its intention to save future generations from the scourge of war and the untold suffering that it causes. To that end, it proposed to preserve international peace and security and to promote friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of sovereign equality and the self-determination of peoples. However, in 2013, global military expenditure amounted to the astronomical sum of \$1.75 trillion, and the survival of humanity is continuously threatened by the existence of more than 16,000 nuclear weapons. The disproportionate amount of money being spent on weapons should be channelled into promoting peace, economic and social development and a dignified life for all human beings. Disarmament issues, which are dealt with by this august forum, are of great importance and warrant greater attention. The first International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons was celebrated on 26 September last year. Cuba welcomes the widespread international support for this initiative and recalls the words of the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, when he said, and I quote: "In a nuclear war, the collateral damage would amount to the life of humankind; every Government in

the world is obliged to respect the right to life of every nation.” People have the duty to demand of political leaders the right to live. No one can afford to be indifferent, nor is there time to waste in demanding respect for this right. Tomorrow will be too late. It is time for the world to embark on the path to peace. Nuclear disarmament cannot remain a goal that is subject to continual postponement. We condemn the role of nuclear weapons in political doctrines and security strategies, and the threat of their use. We also demand respect for the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. At the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, Member States gave this forum the mandate to negotiate multilateral treaties in this area. However, the Conference on Disarmament has failed to fulfil its mandate in respect of nuclear disarmament. It has also failed to comply with article 6 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which clearly lays down an obligation to negotiate nuclear disarmament in good faith. Concrete action is needed to achieve the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world to which we aspire. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries put forward a proposal which was subsequently adopted by the General Assembly calling for negotiations to begin within the Conference as a matter of urgency with an eye to the early adoption of a comprehensive convention prohibiting the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and providing for their destruction. The Conference needs urgently to adopt a broad and balanced programme of work that takes into account real priorities in the field of disarmament. It is important for this forum not to yield to the lack of political will on the part of a small number of countries. The Conference, if it were to fulfil its mandate, could make an important contribution to changing the status quo and to freeing the disarmament machinery from its current state of paralysis, which benefits only the powerful. The Conference is prepared to negotiate on various issues in parallel, including a treaty prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons, a treaty prohibiting the arms race in outer space, a treaty providing effective security assurances to States which, like Cuba, do not possess nuclear weapons, and a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and dealing with those already in existence. All members of the Conference must be committed to contributing to the success of the high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament, which is to be held in 2018 at the latest.

By way of an historic milestone, at the second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which took place in Havana in January 2014, the region of Latin America and the Caribbean formally proclaimed itself a zone of peace. The proclamation, which was signed by all Heads of State and Government, emphasized the strong commitment of the members of CELAC to the promotion of nuclear disarmament as a priority. The Conference on Disarmament has an important responsibility to act to meet the legitimate expectations of the international community and to contribute decisively to international peace and security and to the survival of the human race, which is threatened by huge nuclear arsenals and by climate change. A new world order based on peace, human solidarity and social justice is essential.

The President: I thank Minister Rodríguez Parrilla for his statement. Allow me now to suspend the meeting in order to escort Minister Rodríguez Parrilla from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like now to extend a warm welcome to our guest today, Mr. Takashi Uto, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I now have the pleasure and honour to invite Mr. Uto to take the floor.

Mr. Uto (Japan): At the outset, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Vaanchig Purevdorj on his assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I also would like to express my gratitude to the Acting Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Møller, and his team for their continuous support to the work of the Conference. Disarmament is one of the pillars of the foreign policy of Japan, and it is therefore a great honour for me to have the opportunity to address you here today.

The year 2015 marks 70 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In this milestone year, it is critical that the international community achieve concrete progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Atomic bomb survivors are growing old, and many believe that this year might be their last chance to witness such progress. I recognize that various creative efforts have been put forward at the Conference on Disarmament in order to break the deadlock in negotiations. In this regard, we are encouraged by the work of the Group of Governmental Experts that has allowed for experts to engage in substantive discussions on various aspects of the future fissile material cut-off treaty, thus providing signposts that can help guide future negotiations of such a treaty.

Japan urges the representatives of the Conference's member States to take advantage of these developments and to agree to promptly begin negotiation of a disarmament treaty in order to fulfil the mandate of the Conference. To achieve such results, allow me to stress the importance, above all, of increased political will and participation of all countries.

Looking beyond the Conference on Disarmament, 2015 is an important year given that the Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will be held this spring. The NPT is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and maintaining and strengthening this regime is the most important disarmament and non-proliferation issue for the international community.

I would like to emphasize that the upcoming 2015 Review Conference should not only review the implementation of past Final Documents, but it should also agree on a concrete, practical final document for the next NPT review process. This outcome should address all three pillars of the NPT, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Japan recognizes that the international community faces increasingly diversified nuclear risks in relation to national, regional and international security. In this regard, I would like to express my deep concern at the ballistic missile launches conducted by North Korea yesterday, 2 March, which are a clear violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

In the light of such security environments, we believe that it is important to adopt realistic and practical measures to advance nuclear disarmament and ultimately realize a world free of nuclear weapons. As I indicated earlier, political will is essential to make steady progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

In this regard, allow me to mention the activities of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). The Initiative is a cross-regional and action-oriented group of countries, including Japan, that shares such political will. Indeed, participating States committed, at the ministerial level, to pursue the activities of the Initiative. The group contributes to the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and has actively participated in the 2015 NPT review process by submitting a total of 17 working papers, including the proposal of a standard reporting form to improve transparency. We are currently in the process of consolidating the working papers to be submitted to the NPT Review Conference so that the Initiative's practical and concrete proposals can become a basis of agreement at the upcoming Review Conference.

Furthermore, Japan has also been contributing to the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology. While we need to continue these efforts so that NPT States parties can benefit even more from the NPT regime, we must also stress the importance of the three Ss — safety, security and safeguards — in the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Japan will continue to actively contribute to the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology by promoting technical cooperation and strengthening the three Ss.

In order to strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, along with reinforcing the NPT regime, it is necessary to develop a subsequent legal framework at an early date. I would like to emphasize our commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Last month, Japan and Kazakhstan were nominated Co-Presidents of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In addition to chairing the upcoming Conference in September, we will act as coordinators for the next two years. We plan to host a Group of Eminent Persons meeting in August in Hiroshima.

In addition to the importance of recognizing the various risks of nuclear weapons, Japan — as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombing in a war — has been attaching importance to discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, which is an issue that has been receiving increased attention in recent years.

Japan believes that it has a special mission to convey, across national borders and generations, the reality of the devastation that occurred in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We have engaged in various efforts over the years in this regard, including supporting international activities of atomic bomb survivors and translating their testimonies into several languages.

The catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons fundamentally underpins all nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. I hope that discussions on these issues will be universal and inclusive.

In August 2015, as we mark 70 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan plans to host the next United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima. Furthermore, a Pugwash Conference will be held in Nagasaki in November. I wish to convey at these meetings the experience of those living in an area that has been exposed to radiation, as we seek to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

I also hope that, in this milestone year, we will all reinforce the political will needed for the Conference on Disarmament to become once again a negotiating forum and for the success of the NPT Review Conference. I believe that such steady efforts are important steps towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

The President: I thank Vice-Minister Uto for his statement and also for his kind words addressed to the President. Allow me now to suspend the meeting in order to escort the Vice-Minister from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: We have exhausted the list of high-level dignitaries scheduled to speak this morning at the Conference. I would like to suggest that we use the remaining time for delegations that would like to take the floor.

I recognize the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I do not wish to detain my colleagues today, but the Russian delegation is compelled to make use of its right of reply in order to comment on some of the points raised by the German Minister for Foreign Affairs relating to the issue of negative security assurances.

Negative security assurances in the form in which they are discussed at the Conference on Disarmament provide that nuclear-weapon States, including Russia, will not use nuclear weapons and will not threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. Russia has not threatened to use nuclear weapons against any other State and, needless to say, has never used them. So in that respect, the obligations of Russia to meet its commitments under the Budapest Memorandum have been fully complied with. I repeat: the topic of negative security assurances does not cover anything more than that. Therefore, the assertions made by Mr. Steinmeier are completely unfounded.

With regard to other issues relating to the Budapest Memorandum, a topic that is often discussed here — and was mentioned in the statement of the German Minister for Foreign Affairs — is that of respect for the territorial integrity of Ukraine. In that regard, it should be noted that Russia respected that territorial integrity for many years. However, there is no obligation under the Budapest Memorandum to recognize the outcome of anti-constitutional, anti-State insurgencies. That does not appear in the document, nor does the obligation to recognize the consequences of an insurgency that would lead to the separation of any part of Ukraine. Furthermore, there is no obligation under the Budapest Memorandum to restore the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

With regard to the annexation of Crimea, there are clear inconsistencies here. Let me remind you that Ukraine lost Crimea as a result of an anti-constitutional, anti-State insurgency and the ensuing events, in which the Russian Federation played absolutely no role. But Germany did, as Mr. Steinmeier was one of three ministers from the European Union member States who signed the agreement of 21 February that should have ensured a transfer of power in Kyiv within the framework of the Constitution. Therefore, we do not feel that it is appropriate here to question the compliance by certain parties with certain obligations. Furthermore, Crimea joined the Russian Federation as a result of the freely expressed will of the population of that region, when more than 90 per cent of people voted in favour of that move. I challenge you to show me similar examples of referendums conducted in other developed democratic countries. And if anyone claims that more than 2 million people can be forced at gunpoint to go and vote, I would be highly doubtful of such an assertion.

Lastly, with regard to certain actions implemented by Russia in eastern Ukraine, if what is meant by those actions is the provision by Russia of humanitarian aid to the suffering, civilian population of Ukraine, who are literally dying of starvation, I do not see what is being criticized. Russia has sent 16 or 17 humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine, which have directly ensured the survival of those people who have not been killed by bombing, shelling etc. Furthermore, in recent days Russia implemented another measure and opened a direct supply of natural gas to Donetsk and Lugansk. I would like to point out that this was done after the authorities in Kyiv — or, let us say, the recognized Ukrainian Government as it is now — cut off the gas supply to Donbass while the temperature — even though Ukraine is situated to the south of Russia — the temperature is still pretty low there and people could quite simply freeze to death.

I had to take the floor in order to once again reiterate a number of points that needed to be clarified for those officials at the Conference who were either not au courant with the situation or — in the case of newcomers — had not heard our previous discussions. Personally, I would not choose to initiate such a discussion, because I do not believe that all the issues that were raised in the statement by Mr. Steinmeier are directly related to the work of the Conference. However, I would like to say that you may consider my comments as a potential reply to any similar statements made in future.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of the United States.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I apologize for taking the floor, Mr. President, but I would like to exercise my right of reply based on the comments that were made earlier today by the Foreign Minister of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately cease all threats, reduce tensions and take the necessary steps towards denuclearization needed to resume creditable negotiations. Let me be clear: we will not accept North Korea as a nuclear-arms State and we will do what is necessary to defend ourselves and our allies. We continue to urge North Korea to refrain from actions that threaten regional peace and security and to comply with its international obligations and commitments. And finally, let us not forget that multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions require North Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and immediately cease all related activities.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of the United States for his statement. Would any other delegation like to take the floor? I recognize the representative of Canada.

Ms. Anderson (Canada): Canada considers it regrettable that North Korea chose to come into this chamber dedicated to disarmament to speak of its efforts to develop nuclear weapons in deliberate contravention of its international obligations, including under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We call on North Korea to cease its provocative threats to international peace and security, including continued nuclear programmes and ballistic missile testing, and to return to full compliance with its obligations, including as outlined in United Nations Security Council resolutions.

The President: I thank the representative of Canada for her statement. Would any other delegation like to take the floor? I recognize the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Jo Chol Su (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I have requested the floor, Mr. President, to comment briefly on the reply of some delegations with regard to my Foreign Minister's statement of this morning, and also to exercise the right of reply to the statements made by the Vice-Minister of the Japanese delegation.

As already mentioned in the Minister's statement this morning, the joint military exercises this year have become more provocative in nature than ever before. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea set forth flexible proposals to create a peaceful environment on the Korean Peninsula this year and has made sincere efforts for their realization. It clarified that, in case the United States stops for the time being joint military exercises in and around South Korea, we are willing to respond with a moratorium on a nuclear test which the United States is very concerned about, and expressed the stand that we are always ready to sit with the United States at a negotiating table.

From the outset of the year, however, the United States again started the aggressive war exercises with South Korea against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, thereby blatantly challenging the sincere proposals and efforts made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This has brought to light who is really responsible for escalating tension and harassing peace in the Korean Peninsula.

Increasing the nuclear threat from outside will only compel the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to bolster its nuclear deterrent to cope with this, and it will not be bound by anything in doing so.

With respect to our position on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as we have already clarified on several occasions, and I do not want to repeat, but I would like to kindly advise those speakers to try their best to look closely into the root cause and the

main reason why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea withdrew from the NPT, why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea decided to withdraw from the NPT.

As far as the current launch of missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is concerned, which was the issue raised by the Japanese delegation, it is an exercise of its right to self-defence. If these launches are called into question, what can you call the joint military exercises annually staged in South Korea in ever-growing numbers? There should be a clear answer on this. If Japan really is concerned about the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula, it should clearly and closely look into the root cause in a fair and unbiased stand and implement its obligation in earnest, in conformity with the Stockholm agreement.

The President: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of the United States.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): My apologies again for taking the floor, Mr. President. I just wanted to make clear and respond to the remarks that were just made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Our annual joint military exercises with the Republic of Korea are transparent, defence-oriented and have been carried out regularly and openly for roughly 40 years. These joint military exercises are planned months in advance and involve participants from 10 United Nations sending States Members. They are carried out in the spirit of the 1 October 1953 Republic of Korea-United States Mutual Defense Treaty, and are carefully monitored by the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission to ensure full compliance with the armistice. Our annual joint military exercises with the Republic of Korea are transparent and defence-oriented, as I said, and they have been carried out for the last 40 years and in no way pose any kind of a threat.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of the United States for his statement. I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Japan.

Mr. Sano (Japan): Mr. President, Japan would like to exercise the right of reply to the point made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regarding the issue of missile launching.

The international community must be reminded that it is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that continues to develop its nuclear and missile programmes in violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. It is imperative for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete actions towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization and to return to compliance with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Agreement and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Japan strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take such concrete actions.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Japan for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Böhm (Germany): I must just make a few remarks on the remarks made about the statement by my Minister. I see, with some interest, that his comments on the situation in eastern Ukraine received considerable attention. I would like to go back to the text and to what he really said in this context.

He talked about the Budapest Memorandum and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. He did not talk about any nuclear threat in that context, and he did not talk about any questions of natural gas or of trucks with support loads coming into Ukraine. He was just, and I say this with satisfaction, he was just appealing to his Russian colleague to be aware of multilateralism and the task we have here to act responsibly in the context of security

problems. That there was a security problem and still is, and that there is non-compliance with the Budapest Agreement was quite evident in that context. Referring to the statement about security guarantees — he did not talk about nuclear security guarantees — the guarantees as stated in the Budapest Memorandum have to be observed and complied with. It is as simple as that. I see also, again with satisfaction, that this topic will not allow us, as Minister Steinmeier said, to return to days older.

The President: I thank the representative of Germany for his statement. I recognize the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Dear colleagues, I apologize to you all, but we are getting into a very interesting situation. I respect the opinion of my German colleague and I am sure that he knows better than I do what his Minister intended, so I listened to his interpretation of what was said by Mr. Steinmeier. I also noticed that many of my colleagues simply compared what our German colleague said with what was actually written down. And what was actually written down? With regard to negative security assurances, you will find the following sentence: “Security assurances are a key task of this Conference, and they must be protected”. That is an exact quote. How can we deal with this kind of deceitful attitude towards one another? Let us tell it like it is. Were we called on to comply with the obligations under the Budapest Memorandum? We were. The key obligation under the Budapest Memorandum is not to use nuclear weapons and to refrain from threatening to use them. So if we are going to have a serious discussion here, let us stick to some parameters. Then, did Mr. Steinmeier talk about certain “Russian activities in eastern Ukraine” in his statement? He did. I am not making things up. I am basing my comments on the official text of a statement made by a very high-ranking German representative, in which every word should be honed and given the most careful consideration.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his statement. Would any other delegation like to take the floor? I recognize the representative of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Mr. Jo Chol Su (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): My apologies, Mr. President, for requesting the floor again. I wish just to briefly respond to the remarks by the Ambassador of the United States.

In addition to what I have just mentioned with regard to the military exercises, the Government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has already announced that if the United States and its allies really want to pursue military exercises, why are they not trying to stage military drills in other places, rather than conducting this one in the vicinity of the Korean Peninsula, where a tense situation prevails?

The prevailing situation in the Korean Peninsula proves that tensions are escalating and peace is being harassed day by day. The deliberate act by the United States to escalate tension in the Korean Peninsula, despite the patient efforts for peace by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, is aimed at keeping the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea from achieving economic priority. This act is also aimed at justifying its using the armed forces to hold a military edge in the Asia-Pacific region.

It is precisely for this reason that the United States has resorted to military provocations while persistently shunning the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea for ensuring peace and stability on the peninsula through dialogue and negotiations without preconditions. There is a limit to patience. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea allows peace but never begs for it, and it is ready for both dialogue and confrontation.

As far as the issue of the withdrawal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is concerned, I would like to take one more opportunity to clarify our position, maybe after this plenary session.

The President: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Would any other delegation like to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case.

That concludes our business for this morning. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held this afternoon at 3.30 p.m., when we will hear addresses by dignitaries of Georgia, Myanmar and Mexico.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.