Statement

by

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Mr. President,

Allow me first of all to thank our departing colleagues from the USA, Ambassador Laura Kennedy, and from New Zealand, Ambassador Dell Higgie, for their cooperation and their friendship and to wish them well for the future.

Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for the excellent manner in which you have conducted your presidency and in particular for your tireless efforts regarding the adoption of a programme of work.

I should also like to thank you for the very interesting seminar you organized together with UNIDIR on the state of the CD and ways to overcome its persistent stalemate.

In view of the well known difficulties surrounding the issue of the programme of work it is highly commendable that you have nevertheless taken it upon yourself not only to engage in intensive consultations on this matter but also to present an informal draft programme of work.

Mr. President,

A characteristic feature of the CD lies in the fact that reservations about particular elements of draft programmes of work are as a rule brought forward only in private consultations between individual delegations and the president, which is of course the exact opposite of the transparent procedure I think most of us would like to see.

Unfortunately your consultations have shown that there is no realistic prospect for a consensus on your informal draft which has led you to the conclusion that it would not be advisable to table it as a formal draft decision with a view to propose its adoption.
Mr. President,

It is my understanding that in the course of the informal consultations you held it was one delegation which has specifically and very clearly expressed reservations about a particular point in your informal draft by in effect requesting the reference to document CD/1299 to be deleted from the draft.

The title of CD/1299 speaks of “the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices.” I wish to make the point that this reference is indeed important to us in your draft and I believe to many others as well and we therefore very much welcome that you did not accept the request to delete it.

Mr. President,

If this body is ever to agree a programme of work, delegations need to fully understand where exactly the problems are. Can I therefore in the interest of transparency put a straightforward question to you so that all of us and future presidents fully understand the problems some delegations may have when new attempts at agreeing a programme of work will be made in the future?

Just assuming hypothetically for a moment the request to delete the reference to CD/1299 had not been put to you by one particular delegation: Can I ask you - were there other serious problems raised with your informal draft by other delegations which would have led you come to the conclusion not to table the draft because there would have been a significant risk that it would not have been adopted?

If this should indeed have been the case, I believe it would be highly interesting to all in the chamber to learn what kind of problems these exactly were, because otherwise we are left in a situation where we operate in the dark in our attempts to find the consensus this body has been seeking without success for nearly 15 years.

Thank you.