



## UNITED STATES NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSES CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Algeria, Poland, Malaysia and Iran Make Statements

7 February 2008

Thomas D'Agostino, the Administrator of the United States National Nuclear Security Administration, briefed the Conference on Disarmament today on the United States record of accomplishment on Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), underscoring the United States policy to achieve an effective strategic deterrent at the lowest level of nuclear weapons consistent with national security and its commitments to its allies.

Mr. D'Agostino said the United States wanted the Conference on Disarmament to undertake substantive work. In particular, the United States believed in the viability of concluding a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), and stood by the draft text it had introduced in the Conference in 2006. However, the United States was not just standing by, and waiting for progress to be made in the Conference. In 2004, President Bush had announced that the United States would dramatically reduce its nuclear stockpile, with a goal of reducing it by half by 2012, which would have the lowest level since the Eisenhower Administration in the 1950s. What many had missed was that, in 2007, the United States had already reached that 2012 goal, and just a few months ago President Bush had declared the goal of reducing the current stockpile by a further 15 per cent. The United States had also reduced its reliance on nuclear weapons in its strategic strategy, and it had accelerated dismantlement of nuclear weapons taken out of those stockpiles.

Mr. D'Agostino said it was clear, nevertheless, that the future security environment was very uncertain, and some trends were not favourable. Some States either had or sought weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and the risk of future proliferation could not be ignored. While the United States was committed to the objectives of article VI and the Preamble of the NPT, nuclear weapons would continue to be required for the foreseeable future. Even as it was shrinking, the United States nuclear arsenal was serving NPT objectives – assuring United States allies that the United States security relationship continued to help ensure their security, thus obviating the need for them to acquire nuclear weapons on their own. Credible United States nuclear capabilities and its security commitment to its allies remained an indispensable part of deterrence and an important element in the United States effort to limited proliferation and prevent nuclear arms races.

Article VI of the NPT states: "Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date

and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

Algeria, Poland, Malaysia and Iran also made statements during the plenary.

Algeria, in its statement, acknowledged that reductions in nuclear arsenals had been made by the nuclear powers by means of bilateral agreements and unilateral decisions, but said those measures did not respond to the criteria of irreversibility, transparency and verifiability agreed by consensus by the States parties to the NPT in 2000.

Malaysia added that, while information on the reduction of deployed nuclear weapons was welcome, it remained concerned and disturbed over reports on the development of new, more sophisticated types of nuclear weapons replacing old stockpiles, as well as qualitative improvement on existing nuclear arsenals within the stockpiles of nuclear weapon States. Those developments, coupled with pronouncements of new strategic defence doctrines – setting out the rationale for the first use of nuclear weapons – unilaterally reinterpreted commitments hitherto agreed upon within the NPT framework. Retrogressive movements reinforced the untenable perception that the existence of nuclear weapons was essential for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Poland spoke on the issue of Presidential draft decision CD/2007/L.1, warning that the Conference should avoid introducing into its deliberations a destructive spirit that could leave it on the margins of the whole security structure. Poland believed that the Presidential proposal constituted an extremely well drafted compromise, which still deserved credit for moving things forward and was equal to the dramatic achievements of the Conference in the past.

Iran took exception to the references made to it by the United States. Iran was a member of the NPT, and all its peaceful nuclear activities were under the full safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Regime. Many IAEA reports had been indicative of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme; allegations made in that regard therefore had no substance.

In 2007, the Conference was once again not able to reach agreement on a programme of work and so was unable to start work on substantive issues. A Presidential draft decision (CD/2007/L.1\*\*) was submitted as a basis for an agreement to begin substantive work in the Conference, and successive Presidents conducted intensive consultations with a view to reaching agreement on it. Presidential draft decision CD/2007/L.1\*\* calls for the appointment of four Coordinators to preside over substantive discussions on the issues of nuclear disarmament; prevention of an arms race in outer space; and negative security assurances; and to preside over negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The complementary Presidential statement, CD/2007/CRP.5\*, reflects an understanding of the Conference on the implementation of the Presidential decision, and the third text CD/2007/CRP.6\* is a short decision stating that when the Conference adopts the Presidential decision, it will be guided by the Presidential statement in its implementation. At the end of the 2007 session, it was decided that the documents before the Conference would be held over for consideration at the 2008 session.

At the end of the meeting, Guinea was invited to participate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament for 2008 as an observer

The next plenary of the Conference will be held at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 12 February, when the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov will address it.

## **Statements**

THOMAS D'AGOSTINO, Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration of the United States, said that the United States wanted the Conference on Disarmament to undertake substantive work. In particular, the United States believed in the viability of concluding a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), and stood by the draft text it had introduced in the Conference on Disarmament in 2006. However, the United States was not just standing by, and waiting for progress to be made in the Conference. In 2004, President Bush had announced that the United States would dramatically reduce its nuclear stockpile, with a goal of reducing it by half by 2012, which would have the lowest level since the Eisenhower Administration in the 1950s. What many had missed was that, in 2007, the United States had already reached that 2012 goal, and just a few months ago President Bush had declared the goal of reducing the current stockpile by a further 15 per cent. Easing international tension and strengthening trust between States in order to facilitate disarmament was a recognized goal set out in the preamble of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The United States had done a fair amount of effort to engage with the international community, holding two briefings on Article VI issues at the NPT Review Conference, and undertaking active public outreach efforts, among others. In terms of concrete steps, the United States had reduced its reliance on nuclear weapons in its strategic strategy; it had continued its drawdown of operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads in its current stockpile toward the Moscow Treaty figures of 1,700 to 2,200 by 2012; and it had accelerated dismantlement of nuclear weapons taken out of those stockpiles. Those were among significant steps taken by the United States, in addition to tabling a draft FMCT, as mentioned earlier.

In 2001, President Bush had said that the United States could and would change the size and character of its nuclear arsenal, Mr. D'Agostino continued. It was United States policy to achieve an effective strategic deterrent at the lowest level of nuclear weapons consistent with United States national security and its commitments to its allies. Those words had been taken to heart and translated into real action. However, it was clear that the future security environment was very uncertain, and some trends were not favourable. Some States either had or sought weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and the risk of future proliferation could not be ignored. While the United States was committed to the objectives of NPT article VI and its Preamble, nuclear weapons would continue to be required for the foreseeable future. Even as it was shrinking, the United States nuclear arsenal was serving NPT objectives – assuring United States allies that the United States security relationship continued to help ensure their security, thus obviating the need for them to acquire nuclear weapons on their own. Credible United States nuclear capabilities and its security commitment to its allies remained an indispensable part of deterrence and an important element in the United States effort to limited proliferation and prevent nuclear arms races.

Mr. D'Agostino then referred to a chart showing dramatic reductions in United States deployed strategic nuclear weapons. In conjunction with that, the number of deployed delivery systems had also been cut by over one half. In terms of nuclear weapons dismantlement, further dramatic steps had been taken: since 1992, 13 different types of nuclear warheads had been retired and eliminated. There had also been reductions in the United States Nuclear Weapons Complex: since the 1980s that infrastructure had been reduced by 50 per cent, and, as Administrator, his goal was to further reduce that nuclear weapons complex by 20 to 30 per cent. The United States had also developed the Reliable Replacement Warhead concept, which incorporated the latest advances in safety and security features to prevent unauthorized accidental use or theft, and in the long term ensured high confidence in warhead reliability and decreased the likelihood of returning to underground nuclear testing. It would also allow the United States to maintain its nuclear weapons deterrent with a smaller stockpile of nuclear warheads. Among efforts to reduce fissile material, the United States had cut off production of fissile material for weapons, ending production of highly enriched uranium in 1964, and of plutonium in 1988. Some 61.5 tons of plutonium had been removed from United States stocks – equivalent to roughly 7,600 nuclear weapons – and a \$4.8 billion facility was built to convert those stocks to civilian energy use.

Mr. D'Agostino then detailed the United States efforts to secure nuclear and radiological material worldwide, through enhancing capabilities to detect and deter illicit international nuclear transfers; strengthening and enhancing nuclear non-proliferation efforts; and numerous non-proliferation research and development activities. However, despite those non-proliferation initiatives and achievements, proliferation had increased. Significantly, there had been no evidence that United States nuclear weapons reductions had caused “North Korea” or Iran to slow down covert programmes to acquire capabilities to produce nuclear weapons, as his predecessor, Linton Brooks, had said in March 2004. Nevertheless, for the United States the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty remained a central element of its non-proliferation regime, and the United States remained convinced that improving the security environment was key to achieving the goal of complete nuclear disarmament.

IDRISS JAZAIRY (Algeria) said that the participation of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia at the Conference on Disarmament's inaugural meeting of 2008, on 23 January, testified to the importance of the Conference on Disarmament and had highlighted its role in establishing and consolidating international peace and security. However, they could not lose sight of the fact that that role could only be carried out through a joint commitment to disarmament, and in particular to nuclear disarmament. The non-proliferation and disarmament regime, particularly in the area of nuclear weapons, was going through a grave crisis that threatened to undermine international peace and security. The risk of nuclear proliferation continued. In the area of nuclear disarmament, it was true that reductions in nuclear arsenals had been made by the nuclear powers by means of bilateral agreements and unilateral decisions. But those measures did not respond to the criteria of irreversibility, transparency and verifiability agreed by consensus by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 2000. More troubling still were the interpretations of article VI of the NPT that contradicted the unequivocal political commitments made by nuclear weapon States for the elimination of those arms. Had they not heard statements to the effect that the maintenance and modernization of nuclear weapons were

in accordance with the NPT? Such statements only further undermined that Treaty. Algeria could not accept a situation in which the indefinite postponement of the effects of the NPT led to the de facto recognition of unlimited nuclear status of the nuclear powers. In particular, Algeria attached the utmost importance to effective international agreements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The nuclear powers themselves recognized in principle their duty to make such assurances. Then why not recognize the non-nuclear weapon States right to obtain the guarantee of such assurances through the elaboration of a legally binding international treaty to that effect? Such assurances would rectify the current security imbalance, between the nuclear weapon States and the non-nuclear weapon States, and would strengthen non-nuclear weapon States in their humanist choice. Algeria therefore renewed its call for the Conference to establish a subsidiary body to negotiate an international, legally binding agreement to that end.

At this session, the Conference had to find agreement on a balanced programme of work, Mr. Jazairy said. The six Presidents' proposal (incorporated in documents CD/2007/L.1, as complemented by CD/2007/CRP.5 and 6) had the merit of touching on all the four core issues before the Conference. They could not lay that proposal aside and go back to square one. That would be to dismiss the positions of many Members and to discount all the efforts undertaken. Not a single delegation had rejected that proposal categorically. However, despite the support it had received, the proposal had not yet reached maturity. It contained positive elements upon which they could build a programme of work, taking into consideration the legitimate concerns expressed by certain countries. The programme of work had to provide for a feeling of security for all States. Approaches that conflated the right to resist occupation, recognized by the United Nations, with terrorism, had to be avoided. Such a combination threatened to have the effect of slowing down and complicating their work, Algeria said.

ZDZISLAW RAPACKI (Poland) said that, since the 2006 session, when they had initiated the mechanism of close cooperation between the six Presidents (P6) of the Conference, the level of confidence among Conference Members had increased. They should avoid introducing into their deliberations a destructive spirit that could leave the Conference on the margins of the whole security structure. Poland believed that proposal CD/2007/L.1 constituted an extremely well drafted compromise, which still deserved credit for moving things forward and was equal to the dramatic achievements of the Conference in the past, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention. After almost 10 years of uncomfortable "hibernation" they could not face further delay.

In that respect, Poland assigned a clear priority to the commencement, without preconditions, of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). Together with the European Union, Poland also stood ready to engage in substantial discussions on the other items included in L.1, in particular on nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war. This year would be crucial for the future of the Conference. There was only one choice here: to move forward.

HSU KING BEE (Malaysia) said that, convinced as it was that the complete and total elimination of nuclear weapons was the only solution against their possible use or threat of use, nuclear disarmament remained the highest priority for Malaysia. In that context, the update by

the Secretary of Defence of the United Kingdom on its ongoing initiative in collaboration with Norway in developing verification techniques on the dismantlement of nuclear warheads had been welcome. Nonetheless, reductions in deployments and operational status could not substitute for irreversible cuts aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Clearly, in line with the collective commitment they had undertaken in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), disarmament and non-proliferation measures should move forward together. In reality, that was sadly not the case. While information on the reduction of deployed nuclear weapons was welcome, Malaysia remained concerned and disturbed over reports on the development of new, more sophisticated types of nuclear weapons replacing old stockpiles, as well as qualitative improvement on existing nuclear arsenals within the stockpiles of nuclear weapon States. Those developments, coupled with pronouncements of new strategic defence doctrines – setting out the rationale for the first use of nuclear weapons – unilaterally reinterpreted commitments hitherto agreed upon within the NPT framework. Retrogressive movements reinforced the untenable perception that the existence of nuclear weapons was essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. For its part, consistent with Malaysia's firm commitment towards nuclear disarmament, it had ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on 17 January 2008.

Malaysia was encouraged by the momentum behind the carefully crafted 2007 Presidential proposal contained in document CD/2007/L.1, which suggested the issue of an FMCT was ready for negotiations. While it fell short of Malaysia's expectations to address other core issues in a balanced and comprehensive manner, Malaysia had nonetheless demonstrated flexibility and readiness to work closely with Conference members by joining the consensus on L.1. It had done so also in the belief that while nuclear disarmament remained Malaysia's highest priority, pending negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, the FMCT, like the CTBT, remained one of the next essential steps towards preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the attainment of genuine nuclear disarmament.

MOHAMMAD TAGHI HOSSEINI (Iran) took exception to the references made to Iran by the United States in its intervention. Iran was a member of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and all its peaceful nuclear activities were under the full safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Regime. Iran's peaceful use of nuclear energy was completely within its inalienable rights under the NPT, and it intended to pursue those rights. Many reports of the IAEA had been indicative of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and IAEA had issued repeated statements that it had seen no evidence of diversion of nuclear materials to other than peaceful purposes. Allegations made in that regard therefore had no substance.

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