



STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR OF DENMARK

ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to take the floor today on behalf of the European Union. Furthermore, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union - Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia - and the Associated countries Cyprus and Malta have expressed the wish to align themselves with this statement.

Mr. President,

Since it is the first time that I take the floor during your presidency, I would like to congratulate you on your important task of guiding the Conference of Disarmament throughout the end of this year's final session. I would also like to convey my appreciation of your predecessors of this year - the charge d'affaire of Egypt and the ambassadors of Ethiopia, Finland, France and Germany for their strong efforts to revitalise the CD. My gratitude also goes to the three Special Co-ordinators of this year's session ; the Special Co-ordinator on "Expansion of the Membership of the CD", the ambassador of Bulgaria, the Special Co-ordinator on "Review of the Agenda of the CD", the ambassador of the Republic of Korea, and the Special Co-ordinator on "Improved and effective functioning of the CD", the ambassador of Sri Lanka. Finally, Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to the Secretary General of the Conference, Mr. Sergei Ordzonikidze and to the Deputy Secretary-General of the CD, as well as to the Secretariat of the CD.

Mr. President,

The international community is being challenged by the risks brought about by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Our security and stability, both globally and regionally, are being threatened by such actions. A year has now passed since the horrific terrorist attacks against the United States of America of September 11 2001. These events have given an even greater sense of urgency to the common efforts required from all States to ensure mutual security.

Against this background, Mr. President, the EU has asked for the floor in order to express our view on the work of the CD in 2002 as well as our expectations for 2003.

When the EU last spoke in this forum at the beginning of this year, it was with the sincere hope that the CD would finally rise to the challenge of the expectations of the outside world and agree to a common basis for substantive work. As we speak today, we can only regret that we are once again heading towards the end of a year without having agreed on a programme of work. This is not least regrettable since the members and observers of the CD share a strong common interest in starting substantive work as soon as possible.

That said, Mr. President, in disarmament and non-proliferation, year 2002 was not only a year of "setbacks".

The EU welcomes the treaty between the USA and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions and the Joint Declaration by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on the New Strategic Relationship Between the USA and the Russian Federation signed on May 2002 in Moscow.

Furthermore, we welcome the commitments expressed by States Parties to make the improved NPT review process a valuable new instrument in the fight against the continued danger of the spread of nuclear weapons – commitments that have already resulted in the successful launching of the NPT Preparatory Committee which took place in NY in April this year. I would like to repeat in this regard the commitment of the EU to the effective implementation of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and of the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

In the context of the CD, this refers especially to two important practical steps agreed by all States Parties to the NPT – i.e. the negotiation on a fissile material cut-off treaty on the basis of the Shannon report and the mandate contained therein and the establishment of an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament, together with other elements of a programme of work. In the meantime, The EU welcomes in this respect the substantive working paper by South Africa on the “Fissile Material Treaty” that was recently circulated to this forum, as well as the useful initiative taken by The Netherlands to organise informal, open-ended seminars on the topic. Together with an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the immediate commencement of the FMCT negotiation constitutes the next essential step in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Regarding the issue of biological and chemical weapons, the EU has taken note of States Parties expressed commitment to the Biological and Chemical Convention and expects in this regard a successful outcome of the reconvening of the BWC Review Conference in November this year.

Mr. President,

The CD is the sole multilateral forum at the disposal of the international community for disarmament negotiations.

The EU regrets that we are now moving towards the end of the fourth consecutive year of the CD without being able to agree to a work programme.

The immediate launch of the FMCT negotiations as well as dealing with both nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as contained in resolution 56/23, within subsidiary bodies whose mandates shall need to be both pragmatic and substantial in order to be accepted by all - these three parts together constitute the basis today for an agreement to begin our work.

The EU remains hopeful that the obstacles that have so far prevented us from starting substantive work can after all be overcome. The EU has stated that CD Document 1624, which has come to be known as the "Amorim proposal", contains elements for a rapid agreement if all members of the CD display a spirit of openness and pragmatism.

During this year's sessions new and creative ideas for a work programme of the CD have also been put forward.

The EU welcomes the work and efforts of the Finnish president aimed at establishing a new work programme for the CD culminating in CD document 1670 of 23 May 2002.

Furthermore, in light of new threats in this area, the EU welcomes that the CD, following the proposal of the German president to revisit the issue, conducted open-ended informal consultations on the issue of radiological weapons. The EU also welcomes the suggestions of the German president that the CD continue its considerations of this matter.

Finally, the EU in particular welcomes the efforts of the ambassadors of Algeria, Belgium, Colombia, Sweden and Chile to develop a programme of work for the CD, as presented to us on August 29 2002. It is the hope of the EU that such initiatives – remaining flexible and open to any concerns that delegations might have – will merit constructive attention by all the CD delegations in the coming months. The EU therefore urges the Conference to continue to explore all avenues enabling us to start substantive work from the outset of the first session of 2003. The member states of the European Union will in the meantime remain active in supporting the President of the CD as well as participate constructively in any endeavours to revitalise the CD.

Finally, Mr. President, the EU would like to recall its attachment to the follow-up of the enlargement process of the CD - and in particular to those members of the EU which are not yet members of the conference, as well as the associated countries which have submitted a request for admission to the conference.

Thank you, Mr. President.