

S T A T E M E N T

by

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Thematic debate: Disarmament Machinery
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Madame Chairperson,

As I take the floor for the first time during this session of the First Committee, allow me to congratulate you for your assumption of the Chairmanship of this Committee. It is a reflection of your country's long-standing positive involvement in global disarmament and efforts towards making the disarmament machinery functional.

The Ambassador of Finland has already spoken in the name of the European Union in this thematic debate, and my country fully stands behind that statement. However, allow me to touch upon a few points from Poland's national perspective.

Madame Chairperson,

This year Poland has had the privilege to actively participate in the work of two bodies of the disarmament machinery:

- as a President of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and
- as a Vice-chairman of the UN Disarmament Commission.

Poland has also been a Vice-Chairman of the First Review Conference of the UN Program of Action on Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons. My country will also have the privilege to be Vice-President of the Review Conference of the Convention of Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which is to take place in Geneva in the near future.

These are reflective of the devotion of Poland to the cause of global disarmament and our belief that only through the active involvement of all can we make the disarmament machinery work. It brought us great satisfaction that we were able to participate in the revival of work within those two bodies – the UNDC restarted its substantive work and hold long-awaited deliberations, while the Conference on Disarmament had build a new momentum.

Distinguished Delegates,

Exactly one year ago, I spoke here about the plans of the incoming 6 Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament. Together with the Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal and Slovakia (the P6) we worked hard to fulfil those promises and commitments.

Building upon the positive activities of the CD Presidents in 2004 and 2005, this year we scheduled the work of the CD. The basis for this schedule was the CD agenda. One-week structured debates have proven that the CD agenda is still valid and wide enough to deal with all issues of key interest to its Member-States. The key for this year's activities was the co-operation between 6 CD Presidents of the session and the active involvement of all delegations. The P6 co-operation allowed us to overcome shortcomings related to the 4-week-long presidencies. Active involvement of all delegations and participation of experts from capitals have proven that all Member-States believe that the CD is an important body, which can contribute to the field of international security and disarmament.

In 2006, we have deepened the understanding on all key items of the CD agenda. It helped delegations to examine which issues are riper for negotiations and which still require further in-depth discussion, before we start proper negotiations. We have not re-started negotiations, which is the ultimate goal of the Conference, but we believe we brought the CD closer to finding consensus to do so. We may also say that this year the CD – through the many debates held – reviewed its agenda and methods of work. This should be a continuous process, and we are sure that it will continue next year.

Distinguished Delegates,

The CD President, the Ambassador of Slovakia, informed you a while ago, that at the end of this year's session the P6 presented its Vision Non-Paper. Therein, the P6 expressed its views on what could be possible in the following year.

At the beginning of the 2007 session, the CD should contemplate making a formal decision or decisions on the establishment of subsidiary bodies (also working groups or experts groups) to negotiate issues that are ripe for it, along with accepting a "schedule of activities", which would provide for substantive discussion on all other issues under the CD agenda.

When thinking about negotiations in the CD, we must keep in mind that not all the issues can be negotiated at once. The history of the Conference shows that there was no more than one full-fledged negotiation at a time. Therefore, we have to concentrate on those issues that are closest to being brought forward to the negotiating table. In the opinion of Polish delegation, the FMCT is such an issue. At the same time, we should not divert our attention from other issues on the CD agenda – this could best be done through the adoption of a "schedule of activities", based on all agenda items.

The experience of this year demonstrates that the "schedule of activities" itself provides an efficient framework for advancing substantive work of the CD, pending agreement on a programme of work or establishment of subsidiary bodies – as well as on opening *de facto* negotiations. Future structured debates, not limited to a certain period, could provide for regular debates throughout the year. Certain flexibility is needed to intensify discussion on issues that require more attention. The experts should be invited not only from capitals, but also from relevant international organisations and UN bodies (IAEA, OPCW, COPUOS/UNOOSA, UN Groups of Governmental Experts etc.), as their presence is vital to keeping the CD open to the work of other organisations and – in a broader sense – to the realities of the outside world.

The "Friends of Presidents" mechanism can be further strengthened for searching for consensus on specific substantive issues, including possible mandates. Let me in this place thank our Friends of this year Presidents – the CD Ambassadors of Algeria, Bulgaria, Chile, Italy, Japan and Sri Lanka, who spared no efforts in supporting the CD Presidents in the 2006 session.

Madame Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

The incoming Presidents of the Conference – South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland and Syria – will have to look for even more innovative and creative solutions than those which we applied this year. Positive developments will also require the flexibility, co-operation, and good will of all Member-States. My delegation stands ready to continue its active participation in all efforts to advance the substantive work in the CD.

To conclude, let me express my hope that following years of stalemate, unadopted final documents, and a general crisis in disarmament machinery, the year 2007 will prove to be a better one, marked by positive developments in multilateral disarmament fora. As I said in the CD earlier this year – the outside world wastes no time and seeks not the solutions UN machinery could provide, as last week's events have shown. It is up to us – all Member-States – to bring those fora closer to realities of today world, make them fully functional and able to face problems.

Thank you for your attention.