Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to extend to you my warmest congratulations on your election to the high office of Chairman of this Committee and wish you every success in discharging your responsibilities.

I take the floor in my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament to present the report of the Conference on its 2002 session and the relevant draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has a crucial role to play in addressing existing and new challenges in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September last year against the United States made it clear that the world is confronted with a new quality of threat with serious repercussions in, among others, fields such as nuclear non-proliferation, safety and security. They have made the international community aware of the need to explore new measures for halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Those tragic events must be a catalyst for the Conference to resume substantive work with a renewed sense of urgency.

Mr. Chairman,

The 2002 session of the Conference has seen valuable attempts to bridge the existing divergences of views on key issues on the disarmament agenda in order to overcome the stalemate that continues to paralyse its work:

- Intensive consultations were conducted in 2002 by the successive Presidents of the Conference in order to reach consensus on a program of work.
- A group of former presidents of the Conference, the Ambassadors Dembri, Lint, Reyes, Salander and Vega, have presented to the Conference a joint proposal on a comprehensive program of work to the Conference. This evolutionary, cross-group initiative takes into account earlier proposals, in particular the Amorim Proposal, as well as the different views of the Members of the Conference. The
unprecedented, promising proposal enjoyed appreciation from a wide range of
delegations, and will be further explored during preparations for the 2003 session.
- The Conference also demonstrated its ability to address new challenges by
  revisiting the issue of radiological weapons through a number of open-ended
  consultations.
- The Conference also decided to reappoint Special Coordinators on the Review of
  its Agenda, the Expansion of its Membership as well as on its Improved and
  Effective Functioning. While agreeing that priority should be given to pursue
  substantive work, the Conference recommended that Special Coordinators on
  relevant procedural issues be appointed, if deemed necessary, during its 2003
  session.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to promote substantive progress during the 2003 session, the Conference has
requested me as well as the incoming President to conduct appropriate consultations during
the intersessional period and to make recommendations, recognising the support of the
Conference for the Amorim Proposal, taking into account all existing proposals, views
presented and discussions held in this year’s session. I can assure you that no efforts will be
spared to come up with a proposal to end the stalemate of the Conference.

Despite these efforts and new initiatives the Conference could not manage to agree on a
programme of work. It was generally felt that the political will, especially on behalf of the key
players, remains essential to resume substantive activities.

Mr. Chairman,

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13 follows, in general, the usual
pattern and content of resolutions on the subject adopted at the previous sessions of the
General Assembly. However, it also attempts to encapsulate the main achievements of the
Conference during its 2002 session, as I outlined before. These developments, recorded in the
report of the Conference, have been faithfully translated into the language of the resolution,
particularly in its operative paragraph 3, 4 and 5 and after broad and intensive discussions
enjoys the support of the CD member States.
Mr. Chairman,

The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, despite its current stalemate, continues to play an important role in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. This draft resolution, if adopted, will without doubt provide a stimulus to the commencement of the substantive work of the Conference. Therefore, I would recommend that draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13 be adopted by consensus.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.