Politics and diplomacy are no play of will and skill where results are independent of character of those engaging in the game. Results are determined not by superficial ability, but by the consistency of the actors in their efforts and by the validity of their ideals.

Dag Hammarskjöld (speech to Johns Hopkins University 1955)

Mr President,

Please allow me first to congratulate you on your assumption of the first CD Presidency of this year. While congratulating you, I realize that this must not be easy for you. You have expressed at several occasions mixed feelings about the CD.

We share those feelings. There is little value in meetings where we just repeat the same statements. We need to make progress on disarmament. The CD, with all its flaws, is in my view still the best vehicle we have to deal with all core issues. We should work together in the CD to keep on trying to identify possible ways forward. Creativity and flexibility are key here. Let us now concentrate on a Programme of Work to allow for an immediate start of negotiations.

Let me assure you that my delegation, also both as a fellow P6 member for this year and as the current coordinator of WEOG, stands ready to assist you in every way we can in trying to make a real difference, in trying to get the CD back to what it is supposed to.

Let me also use this occasion to once again congratulate Ambassador Mazlan Muhammad of Malaysia on the excellent and swift way he and his team dealt with the CD report and the CD resolution, we hope this is a new tradition.¹

Encouraging signs in the 2014 session

Mr President,

(1) The Netherlands aligns itself with the EU statement
Last year we saw encouraging developments in the CD and we think we should try to build on these developments in 2015.

**P6 Cooperation**
As part of the CD mechanics we think coordination amongst the P6 and close consultations with regional groups have served the CD well. Coordination amongst the P6 was started in 2006 by Poland, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Senegal and Slovakia. Last year was again a year where close P6 cooperation created a good dynamic in the CD. We are therefore strongly in favor to work closely together with the other P6 members this year. In any case we will be an active P6 member.

**Informal Working Group**
The Informal Working Group did not produce a Programme of Work yet, but we think the discussions we had in the IWG were very useful.

Mr President,

We understand that your first priority now is to examine if we can get to a Programme of Work. We support this approach and will come up with concrete suggestions for such a Programme.

However, we do not think that the IWG has exhausted its existence. If needed we could see the IWG as an alternative route later in this CD year. We think with the IWG we are on the right track when it comes to discussing creative ways to get the CD back to work. If needed, the Netherlands remains open to discuss the possibility to renew the mandate of the IWG in order to continue this constructive and creative process.

**Moving on**

**Schedule of Activities**
Last year’s *Schedule of Activities* allowed for some in-dept discussions that had not taken place in this room for a long time. It also allowed delegations to clarify their positions. Without exactly repeating what we did last year, we would like to see some sort of a follow up to these discussions as in the meantime more has happened.

**Speeches**
Making speeches is a standard practice in the UN and in the CD. It is not always a good way of moving issues forward. Our main task here is to negotiate disarmament treaties. That is why the CD exists. In times of growing international tensions like today we see greater need to negotiate and strengthen treaties. But before you can negotiate your have to talk to each other. Let me be clear though: we are not in favor of creating a talking shop or a simplified programme of work. Discussions can lead to negotiations provided that we listen to each other and look for common ground.

**FMCT**
Our discussions last year on a Treaty banning the production of Fissile Material once again showed that this topic is most ‘ripe’ for negotiations. The GGE FMCT played and is playing an important role in shaping our understanding of this future treaty. The final report of the GGE FMCT should give us input to continue our discussions on this topic and hopefully will lead to negotiations in a not too distant future.
PAROS
We also see value in continuing our discussions on PAROS. More work can be done on confidence building in line with resolution 69/38 on Transparency and confidence building in outer space and in particular on the Code of Conduct.

We should also consider how to progress on our discussions on nuclear disarmament and NSA's.

Proposals by SG Møller
So far only a few of the several proposals made last year by Acting Secretary-General Michael Møller were discussed. We believe that in particular we should give more attention to his ideas of politically binding regimes or agreements and a review of the working methods of the CD.

CD Enlargement
CD Enlargement is another issue that deserves serious consideration this year. At last year’s First Committee while adopting the annual CD resolution the Czech Republic on behalf of IGOS made again a plea for the enlargement of this forum. We need to see how we can identify possible steps that could make (future) enlargement possible. A large group of serious countries deserves an answer to this question.

Mr President,

Participation of experts and NGO's
Another item we need to consider how we can make better use of experts and NGO input in the CD. We look forward to the informal CD civil society forum that has been planned for March where this and other items can be discussed.

I would like to use this opportunity to especially compliment Reaching Critical Will as the Geneva representation of the Womens International League For Peace or WILFP which was founded exactly one hundred years ago in The Hague. Their 100 year exisance will be celebrated this year. Good examples of the useful work of Reaching Critical Will for the CD are the Guide to the Conference on Disarmament and their reports on our deliberations in the CD.

Let me under this item also mention the special position of UNIDIR and welcome the familiar face of Jarmo Sareva as its new director. UNIDIR with its knowledge on disarmament has been of special importance to the CD. We can and need to make more use of it.

Mr President,

The times are changing and we have a difficult and a challenging year ahead of us. It will also be a full and interesting disarmament year. The NPT Revcon, the first meeting of states parties of the ATT, the further discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems and the first review conference of the CCM are just a few highlights. Progress is needed and is possible. Sir Winston Churchill once said: "Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts".

Together with the other P6 members of this year, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, and New Zealand, The Netherlands stands ready to do its utmost to get the CD back to work that is to negotiate disarmament treaties.

Thank you.