

Summary
by
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Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations
Friday 13 May 2016, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

We are approaching the end of this two-week long series of plenary sessions of the Open-Ended Working Group.

As per the indicative timetable contained in A/AC.286/WP.21/Rev.1, I intend to wrap-up our work today and discuss the way ahead in preparation for the August meetings and the consideration and conclusion of the final report which this Group will have to submit to the General Assembly pursuant to OP7 of resolution 70/33.

Before sharing my thoughts about our work during the last two weeks, I wish to express my appreciation to Director-General Michael Møller, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and to Under Secretary-General Kim Won-soo, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for their participation in the work of our Group.

I also thank all the panellists for contributing to our discussions, as well as the testimony of our special guest speaker, Ms. Setsuko Thurlow, a Hibakusha who survived the bombing of Nagasaki.

I should now like to share my views about the proceedings thus far. This summary of course reflects my own very initial views on some of the main points raised during the various phases of the Group's deliberations. It is not meant as an exhaustive summary nor does it attempt to give any weight to any of the points discussed in terms of the level of support enjoyed by any particular measure.

Overall, I believe we had a very intensive and productive meeting over the past fortnight. We had frank, robust and exhaustive discussions on all of the main substantive items mandated by General Assembly in resolution 70/33.

While convergence was observed on some important topics, there were divergences on others. This was apparent on the issue of which approach or pathway was most appropriate to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Notwithstanding the differences in views and approaches, I believe we had constructive and interactive discussions during which an abundance of ideas and suggestions emerged, both from your statements and the over sixty working papers submitted by States, civil society and academia.

On **transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons**, it is my sense that the Group agreed upon the importance of the principle of transparency, which, along with the principles of irreversibility and verifiability, play an essential role in the nuclear disarmament process.

In this regard, the importance of ensuring access to uniform information reported by States possessing nuclear weapons to the public and to neighbouring States was stressed. The need to protect sensitive national security information was also emphasized.

The Group discussed specific types of information including those contained in Annex 2 of the synthesis paper that could be reported by the States possessing nuclear weapons to a reporting mechanism established within the framework of the United Nations.

In addition to these measures, the Group discussed information that could be reported by other States, including non-nuclear-weapon States.

It was noted that many of these measures built upon deliberations held in the context of the NPT review process and at the 2015 Review Conference.

On **measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations**, the Group discussed a number of factors that contribute to the current and growing risk of a nuclear weapon detonation. It was stressed that the only way to eliminate these risks is by achieving the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It was acknowledged that the precise nature of the risks was difficult to assess, given the lack of transparency in nuclear weapon programmes.

There was a particular focus in many interventions on the risk posed by maintaining nuclear weapons at high levels of alert and on the effect that these postures have on the process of nuclear disarmament. Mention was made on risks associated with cyber-attacks as well as issues regarding nuclear armed cruise missiles.

The Group also discussed measures to reduce risks and increase safety, pending the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, including those measures identified in Annex 3 of the synthesis paper.

These included, inter alia, measures for reducing: stockpiles of nuclear weapons; their role in doctrines; and their operational readiness. They also included the abandonment of launch-on-warning postures, de-alerting, as well as measures to build safety and security and to protect command and control systems.

It was emphasized that the pursuit of such measures should not imply support for any possession or use of nuclear weapons.

On **additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of and interrelationship between the wide range of humanitarian consequences that would result from any nuclear detonation**, the Group discussed the role of actors at all levels within the international community in enhancing public awareness. This included efforts by the United Nations system and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, academia, parliamentarians, the mass media and individuals.

Considerable emphasis was placed on the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education, especially on the need to promote critical thinking in the next generation.

The importance of observing the relevant international days declared by the General Assembly, including the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the International Day Against Nuclear Tests, was mentioned.

The Group also discussed specific measures to increase awareness on humanitarian consequences, including those contained in Annex 4 of the synthesis paper.

These included measures for, inter alia: promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education; promoting the role of atomic bomb survivors; and promoting understanding of the interconnected consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation on development, the environment, climate change, cultural heritage, human rights, children and its particular gendered impacts. They also included measures to integrate nuclear disarmament into other policy areas, to elevate awareness at the highest levels of government and to reach out more effectively to youth.

On **concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons**, the Group broadly considered the main features of and relationships between the four distinct approaches or pathways for the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons, including a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention, a nuclear weapon ban treaty, a framework agreement and the progressive approach based upon building blocks and the 25 effective practical measures and effective legal measures identified, including in particular the early entry into force of the CTBT and the negotiations of an FMT. The features of a hybrid approach were also raised. The Group considered possible elements that could form part of a legal instrument or set of instruments, depending upon which approach or pathway was being considered.

These included, inter alia, those elements identified in Annex 1 of the synthesis paper, such as acquisition, stockpiling, possession, use or threat of use, research and development, testing, production of fissile materials, transfers, deployments, transit, visitation and over-flight and financing as well as any assistance, encouragement or inducement in any prohibited acts. The rights and needs of victims were also highlighted, as well as the need for understanding the unique and specific circumstances of affected populations, including indigenous peoples. The issue of elaborating definitions was also discussed.

Measures raised included other provisions and arrangements addressing issues such as bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral nuclear arms reductions, decontamination, verification, processes for eliminating nuclear warheads and delivery systems, removing stockpiles of fissile materials, nuclear safety and security, institutional arrangements, compliance and dispute resolution, confidence-building and security assurances.

Finally, the Group discussed **other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations**, including trust and confidence-building measures to create conditions necessary to facilitate further major reductions in nuclear arsenals, as well as the consolidation and strengthening of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and the establishment of new zones.

In the discussion on reviewing the role of nuclear weapons in the security and other contexts of the 21st century, various views were expressed on the weight given to a particular security outlook and humanitarian considerations. Discussions centred around the relationship between nuclear deterrence and nuclear disarmament, as well as threat perceptions on the one hand, and collective security on the other.

The issue of how to reconcile contending concepts of national, regional and collective security was also raised.

Let me now inform you about my intentions for the **way forward** towards the consideration and adoption of the final report of this Group.

The discussions in February and May have emphasized important elements and measures to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. It is now my duty to prepare a zero draft of the final report.

My intention is to prepare a factual report reflecting as much as possible the various views expressed and proposals made. The agreed recommendations will be more of a challenge given the divergence of views on how best to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. Let me just reiterate here that I will do my best to reach general agreement and achieve an outcome that is acceptable to all by reaching out to all parties in an open, transparent and inclusive manner.

I hope to be able to circulate this zero draft by the end of July or early August. For its consideration and adoption, I have tentatively scheduled the remaining six formal plenary sessions, as follows:

- two sessions on Friday, 5 August,
- one session in the afternoon of Tuesday 16 August,
- another session in the afternoon of Wednesday 17 August, and
- two sessions on Friday, 19 August, for the final consideration and adoption of the report.

This schedule of activities is only indicative and is subject to change.

If necessary and depending on the progress made, I have also planned for the possibility of holding informal meetings between 8 and 19 August.

This schedule has also been coordinated with the Polish presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and will not overlap with any activity in the CD. I am grateful for the kind cooperation of the delegation of Poland in this regard.

The floor is now open for your comments and suggestions.

[Exchange of views]

I wish to thank all of you for the kind words addressed to my team and me. In fact, it is I that must thank all of you, representatives of States, civil society and academia alike, for your active and constructive participation in the work of this body, as well as to all the panellists and experts who have informed our deliberations. Your engagement and interactive deliberations have taken us a long way towards better understanding each other with a view to achieving progress towards our common goal of the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

My appreciation also goes to the Secretariat and the interpreters for their hard work. Before concluding, let me once again seek your kind cooperation in providing the Secretariat with a copy of your interventions so that they can be uploaded onto the Group's website as reference, particularly for those not able to attend this meeting.

This concludes our work for this meeting of the Group. We will resume our work on Friday 5 August at 10h00 AM in conference room XIX with the consideration of the zero draft of the report.

Thank you.

This meeting stands adjourned.
