



**SLOVAKIA**

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**STATEMENT  
AT THE 944<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING  
OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

**BY**

**AMBASSADOR KÁLMÁN PETŐCZ  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SLOVAKIA**

Geneva, 29 January 2004

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## **Statement at the 944th Plenary Meeting of the Conference on Disarmament**

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**Ambassador Kálmán Petőcz, Permanent Representative of Slovakia**

Thank you, Madam President.

Since this is the first time I am asking for the floor under your Presidency, I would like to express my pleasure and satisfaction to see you in the Chair of this Conference. In the last couple of years, we have worked together at various UN fora where you have shown your diplomatic skills. I am sure that you will continue to lead our work with dedication and charm, as you have done so far. May I also use the opportunity to welcome our new colleagues who have joined our club recently.

Madam President,

On Tuesday, we adopted the agenda of the Conference. Let me congratulate you on your efforts that lead to this approval and let me appreciate the spirit of compromise shown by the delegations of member states that made the agreement fly. The Eastern European Group, as many times before, showed a flexible approach and joined the emerging consensus between G21 and WEOG. Let me, however, make the position of my delegation a little bit more refined. Since I did not take the floor during the very interesting exchange of views in the informal plenary a week ago, you can take my intervention as an „explanation after the vote“, and as an early contribution to the debate on the programme of work. I am, of course, aware of the fact that Slovakia is not a heavyweight in this „arena“ but still, I hope that our presence here is of any sense.

My delegation could have accepted a little bit more ambitious wording of the relevant part of the Presidential Statement attached to the agenda. The Conference on Disarmament cannot, in our view, let the new security threats and new challenges pass by without addressing them properly, because then it can easily face the risk of being marginalized. Nevertheless, we sincerely welcome the adoption of the agenda and we are ready to make a step forward towards adopting the programme of work.

In this regard, Madam President, I can reiterate the priority of the Slovak Republic which is negotiating an FMCT, based on the once already approved mandate as a starting point. We believe that this mandate can be further elaborated in a way that would address all aspects of concern and interest of both individual member states and regional groups. We believe that this would be the most logical reopening of the game in the CD after a 7 years long break in negotiations. (I am deliberately not using the words stalemate, deadlock or impasse, because I am not sure whether it would be of any help.)

On the other hand, Slovakia has queued up with those delegations that favour the adoption of a complete programme of work on the basis of the A5 proposal. On the basis of the A5 proposal viewed as an open framework, with no rigid linkages, but taking into account the legitimate expectations and interests of all members, taking into account the legitimate expectations of the whole international community, because peace and security are the matter of all, not only of the 66 members of the CD. As our Hungarian colleague, Ambassador Tóth said at the last session, the CD rules of procedure and its established practice provide ample tracks how to address all the issues of concern at a proper time and in the most appropriate way.

In conclusion, Madam President, let me inform you about an important legislation adopted in my country, related to our work here in Geneva. On 23 January 2004 the Slovak Republic completed the process of ratification of the Amendment to Article I of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and her national instrument of ratification is on the way to the depository of the Convention, Secretary General of the UN. Slovakia continues to stand firmly behind its commitment to restrictions on the use and eradication of inhumane weapons, taken up in the late nineties and at the beginning of this century by her active engagement in the Ottawa process, the CCW Amended Mines Protocol follow-up process and the CCW review and follow-up process.

Thank you, Madam President.