

*Conference made  
a smooth and rapid  
start to substantive  
work.*

26 April 1994

Press Conference  
UN Secretariat

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The Conference on Disarmament Shapes the Agenda for  
Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations

Distinguished members of the international press:

Let me begin by expressing my deep appreciation for the opportunity to share with you a brief overview of the work of the Conference on Disarmament during its first session in 1994.

You may recall that there are a number of bodies in the global community that deal with the issues of arms regulation and disarmament. While the UN Disarmament Commission, which is now holding its substantive session here in New York, is one of the major deliberative bodies, the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament is the unique multilateral negotiating forum of the international community.

The Conference on Disarmament exercises a special role in shaping the multilateral disarmament agenda of the 1990s. A year following the opening for

signature of the historic Chemical Weapons Convention, the first collectively negotiated treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, the eyes of the world are again on Geneva, as the Conference on Disarmament has embarked upon another major multilateral negotiation -- the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty or CTBT.

The Conference's decision to commence negotiations on a CTBT, to address with renewed enthusiasm the issue of negative security assurances to be provided to non-nuclear weapon States, and to start the consideration of ways and means to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, all provide testimony to the emergence of "Pax-Multilateralism" in the twilight of the East-West confrontation. A brief examination of the tone and substance of the Conference's deliberations so far in 1994 is further proof that the new disarmament agenda is widening in the 1990s as it transcends the bilateral dynamic between the United States and the former Soviet Union and takes on a truly multilateral character.

There also is a growing realization that arms regulation and disarmament constitute an integral part of common efforts to promote international peace and security. As the Secretary-General highlighted in his report *New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era*, the three specific

areas of conflict resolution -- preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping -- together with the post-conflict notion of peacebuilding, can be strengthened by concrete measures of arms regulation and disarmament. It is my view that the Conference on Disarmament, mandated to promote the attainment of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, is uniquely placed to negotiate measures which could facilitate the resolution of crises, especially at the regional level.

If the substantive, business-like and non-confrontational first session of the Conference in 1994 is indicative of the character and style of its work during its subsequent sessions, I feel certain that the 37-member body will continue to capture the attention of distinguished journalists such as yourselves in the remainder of the year. Progress in any one area of the Conference's work, whether it be the question of negative security assurances, the CTBT negotiations, or the drafting of a future convention on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapon purposes, is likely to act as a catalyst for positive results in other related fields, most importantly the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference.

At this juncture, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you several brief observations on the work of the Conference on Disarmament during its

first session, held between 25 January and 31 March.

With regard to the negotiations on a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, it is widely recognized that the prospects for the conclusion of a CTBT by 1996 are real. I share the opinion of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, who at a recent press conference remarked that it seemed possible to conclude the negotiations on a CTBT by early or mid-1995. A draft treaty is expected to be tabled this June, based on the contributions of Australia and Sweden, among others, and the progress achieved in the Working Groups on Verification and Legal and Institutional Issues. The scope of the proposed Treaty, the conditions for entry into force, and verification of compliance with its provisions are several of the elements being examined. I should point out in this context that the decision in March by the United States to extend its moratorium on nuclear testing through September 1995 was welcomed in the Conference as an important contribution to the creation of a favourable climate for the negotiations. I wish to also inform you that President Yeltsin, in his discussions with the UN Secretary-General in early April, expressed a commitment to continue the Russian Federation's moratorium on nuclear testing that was originally declared in October 1991 by former Soviet President Gorbachev. Similar undertakings on the part of the other nuclear-weapon States would greatly assist the negotiating process. It is

important to recognize that for the first time, not only the United States, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom, but also France and China, are now engaged in a negotiation which directly affects their nuclear interests.

On the question of negative security assurances, which aim to provide effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, work is proceeding, albeit at a slow pace.

There are signs, however, that a majority of the members insist on the need to find a rapid solution to the question of negative security assurances and to recognize a relationship between such assurances and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, thus making them an integral part of the overall non-proliferation regime.

Turning to the issue of a proposed treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes, the Conference decided to appoint, as a first step, a Special Coordinator to "seek the views of its members on the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices". The Special Coordinator subsequently considered that "a preponderant majority view" existed among delegations that the Conference was the most appropriate international forum to negotiate such a treaty. However, it may be too early to reach any

conclusions at this stage on the format, form and starting date of the negotiations on a so-called "cut-off" treaty. In my view, the practice of linking the resolution of one nuclear disarmament issue with another should be associated with the policies of the Cold War past and not with the current environment. The new era of multilateral disarmament should be marked instead by a spirit of "constructive parallelism", as new methods of nuclear disarmament evolve in tandem with one another and past rivalries are set aside as Member States adopt problem-solving approaches to mutual problems.

Although the Conference is concentrating on its nuclear items, the other issues of its agenda -- the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and Transparency in Armaments -- are also at an advanced stage. Tangible progress has been witnessed, with the establishment of the UN Register of Conventional Arms in the General Assembly, which in 1992 received data on arms transfers from 83 Member States. As the Conference on Disarmament is discussing ways in which to apply the UN Register in various regional arrangements, I should like to suggest that the Conference could at some stage endeavour to work out various "model arrangements", for instance, in the transparency of armaments or confidence-building measures, that could be applied on a regional scale, based on the particular characteristics of each region, to preventive diplomacy and

peacemaking.

On the question of expansion of the membership of the Conference, it is important to note here that a total of 47 States not members of the Conference were invited to participate in its work in 1994, providing evidence of the heightened interest in the work of the Conference and particularly the negotiations on a CTBT. Despite the fact that a proposed "package" of 23 states to be admitted as full members of the Conference was not accepted at the end of the 1993 session, Ambassador Luiz Felipe Lampreia of Brazil has been appointed as Friend of the Chair on the expansion issue in order to ensure that this important and urgent matter is kept alive and under constant review. It is widely felt, both within and outside the Conference, that this situation will have to be resolved in the near future.

Last but not least, the Conference on Disarmament appears to be moving away from the bloc-based politics of its past and evolving into a truly multilateral and representative negotiating body that will be able to move the disarmament programme of the 1990s forward. It is a promising sign that individual delegations are now adopting independent positions based on national interests. What we are witnessing in the disarmament field is the decline of an uneasy balance of power blocs and the emergence of a balance of interests, marked perhaps by this notion of "constructive parallelism", as the new regime for the conduct of multilateral affairs.

I think that this may be an opportune moment to conclude this short overview of the work of the Conference so far in 1994. I would be most delighted to entertain questions from the distinguished members of the media at this stage.

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