Statement by H. E. Mr. András Dékány,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Hungary,
President of the Conference on Disarmament
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Mr. Secretary-General of the CD,
Distinguished Ambassadors, Delegates,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

By today, all delegations should have received, through their regional coordinators, an unofficial first draft of my proposal on a Program of Work. Please keep in mind that the paper does not have an official status yet, and indeed it is work in progress in order to forge a document that can be adopted by consensus.

I also have to emphasize that the draft is the result of intensive consultations and represents my overall assessment at this stage of the process of how we can move forward given the widely diverging views and positions of CD member states. It was carefully crafted in good faith, with the intent to find the best possible balance among member states' views.

The draft is an honest effort to break the deadlock we've been in for the last 16 years. As you can see, all four core issues would be taken up substantively. The novelty of the proposed approach comes from the merger of the issues of nuclear disarmament and a fissile material ban within one working group.

Let me explain our thinking behind this idea. First, nuclear disarmament and a ban on the production of fissionable material should not be seen as competing issues. This is in line with the founding document of the CD, the final resolution of SSOD I, which in its chapter on a “Program of Action” refers to nuclear disarmament as a process, and in paragraph 50, specifically mentions among the ban on fissionable materials for weapons purposes as one of the necessary stages towards achieving the overall goal of nuclear disarmament.

Second, these two issues have traditionally been dealt with under the same agenda item of the CD and its draft Programs of Work. The two documents with the greatest impact of recent years, CD/1864 and CD/1933/Rev.1, intended to establish the two working groups on nuclear disarmament and on fissile materials under agenda item 1. I thought it would be a logical step to merge the two working groups, given the fact that our agenda has not changed over the last decade.
In our view, bringing our work on a fissile material ban under the umbrella of nuclear disarmament clearly emphasizes the importance we all attach to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and the elimination of nuclear weapons, which, in our view, is a long and arduous process, but one we have to take forward continuously in appropriate stages.

While drafting the text, we've been trying to stick, to the extent possible, to previously agreed or accepted language. CD/1864, adopted at the time by consensus, undoubtedly served as a basis, while we have also taken into account elements of CD/1933/Rev.1. We also had to take into account developments in the UNGA I. Committee, while firmly sticking to our belief that the CD is the appropriate forum for multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

I am fully aware that a Program of Work needs to be accompanied by an agreed implementation plan as well. I have not forgotten the issue of selecting the chairs for the working groups and the allocation of time for the meetings of the working groups. These are important elements of the final package. However, first I have to see whether my proposed approach is a good enough basis to move forward by consensus. Should this be the case, I will present a proposal on the modalities of implementation. I can already indicate to you that I believe the merged working group, with two core issues to be taken up by it, needs double the time than the other two. I also believe that the chairs of the working groups should have the overall responsibility to arrange for the most efficient and balanced consideration of the issues in the respective working groups chaired by them.

Finally, I wish to reiterate that my door is open to all of you. Both me and my team are ready to further consult with any of you. I hope I can count on your cooperation, openness, and indeed support with regard to my plans.