IRELAND

Statement to the Conference on Disarmament
On revitalisation

11 June 2013

Mr. President,

Ireland welcomes the opportunity to set out its views and to hear the views and ideas of other delegations on the topic of revitalisation of the CD. We align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Ireland has always believed that a strong and effective multilateral system is the most appropriate way to promote international peace and security. A strong and responsive rules based system is to the benefit of all nations and their citizens. Ireland has long been, and will continue to be, an advocate for disarmament as a key contributor to peace and security.

Mr. President,

Like many delegations, Ireland is troubled that this Conference, a core element of the multilateral disarmament machinery, has not been able to add to its impressive track record of achievements for over a decade.

Mr. President, as you noted in your opening address to the Conference on 28 May, the success of the Conference is a collective responsibility. This was further underlined last week by Ambassador Wibowo of Indonesia who remarked that CD Member States should contribute their share of work and responsibility.

The revitalisation of the Conference was discussed during 2012 a very large number of Member States spoke. At the seminar organised by Indonesia with UNIDIR on 15 May this year, there was a very wide attendance. My delegation believes that there is significant interest in revitalising this Conference so that it may get back to the work that has been entrusted to it by the international community: the negotiation of multilateral disarmament instruments.

During the discussion last year on revitalisation, many delegations suggested that the best way for the Conference to revitalise itself would be to resume substantive work. My
delegation fully agrees. At the same time, my delegation sees value in examining our methods of working to see if they are appropriate to the task we have been set.

A detailed reflection on the ways in which we have chosen to work may show us that there is room for improvement, for conducting our business more efficiently and more effectively. Our working methods should contribute to achieving results not be, as is sometimes suggested, a reason for the lack of results.

Mr. President,

My delegation does not expect that an examination of our working methods will provide a quick fix allowing us immediately to resume substantive work but we do consider that it is time to start the exercise.

As initial contributions, my delegation would like to suggest that we pursue more active engagement with civil society and with academia. While the burden of negotiating international legal instruments falls upon States, the input from expertise outside of diplomacy can be invaluable. Civil society and academia can provide us with technical expertise and information and through their outreach activities can help bring us to a closer understanding of the issues with which we are dealing.

Ireland has long maintained that the membership of this conference should be open to all States who wish to join. We strongly believe this would benefit the Conference and strengthen this element of the multilateral disarmament machinery. Ireland considers that the appointment of a special coordinator on the expansion of the membership of this body should happen as a matter of urgency.

Mr. President,

Ireland remains firmly convinced that the multilateral system delivers results. As our Minister of State for Trade and Development noted last week in New York at the signature ceremony for the ATT “The ATT is an important achievement for the UN system and a vindication of our collective way of doing business. Those who doubt the UN’s capacity to deliver on its core mandate of contributing to global peace and security have been given an answer. The UN label confers a unique and unrivalled legitimacy.”

At the beginning of this year, Secretary General Tokayev in reaffirming his commitment to the Conference suggested that the Conference “should pursue avenues that can bring new momentum for meaningful movement”. My delegation considers that a structured review of our working methods is one such avenue and one which we should explore.
Thank you