

31 March 2005

Statement by H.E. Yoshiki MINE,
Ambassador of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament

Mr. President,

Today brings us to the last CD Plenary for the first session of this year. I have decided to make a few remarks, mainly to reiterate the call for keeping the momentum to initiate substantial work in the CD.

First of all, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you for your assumption of the presidency. Your presidency will be especially important given that the NPT Review Conference, a key component of the current nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, falls during your term. I appreciate your intention to continue to build on the efforts made by your predecessors to bring the CD back to substantive work during this important period. I also thank your predecessors, Mr. Tim Caughley of NZ and Mr. Chris Sanders of the Netherlands, for their excellent and untiring work conducted in a smooth and continuous fashion. I would like to assure you, Mr. President, of our delegation's full support as you continue their efforts.

I have been advocating that the term of the CD presidency is too short to ensure consistency and integrity of the session and, therefore, that it be extended. I have no doubt that you will make an excellent President and that you will achieve a sense of continuity during your term. However, no matter how remarkable the individual capability, it is still regrettable that the CD has to face such a frequent change of presidency, especially as we must concentrate our efforts on the adoption of the Programme of Work. To me, it seems to constitute an institutional deficit of the CD.

We have not been able to achieve an agreement on the Programme of Work in this session. However, throughout the session, consistent efforts have been made by successive Presidents, and I see there has emerged a strong momentum in the CD. I may be an optimist, but I believe diplomats should be optimists rather than pessimists. Even though the first session ends this week and will not resume until after the end of the NPT Review Conference, I do believe that it is the responsibility of the CD members to try to keep the momentum to initiate substantial work in the CD and to make concerted efforts to this end.

I look forward to your continued efforts, Mr. President, to conduct bilateral or regional consultations with Member States to find an agreeable solution based on our accumulated efforts in this session.

Thank you