

**OPENING STATEMENT BY MR. MICHAEL MØLLER**  
**SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT AND PERSONAL**  
**REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE CONFERENCE**  
**AT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP TAKING FORWARD**  
**MULTILATERAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS**  
**Monday, 2 May 2016, Palais des Nations, Room XIX**

Ambassador Thongphakdi,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my privilege to welcome you, on behalf of the Secretary-General, to the second session of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Despite his very short visit to Geneva last Friday, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon shared with me his growing concern over the current political and security trends and military developments in the world, which significantly increase the dangers inherent in today's already precarious international nuclear landscape.

The establishment and progress to date of this Open-ended Working Group is a potentially important means towards breaking the log-jam in multilateral nuclear disarmament and, as former Secretary-General Kofi Annan said during the opening session on 22 February, "developing the recommendations that set us back on the right track."

At the outset, I wish to acknowledge the expert chairmanship of this Working Group by Ambassador Thongphakdi. I commend his soft-spoken, open, determined and creative diplomatic style which is an important and appreciated asset in this difficult and sensitive process.

The first session in February provided delegations with an opportunity to hold an initial exchange of views on the primary substantive matters mandated by the General Assembly. These discussions have already enabled the group to explore the possible parameters, feasibility and effectiveness of various approaches to nuclear disarmament. These discussions have also enriched our understanding of the effective legal measures needed to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world.

A number of important ideas in this regard are presented in the Synthesis Paper of the Chair, a helpful tool reflecting ideas and suggestions expressed in statements and numerous working papers submitted by delegations and civil society.

The great interest and participation by civil society in these proceedings is particularly noteworthy and underscores the high expectations for this body to develop concrete recommendations for breaking the paralysis in the disarmament machinery and in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control more broadly.

I believe that the inclusive participation of civil society, academic institutions and international organizations in the work of the Group is in and of itself an invaluable contribution. It is deeply consonant with my view of the role that civil society can and should play in the multilateral process. This view is the driving force behind my efforts to bring civil society closer to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. A second, informal, CD-Civil Society consultation is in preparation and will be coming up in a couple of months.

The next two weeks are crucial and are likely to be the main substantive segment of this Open-ended Working Group. Yet, as we are all aware, there remain some major differences of views between delegations on the way forward. The reality is that we are at a critical political and technological juncture in history and that present and future generations are expecting us to demonstrate wisdom and statesmanship and act with common sense and enlightened self-interest.

In this connection, I hope you are able to use the next two weeks to build new common ground, promote trust and confidence and develop concrete and action-oriented recommendations to the General Assembly.

The United Nations Office at Geneva and the Office for Disarmament Affairs stand ready, as always, to assist you in your work in every possible way.

I wish you a useful and constructive session.

Thank you.