Mr President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Informal Group of Observer States to the Conference on Disarmament which represents 42 countries from every region of the world. Some of the countries stood at the founding of the Conference of Disarmament in 1979, some of them have been waiting more than 20 years to become full members. All of IGOS countries are state parties to the Non-proliferation Treaty and to the Chemical Weapons Convention, instruments negotiated by this honourable and respected forum and the disarmament negotiating fora that had preceded the CD. Most of the IGOS countries are parties to other international disarmament treaties such as the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. This proves the strong commitment of all IGOS countries to advance global arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

I would like to commend you, Mr President, for scheduling the debate on the revitalization of the CD at this very appropriate moment. We also appreciate your intention to discuss further the expansion of the CD as well as the participation of civil society. The Observer States would like to take this opportunity to offer their views.

We are deeply concerned by a long deadlock of the Conference and by its permanent inability to commence substantive work. We are disappointed by the fact that the membership of the CD is not in a position to make a first step to enable the CD to walk again. All Observer States agree that there is an urgent need for revitalization of the CD as it continues to be unable to perform its mandate, i.e. to negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties.

Revitalization of the CD is a multidimensional process which requires strong political will, compromise and an unceasing effort. One of urgencies of this process is the expansion of the CD. We regret the fact that since 1999, when the last CD enlargement took place, no further action was taken on membership even though the Rules of Procedures, rule 2, stipulate that “The membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals”. We also regret the fact that not even a single informal or formal debate was devoted to the topic of enlargement since 2002, when the last special coordinator, a Bulgarian colleague Peter Kolarov, was appointed. Therefore, we reiterate our call to reflect on the enlargement of the CD. For this purpose the appointment of a Special Coordinator or even of a Coordinator under the responsibility of the President and the initiation of a structural debate would be a benefit which would increase the CD’s chances to success. Observer States consider that the developments in the global security environment should be duly reflected in the appropriate representation of States in the Conference on Disarmament. We would like to contribute in preventing the CD from becoming a relic of the past and from losing its relevance for all.
In our view, the Conference should seriously consider the Remarks to the CD made by the Secretary General Mr. Tokayev in February 2012. The revitalization of the CD also entails procedural reform and evaluation of the functioning of its current institutes. We are convinced that detailed and structured discussion on concrete proposals, such as pronounced by Swiss Ambassador today on revitalization would enhance the legitimacy of this unique multilateral negotiation forum in these difficult times.

Thank you for your attention.