Food for thought for the second meeting of the IWG  
Monday 2 September 2013

The establishment of the IWG represents an opportunity for Member States to collectively and transparently discuss the issues behind the current impasse in the Conference and identify possible ways forward that take into due consideration the security interests of all States.

The outcome of the discussions that will take place in the IWG will constitute the basis for the CD President to draw up a Programme of Work, as provided by rule 29 of the RoP.

It would be ideal if Member States refrained from general statements and principled positions, but instead engaged in a dynamic exchange aimed at finding a common agreement satisfactory to all.

In preparing for the next meeting of IWG, Member States might want to consider the following questions:

1. The Informal Working Group established by Decision CD/1956/Rev.1 received a mandate "to produce a programme of work that is robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation". What are the elements of a PoW that would be "robust in substance"? What would make the ensuing discussions robust enough in substance to enable the CD to "hit the ground running", if and when a negotiating mandate will be developed?

2. In the spirit of reaching consensus, and in the search for a PoW that is "progressive over time in its implementation", would there be agreement on a PoW with robust discussion mandates that would allow substantive discussions on all four core issues of the CD agenda, in preparation for the eventual negotiations? How could one ensure that such discussions will not be general repetitions of national positions but rather an interactive substantive and focused exchange?

3. How would such a PoW be implemented? Would subsidiary bodies such as ad hoc committees be established? How to organize the work in practical terms?

4. Taking into account the final document of SSOD-I and the security interests of all States in pursuing disarmament negotiations, would it be possible to reach consensus on a simplified PoW? Would that PoW be one that does not establish subsidiary bodies? Would that PoW be one that breaks the linkages between the four core issues?

5. Are there new items to be included in the CD agenda which substantive work can move forward on?