

Conference on Disarmament

English

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


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

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The President: I call to order the 1348th 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 today, Mr. Lundeg Purevsuren, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

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

Mr. Purevsuren (Mongolia): It is my pleasure and duty to address the Conference on Disarmament when Mongolia is undertaking the great responsibility of the presidency of the Conference. On behalf of the Government of Mongolia, I wish to express our sincere appreciation to all members of the Conference for their support extended to my delegation during its presidency.

We are gathered here because we all believe in a bold vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. We are gathered here because it is our commitment and obligation to advance the long-standing agenda of the elimination of nuclear weapons. Thus, I believe that, as the sole standing negotiating forum for multilateral disarmament, the Conference has a greater role and responsibility to make progress towards the goal of a safer world.

There is an urgent need to bring the Conference back to work. Although the Conference is not designed to deliberate, I am encouraged that over the past year it has found ways to continue discussions on matters of substance and to make creative efforts to overcome the stalemate. We believe that it is important to continue our efforts along such a path. Therefore, during its presidency, Mongolia is endeavouring to move the process ahead on the basis of the Conference's previous work and to build upon the suggestions and recommendations provided by the Conference's members. I am very hopeful that draft proposals on the re-establishment of the informal working group on the programme of work, a schedule of activities for the 2015 session of the Conference and the establishment of an informal working group on methods of work could help the work of the Conference.

As a member of the international community, as a member of the international disarmament machinery and as a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Mongolia is firmly committed to non-proliferation and complete disarmament of nuclear weapons. Mongolia supports non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives and developments, including the conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, that seek to address the security challenges of our time. We consider that all these efforts will lead us to make sound progress, including implementation of the 2010 NPT action plan, which is required to preserve its relevance, credibility and effectiveness. We are hopeful that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will make a major step towards the fulfilment of the NPT objectives.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime and is an essential part of the global security regime. Thus, Mongolia joins the call on all States parties to spare no efforts towards achieving the universality of the NPT.

Almost 20 years have passed since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature. However, without the legally binding effect of entry into force of the Treaty, a de facto norm remains fragile. Mongolia therefore joined in the Joint Ministerial Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, adopted at the Seventh

Ministerial Meeting on 26 September 2014, and calls on all remaining Annex 2 States to speedily ratify the Treaty to enable its entry into force.

Mongolia has been undertaking efforts to promote the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by joining all major international frameworks, and it continues to fully implement its obligations under the relevant multilateral agreements. At the national level, Mongolia has also been taking measures to establish a relevant domestic monitoring mechanism and it adopted a series of legislative acts which prohibit any non-State actor from manufacturing, developing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

Mongolia has always been a firm advocate of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and is making efforts to contribute to international peace and security by promoting its nuclear-free status. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones has proved to be an effective regional measure of non-proliferation and disarmament. Thus, Mongolia is pursuing efforts in this direction and is supportive of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The existing zones need to be strengthened and measures need to be taken to promote the establishment of new zones, including in the Middle East and in North-east Asia.

Mongolia recognizes the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and looks forward to an earnest solution to the ongoing stalemate in the Conference. We are hopeful that all members of the Conference will demonstrate the necessary political will in order to ensure the commencement of its substantive work. We also believe that, given the present situation, innovative approaches need to be explored to make the resumption of meaningful disarmament negotiations possible.

The Mongolian people are hospitable and have always sought to find a collective solution to difficult issues. Thus, we believe that we need to have a dialogue and build consensus. Let us spare no efforts to move towards nuclear disarmament and to take a bold step further.

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

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would like now to welcome our guest Mr. Ibrahim Al-Jaafari, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite Your Excellency to take the floor.

Mr. Al-Jaafari (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I thank you for your kind words of welcome. I am pleased to be able to address the Conference on Disarmament and am honoured, as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, to be here today in this multilateral international forum. The interest of the Government of Iraq in the Conference on Disarmament stems from the latter's important role and its commitment to the noble ideal of multilateralism, which reinforces the credibility of the international community's collective responsibility for disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Iraq seeks to be a factor of stability at the regional and international levels and to avoid any actions which may increase tension and instability in the world. I wish to take this opportunity to assure you that the Iraqi Government respects its obligations under disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, pursuant to article 9 of the Permanent Constitution of the Republic of Iraq, which obligates the Government to abide by the country's international commitments to prevent the proliferation, development, production or use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and to prohibit the development,

manufacture, production or use of technical equipment and materials or delivery systems associated therewith.

Iraq attaches particular importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations. The Conference has achieved some notable successes in the past; unfortunately, however, it is traversing a critical and highly complex period with the increase in regional crises, the growing threat of terrorism, the escalating danger of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the stalemate on disarmament. All these factors jeopardize international stability and security, deviating resources from more constructive objectives and preventing tangible progress in the economic and human development and capacity-building that everyone aspires to achieve. For the past 18 years, the Conference has been unable to play its mandated role of negotiating disarmament treaties. We must, therefore, redouble our efforts to reach agreement on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that responds to the concerns of all member States and is consistent with the Conference's rules of procedure in order to make progress on the issues before us. Our hope is that the member States of the Conference will reach agreement on the programme of work in the 2015 session in order to move forward towards the disarmament objectives we all long to see, working to ensure that the current international momentum and successes are duly reflected in the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons next April and that the Conference comes to a joint understanding among member States on the fundamental issues.

I also take this opportunity to draw attention to the efforts made by Iraq when it held the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament during the 2013 session. Its efforts then were focused in two directions: to save the Conference from its stalemate and to redirect it back to its substantive technical work, in accordance with its mandate and rules of procedure. Those efforts culminated in the adoption of the decision of 16 August 2013 regarding the creation of an informal working group to produce a programme of work for the Conference.

The Government of Iraq attaches great importance to general and comprehensive disarmament, believing as it does that the arms race cannot lead to peace and security but that it is rather the principal cause of tension and instability. The Iraqi Government adheres to disarmament and non-proliferation instruments because it is convinced that universal accession to and unselective compliance with treaties regarding weapons of mass destruction, and the complete elimination of such weapons, is one of the fundamental ways to provide the international community with a genuine guarantee against their use or the threat of their use. International peace and security can be secured through shared and practical solutions reached via multilateral negotiations on collective agreements. It is for this reason that Iraq has acceded to all the principal disarmament treaties and confirmed its full commitment to implement them, first and foremost the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. It has been a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons since 1969 and has also subscribed to the model additional protocol of the International Atomic Energy Agency's comprehensive safeguards system, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its five Protocols and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In addition to this, Iraq respects other arrangements and measures relating to the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Iraq shares the view of many other States that nuclear disarmament must remain the Conference's top priority. This reflects the importance given to that issue in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in

1978 as well as the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which states that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons contravenes the international law of armed conflict and the obligation of States to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. We therefore reaffirm that complete nuclear disarmament remains our first priority. The destructive nature of those weapons means that their complete and definitive elimination is necessary for the very survival of the human race, while their continued existence constitutes a threat to international security and peace. I would like to use this occasion to stress the inalienable right of States, and particularly of developing States, to develop, produce and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and in order to achieve economic development, without discrimination or hindrance, on condition that their activities are monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency and meet the requirements of the non-proliferation regime. I also take this opportunity to applaud the negotiations currently taking place between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany. They represent the best possible solution; indeed, in March 2012, one of the rounds of negotiations involving the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany was held in Baghdad, thereby reconfirming the concern of Iraq to ensure that the process ends positively and helps to bring the two sides together to find appropriate solutions on remaining points of divergence. Our hope is that a peaceful solution to the issue may be found.

We are pleased to see a revival of the international debate on the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons: Iraq was an active participant in the three conferences held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna. We support the pledge made by the Austrian Government in that regard, which confirms a number of important principles, including the imperative of human security for all, the protection of civilians against the risks stemming from nuclear weapons and the call to States parties to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr. President, please allow me to set forth the point of view of the Iraqi Government on the fundamental issues on the Conference agenda, particularly the four core issues of the agenda. The area of nuclear disarmament has recently seen a number of positive international developments, but the conservation of a large number of nuclear arsenals and the development of new categories of weapons and delivery systems remains a cause for concern. There can be no doubt that technological progress in this field increases the danger of ongoing militarization, and this issue will remain one of the foremost priorities of the Conference. Iraq therefore encourages any efforts and any negotiations between nuclear-weapon States that may lead to a real reduction in nuclear weapons and to the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That would be a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament. As regards negative security assurances, it is necessary to reach agreement on a legally binding international instrument under which nuclear-weapon States give unconditional guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against them, and to consider the ways in which progress may be made towards that objective. Negative security assurances are a core element, a vital step on our journey and a just and legitimate demand on the part of non-nuclear-weapon States, which, by acceding to the Treaty, have voluntarily renounced any military nuclear ambitions, but they cannot be considered as an alternative to the final goal of complete nuclear disarmament. We therefore invite the Conference to redouble its efforts to devise a binding legal framework capable of providing those guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States.

The continuing production of fissile material jeopardizes the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Iraq therefore supports the idea of a negotiating mandate for a non-discriminatory multilateral treaty that is internationally and effectively verifiable to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear

explosive devices. On the issue of outer space, we believe that it is part of God's creation, which He gave into the custody of all humankind, and it must therefore be explored and used only for peaceful purposes. The militarization of outer space will lead to a costly and destructive arms race which must be prevented. It is for the Conference on Disarmament to consider adopting an international instrument to prevent the weaponization of outer space. I take this opportunity to welcome any initiative aimed at preventing the placement of weapons in outer space. Such an initiative would make a constructive contribution to substantive discussions to prevent the militarization of outer space. I likewise welcome any confidence-building initiatives on outer space activities which would help to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Mr. President, Iraq reiterates its support for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones as an important step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. Through you, we wish to draw the attention of the international community to the importance of implementing the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, in accordance with the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, which is fundamental in that regard. Moreover, Security Council resolution 487 (1981) needs to be implemented because security and stability in the Middle East require the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, first and foremost nuclear weapons, in accordance with paragraph 14 of the resolution, the relevant resolutions annually adopted by consensus by the General Assembly and the resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference.

The failure of international efforts to convene the conference to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, which was to have been held in Helsinki in December 2012, may be seen as an evasion of the commitments set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, and this will have a negative impact on the credibility of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as well as adverse consequences for the Treaty review process and the nuclear non-proliferation regime in general. The postponement of the conference to an unspecified date on the basis of unacceptable excuses is the responsibility of the United Nations and of the States sponsoring the conference as the depositary States of the Treaty. We hope that the Review Conference to be held in New York in April 2015 will be able to adopt a binding reference document for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Today's multifaceted and increasingly populated world urgently needs to race to combat corruption and crime, ensure women, children and all people the enjoyment of their rights and disseminate a culture of love, trust, peace and serenity.

In closing, I would like to express my great appreciation for the efforts made by the Acting Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Michael Møller, and by this year's Presidents of the Conference as they seek to restore its effectiveness and enable it once again to play its true role in addressing disarmament and non-proliferation issues. In this, you may rely on the support of Iraq, which has been a pillar of civilization throughout history and is currently on the front line against terrorism. We wish you and the other Presidents every success in your endeavours.

The President: I thank Minister Al-Jaafari for his statement and also for his kind words addressed to the Chair. Allow me now to suspend the meeting to escort Minister Al-Jaafari from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: I would now like to welcome our guest Mr. Francisco Echeverri Lara, Deputy Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Colombia. Thank you, Excellency, for addressing the Conference on Disarmament. I have the pleasure and honour to invite you to take the floor.

Mr. Echeverri Lara (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin, Mr. President, by expressing my great appreciation for your efforts to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament. I would also like to note the work carried out by Mexico, your predecessor in the presidency, and the important conclusions and references that it provided to help us define the mandate of the Conference. We view your efforts as a healthy and essential call to overcome the deadlock in which the Conference finds itself. Throughout the 17 years that Colombia has been a member of the Conference, we have endeavoured to ensure that this forum fulfils the mandate entrusted to it, namely to negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties.

Proof of these efforts can be found in document CD/1913, prepared in June 2011 during the Colombian presidency of the Conference, in which my country presented thoughts on the state of the Conference and on how to strengthen it. As a member of the Conference, we have acted in a constructive manner and will continue to do so, guided by our belief in multilateralism, respect for international law, commitment to peace and clear sense of purpose with regard to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

This year, the experts who sit on the Science and Security Board of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* decided to move the hand of the symbolic clock face that represents our planet's final hour two minutes closer to midnight, as a result of the accumulation of nuclear arsenals and climate change. This alert level, which is among the highest in the history of the clock face, indicates that we are three minutes from doomsday. This is not the only reminder of the urgent need to negotiate a multilateral treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. This week, we have heard sound, reasoned arguments to the same effect.

Colombia values the efforts of non-nuclear-weapon States, which have understood their role and the responsibility that they bear in raising awareness of the dire humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. My country participated in the conferences held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna, and firmly supported the joint statements on the matter delivered in the First Committee of the General Assembly.

Colombia is a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone on the planet. The Treaty encouraged the creation of similar zones in other regions of the world and constituted a concrete step towards attaining a world free of nuclear weapons. At the Second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, countries in the region prioritized the promotion of nuclear disarmament by proclaiming that Latin America and the Caribbean is a zone of peace, free of weapons of mass destruction. Colombia is also a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and, as such, has stressed the need for the Treaty to be universalized. We emphasize the importance of making significant progress in the implementation of the Treaty's provisions, particularly those contained in article VI, at the Review Conference to be held this year. The possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their transfer to armed non-State actors are matters of permanent concern for us. We comply fully with the obligations arising from Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) at the national level and urge other States to do the same at the international level.

It is therefore very difficult for us to witness the stagnation in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, especially as we would like this forum to deal with issues such as conventional arms control, which has been somewhat neglected, in order to prevent illicit trafficking in such arms. Developments in this area have taken place outside the Conference. Taking into account my country's serious aspirations to end the internal armed conflict and build peace, matters pertaining to conventional disarmament and to small arms and light weapons assume critical importance. It bears repeating that conventional arms

currently claim more victims in countries such as Colombia than do weapons of mass destruction.

Colombia is, or is in the process of becoming, a party to the main instruments designed to continue strengthening the international disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control regime.

Mr. President, Colombia has listened carefully to suggestions that parallel courses should be followed in adopting measures to fill the existing gaps in terms of the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. We know the virtues of the processes of negotiating disarmament instruments that have taken place outside this Conference, but we also know their limitations. We will continue to participate in situations that enable us to make constructive and tangible progress towards common goals and towards agreements that pursue the objectives that inspired the establishment of the United Nations and that honour its purposes and principles. In the meantime, my country wishes to underscore the need for all the member States of the Conference on Disarmament to show political will if we are to keep striving for this forum to accomplish the purpose for which it was created and to display its relevance after almost two decades of incomprehensible stagnation.

To conclude, I wish to thank all the member States of the Conference and the international community for their ongoing support in the peace process that is under way in my country.

The President: I thank Deputy Minister Echeverri Lara for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. Allow me now to suspend the meeting in order to escort Mr. Echeverri Lara from the Council Chamber.

The meeting was briefly suspended.

The President: We have exhausted the list of dignitaries scheduled to address the Conference today. The floor is now open to delegations. Would any delegation like to take the floor? I recognize the Ambassador of Ukraine.

Mr. Klymenko (Ukraine): Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor under your presidency, let me extend my warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, on the assumption of your duties and wish you every success in this endeavour. Please be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation with you to advance the objectives of the Conference on Disarmament.

As Ukraine has been mentioned repeatedly during this high-level segment, both in the statements of a number of delegations and in the right-of-reply comments, I would like to note the following.

Let me express my gratitude to the delegates, namely of Germany, Georgia and Latvia, who demonstrated solidarity with Ukraine, supporting its tireless efforts aimed at protecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as at stabilizing the situation in the south-east of my country.

At the same time, we unfortunately also witnessed this week, in this Council Chamber, groundless and cynical allegations being made in the right-of-reply statements of the representative of the Russian Federation with regard to Ukraine, which I totally reject. However, I would like to go further and set the record straight, not politicizing the issue but rather responding to numerous slanderous claims.

First of all, concerning the alleged non-breach by the Russian Federation of the Budapest Memorandum, the Russian Federation indeed has not used nuclear weapons against Ukraine, which is prohibited under article 5 of the above-mentioned document. At the same time, on the twentieth anniversary of the Budapest Memorandum, it perfidiously violated all other articles of this fundamental document of the whole international security

architecture, which stipulate respecting the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine and refraining from economic coercion against Ukraine, among other things. I would thus like to strongly recommend that the Russian representatives refresh their knowledge with regard to the document signed by their country at the highest level.

Secondly, with regard to the status of Crimea, I have to once again remind the Russian delegation that there was neither a legitimate choice by the Crimean population nor a free, so-called referendum. On the contrary, there was a traitorous scenario performed in the autonomous republic by the self-proclaimed, unlawful authorities, at gunpoint, by “green men”, who were later identified by the Russian President as Russian servicemen, that ended up with an annexation, not recognized by the world community, of the peninsula by the Russian Federation.

In this regard, let me draw attention to United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/262 of 27 March 2014, overwhelmingly backed by the international community, which clearly supports the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The resolution underscores that the so-called Crimea referendum of 16 March 2014 has no validity and it calls upon all States, international organizations and specialized agencies not to recognize any alteration of the status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. The latest allegations of the Russian Federation about eventual deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of temporarily occupied Crimea are very irresponsible and destructive. Moreover, the Russian side has seized the nuclear facilities, installations and materials of Ukraine located in Crimea, which contradicts the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Statute. In this regard, I would like to stress the importance of the clear position of IAEA that the provisions of the agreement between Ukraine and the Agency for the application of safeguards in connection with the NPT remain fully effective and apply to the nuclear facilities and materials in Ukraine, including those located on the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thirdly, with regard to the cynical allegation that the Russian Federation is not a party to the conflict in Ukraine, this is exactly the case, whether or not Russia is trying to prove black is white. There is more than abundant evidence of the Russian invasion on the territory of Ukraine, provided not only by the Ukrainian side but also by reliable sources of information, including very explicit satellite imagery of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and data of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and its member States and reputable international NGOs, in particular Amnesty International.

The Russian Federation continues fuelling separatist movements in the eastern part of my country and providing mercenaries, munitions and training for armed terrorist groups in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. Moreover, this State supplies heavy weaponry to terrorist groups in Donbass and put in place its own military command structure on the territories controlled by terrorists. So, against this backdrop, if Russia is not a party to the conflict, then who is it?

Last but not least, replying to the groundless accusations against my country regarding the alleged use of cluster munitions, I would like to make it crystal clear that the counter-terrorist operation forces, unlike the Russian-supported terrorist groups operating in the south-east of Ukraine, have never used and do not use cluster munitions. In fact, Ukrainian armed forces have never shelled populated areas where civilians could be affected. In order to avoid civilian casualties, the armed forces of Ukraine are strictly prohibited from using rocket and cannon artillery against residential areas even if there are illegal armed groups present. At the same time, according to a number of reports of the

OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the cluster munitions which caused casualties among the civilian population in the south-east of Ukraine were fired from the territory which was not controlled by the Ukrainian side and was exactly where the Russian-supported terrorists were located.

The question is, where did they get this deadly, sophisticated weapon? The answer is obvious: from the same place where they got Russian-made Buk anti-aircraft missile launchers, one of which shot down Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 on 17 July 2014, taking 298 lives.

Summing up, we call on the Russian Federation to stop its insinuations and to start to strictly abide by the package of measures on implementation of the Minsk agreements, approved by it on 12 February 2015 at the highest level.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Ukraine for his statement. Would any other delegation like to take the floor? I recognize the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation has often noted two distinctive features of the Conference on Disarmament: firstly, its democratic spirit, which allows the members of certain delegations to speak in this room about whatever comes into their heads; and secondly, the increasingly frequent attempts to politicize the work of this forum, thereby distracting us from our main task of finding compromises on its key questions. Unfortunately, yet another such attempt is now under way. I, of course, find this extremely regrettable.

With all due respect, we were not the ones who once again brought up the subject of Ukraine here. We have to respond to comments that bear little relation to reality and do so in the presence of people who should be dealing with very different matters, given their specialist knowledge and expertise. It might not be very appropriate but, since we have had so many accusations hurled at us, we will have to address each of them in turn. It will take some time, so I ask all those present to gather their patience.

Regarding the Budapest Memorandum, the representative of Ukraine must not have been in the room when we made our last statement and explained that the Budapest Memorandum does not include an obligation to recognize anti-State, anti-constitutional coups and their consequences. Nor does it include an obligation to try to restore the sovereignty of Ukraine now that part of its territory has been lost following complicated socioeconomic and internal political processes. That is not there. As to the 20 years that you are trying to tell us about, during the 20 years in which Ukraine had constitutional order and legitimately elected authorities, there was nothing of the sort. We have respected all the articles of the Budapest Memorandum to the letter.

You must have forgotten what your previous Minister of Defence, I believe, said in August of last year regarding the use by Russia of tactical nuclear weapons in the Luhansk airport area. If you wonder why I am bringing this up, it is so that all those present can consider the extent to which they can trust statements made by Ukrainian officials. Forgive me, but the Minister of Defence was not the last person. If we believe everything that our Ukrainian colleagues say, we must have already had a mini nuclear war in the Donbass region.

Now on to politics and economics. The high-level, ministerial-level dialogue has never been interrupted. It has been conducted respectfully, even in the public sphere, and in a manner that is far from being cynical, groundless and whatever else. Furthermore, it was thanks to this dialogue, to our sustained joint efforts, that we managed to agree and enter into the Minsk agreements, which must be respected.

In fact, much is contained in the Minsk agreements about economics, politics and what needs to be done. I will not cite the information point by point but should say that, after Ukraine ceased paying pensions and social security, closed the railway lines and other transport links and introduced special passes on the territory of the Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics, as I very recently mentioned in my previous statement, it then seized and cut off the gas. Imagine: late February, sub-zero temperatures, and they seized and cut off the gas! The Russian side then had to supply the inhabitants of Luhansk and Donetsk with gas.

Next, I also spoke about Crimea, but you must have been distracted or not have been here to hear me. It is impossible to force more than 2 million people to go to the voting booth. I also wish to recall that, at that time, alongside the Russian military contingent, which was in Crimea in line with the agreements, a comparably sized unit of Ukrainian troops was also there. And thank God, we managed to avoid bloodshed, despite the provocations. Not a single shot was fired in Crimea.

As to supplying weapons, I think that all those present in the room have seen examples of Soviet, Russian and Ukrainian weapons. They are more or less identical. So when people talk about private satellites and images taken from private satellites, it is simply not realistic: it is impossible to tell them apart from the air.

The militia of the Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics acquired a great deal by various means from the Ukrainian army, including weapons abandoned in battle, as is now happening on the territory of the former Debaltseve "kettle", whose existence had long been denied by the Ukrainian side for obvious internal political reasons, namely that it cannot be acknowledged that some peasants and workers there are beating the regular army. In the Debaltseve "kettle", the militias have seized dozens, if not hundreds, of heavy weapons of various types, and they will be repaired and put into service.

Regarding the use of cluster munitions, I will not even get involved in the discussion; there is nothing to discuss because we have Human Rights Watch reports and a large quantity of documentary evidence. What is missing is the essential: the courage or, as we so often say here, the political will to acknowledge mistakes, go beyond one's own point of view, perhaps, and engage in a political dialogue with a part of one's own country, with those who live there, who have all been branded terrorists.

Distinguished colleagues, I can tell you that I was born in the Luhansk province of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, where I lived until the age of 18 years. It was then one big, united country. I am far from indifferent to what is happening in the Donbass region, and particularly in Luhansk.

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

Mr. Klymenko (Ukraine): I am sorry for taking the floor a second time today, but I feel it necessary to react to what was said just now by the representative of the Russian delegation. Unfortunately, I notice that my appeal to stop insinuations was not heard. I already reacted to many of them. Some were new, which were circulated in this chamber with regard to the legitimacy of the Ukrainian authorities, recognizing on the one hand the high-level dialogue between the leaders of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, but at the same time the representative of the Russian delegation called into question the legitimacy of the Government of Ukraine after the quite democratic, effective and fair elections — both presidential and parliamentary — that we had in Ukraine last year.

So, it would be very important for the Russian Federation to provide Ukraine only with gas, which was mentioned by the representative of the Russian delegation, and not the other items mentioned by me, including militants, munitions and weaponry. It would

significantly help to duly implement the package of measures on implementation of the Minsk agreements.

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

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): You are indeed correct. Gas is not all that we are supplying there. We are also supplying humanitarian aid, and have already supplied several hundred thousand tons, to ensure that people, including children, the elderly and women, have enough heat and food, since they receive nothing from the Ukrainian side, whose supplies never get there and are probably just kept by the Ukrainian security apparatus.

As to assistance offered to Ukraine itself, you were right to mention gas. If we bore ill will towards Ukraine, there would not have been a \$100-discount in the autumn of last year, nor would electricity and coal have been supplied, and much more besides. Those who think that the Russian Federation is operating on the principle of “worse is better” are deeply mistaken. We can only wish our neighbouring, brother country peace and prosperity and, since the very beginning of the crisis, we have directed our efforts towards maintaining constitutional processes, as I have often mentioned, and subsequently finding a dialogue with those living in part of its territory.

We must remember that a rather long time elapsed between the legitimate elections. No one denies that it was an anti-constitutional, anti-State coup. To do so would be naive, since what happened in Kyiv last February could hardly be called a democratic process, one offering elections, referendums and other mechanisms in line with international democratic standards. In its final stage, in particular, it was an awful spectacle of disturbing, bloody confrontations, after which people came in and began to take steps that forced two parts of Ukraine to re-examine their relationship, since they simply did not want to live with the new power in Kyiv. They decided to go their own way. What happened next is another matter. And what happened next followed on from the mistakes and incorrect steps that had been allowed from the beginning. That is what happened.

We now have an extremely complex international crisis on our hands, one involving many formats, many players, including the Security Council and the Normandy format, the framework in which the Minsk agreements mentioned by the representative of Ukraine were reached. We are all trying to find the path to peace. And it is important that we do so not only in words but also in deeds. I see no sense in continuing the discussion through an exchange of rebukes and accusations and think that we need to put an end to this. All the more so, and this is the main point, really, as the Conference should not replace the Security Council, which deals with questions of war and peace and the resolution of the most complicated international conflicts.

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

Mr. Klymenko (Ukraine): I am sorry for taking the floor once again, but I will try to be quite brief. I would like to clarify something in order not to leave an erroneous picture from what was just said by the Russian representative.

First of all, what happened in Ukraine last February is called the Revolution of Dignity. The Ukrainian people, together with the whole international community, recently celebrated the first anniversary of this revolution.

Secondly, with regard to the so-called humanitarian assistance and humanitarian convoys which are sent to Ukraine, unfortunately these so-called humanitarian convoys are sent to Ukraine in violation of existing international norms and principles. The Russian Federation alone knows what is inside these humanitarian convoys because neither the

International Committee of the Red Cross nor the Ukrainian Government nor the Ukrainian representatives have access to check what is inside the multi-kilometre-long columns of these humanitarian convoys. So, we call on the Russian Federation to closely cooperate with the international community or the Red Cross and the Government of Ukraine when providing assistance to the people in the south-east of my country.

With regard to gas and the discount that is provided to Ukraine, it is quite paradoxical but, even with this discount, unfortunately the price which Ukraine has to pay for Russian gas is the most expensive in Europe.

Summing up, I would like to underline that Ukraine is committed to peace and to finding the right solutions and right ways to ensure peace and stability in the south-east of my country. Not only are we ready to talk, but we are taking concrete practical steps in order to reach stabilization in my country, including the decentralization of power and many other efforts which will help to improve the situation.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Ukraine for his statement. I would like to appeal to the representatives of Ukraine and the Russian Federation to consider the time and the right of reply and, if possible, to continue the discussion in an informal way. I hope that this appeal would be acceptable to both representatives. I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Deyneko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will comment on only one episode: the Russian humanitarian convoys. Firstly, we always alert the Ukrainian side when a convoy will be sent. That is the first point. Secondly, Ukrainian border guards and customs officials are present at the checkpoints and can inspect cargo and have the right to inspect cargo, but do not always exercise this right and sometimes turn their backs in defiance. If you wish to inspect the convoys, do so, but it seems that you do not. Why am I telling you this? Because I can talk for hours with the representative of Ukraine and we can carefully analyse every episode, which would show that the situation is slightly different. But really, Mr. President, I agree with you completely: it is time to put an end to this discussion, which is going nowhere, all the more so because our discussions with Mr. Klymenko can do nothing at all to resolve the situation in the Donbass region, where right now, at this very moment, everything is being decided on the ground, where heavy weapons must be pulled back to the distances specified under the Minsk agreements.

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

Distinguished colleagues, let me conclude our business for today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Monday, 9 March, at 3.30 p.m., when we will hear an address by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Following the high-level segment on Monday afternoon, we will resume the normal plenary, which will be dedicated to a discussion on the issue of prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.