

الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية

RÉPUBLIQUE ALGÉRIENNE DÉMOCRATIQUE ET POPULAIRE

MISSION PERMANENTE
AUPRÈS DE L'OFFICE DES NATIONS UNIES
ET DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES
EN SUISSE



البعثة الدائمة
لدى مكتب الأمم المتحدة
والمنظمات الدولية بسويسرا

Farewell statement of H.E Idriss Jazaïry

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Algeria

to the Conference on Disarmament

Geneva, 6 March 2012

Mr. President,

I am pleased at the outset to express my happiness in seeing the Representative of Egypt, the first Arab country presiding over the Conference after the Algerian Presidency in 2009. You are undertaking this responsibility in a context, which is both delicate and difficult for the Conference and for the whole multilateral disarmament machinery. This calls for all of us to extend to you the support and the assistance that you require in order to enable the Conference to carry out the mission that is devolved on it.

After seven years of activities my assignment as Permanent Representative of Algeria to the Conference on Disarmament is about to end. Allow me on this occasion to share with you some assessments and conclusions that I have drawn from my experience during this period.

Algeria became, against its will, a land of experimentations for French nuclear tests, whose terrible impacts on people and on the environment are still remain up to this day. It was therefore that normal we should seek to eliminate all weapons of mass extermination with nuclear weapons in the forefront.

Algeria has invariably attended the pivotal stages in the history of nuclear disarmament. It was the first State to launch in January 1979 the deliberations of the Committee on Disarmament, which in 1984 became the Conference on Disarmament. Indeed this role was exercised by H. E. Abdelaziz Bouteflika was then the Algerian Foreign Minister.

Likewise, the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of July 1996 on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, which recognised the obligation to pursue and to achieve nuclear disarmament, was issued under the presidency of the Court by Mr. Mohammed Bedjaoui a high Algerian dignitary.

Algeria also presided the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which adopted the 13 practical steps for achieving nuclear disarmament. In the CD itself, my country's delegation co-authored the A5 proposal of 2002 on the Programme of Work.

These contributions have greatly inspired me and challenged as they have encouraged me to pursue my work along the same line.

This led my efforts with the valuable support of all of you to submitting to the Conference the proposal of the Programme of Work, which was adopted by consensus in May 2009 and became CD/1864.

Despite this historical agreement, we subsequently moved backwards. Nor were we able to find up to now an alternative solution, which could enable us to overcome the blockage.

In this sterile atmosphere, the disagreement in priorities that should be applied in the Programme of Work re-emerged once more.

This has to do of course, in particular with the degree of attention to be given to the four core issues, which are nuclear disarmament, FMCT, PAROS and NSAs.

Let me focus without claiming to be exhaustive on the issue of nuclear disarmament. In the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the Conference, the basic priority of our work is the elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, a treaty on banning the production of fissile materials to nuclear weapons is an integral element of this process. Indeed the quantity of plutonium stockpiles according to the 2011 report of the international Panel on fissile materials reaches 450 tonnes. As for highly enriched Uranium, the stockpiles are estimated at 1,440 tonnes. When confronted with such huge stockpiles of destructive material, any international agreement in this regard that does not consider the question of the stockpiles would be of limited utility.

Nobody would deny that there have been developments to certain extent during recent years in this regard. We welcomed the change in political discourse and the return of the nuclear disarmament to the forefront. Some of the outcomes there from include the entry into force of the START agreement as well as the work plan adopted by the NPT Review Conference of 2010.

Unfortunately, these steps remain of limited impact. They represent a political and diplomatic effort which still awaiting concrete expression on the ground. Indeed, the commitments in favour of nuclear disarmament have been undermined by what is referred to as "policies of nuclear deterrence" which remove from the perceptible horizon any possibility whatsoever of eliminating these weapons. All the reviews of the military policies of nuclear weapon States confirm once more the policies of nuclear deterrence inherited from the Cold War. These States continue to take measures to modernize their nuclear arsenals in order to preserve what they refer to as "a capacity for nuclear deterrence".

The proclaimed objective of these States is to defend their sovereignty and to protect their vital interests.

Do not, Non-nuclear weapon States also have sovereignty to defend and vital interests to protect?

It is the duty of any State to deter any threat or any external aggression by virtue of the right to self-defence, which has been proclaimed by the Charter of the United Nations. However, this does not confer the right to anyone to enjoy a monopoly on nuclear weapons. This is because such an exclusive right would undermine the non-proliferation regime thus encouraging other countries to follow the example of nuclear States and to invoke the same logic.

So also would the claim of nuclear deterrence staked by nuclear weapon States lead to establishing a hierarchy of different degrees in the sovereignty of States. Such hierarchy

would run against the Charter of the United Nations and the spirit of the NPT, in particular its article 6. This would be unacceptable politically, legally and even morally.

Mr. President,

He who believes that the nuclear danger is on the wane is labouring under a delusion. There are no indicators that could lead us to expect this. Indeed, the statistics confirms that 9 States dispose of such weapons whether falling under the scope of the NPT or not. The statistics confirm the fact that approximately 60% of the world's inhabitants rely on these weapons for their security directly or through a nuclear umbrella.

Just imagine the catastrophic devastation that could result from a conflict if there was a resort to nuclear weapons voluntarily or by mistake.

Mr. President,

In order to overcome the nuclear threat there is need to resort to an approach that it is both global and coherent and that would enjoy general support. It would be aimed at freeing the world of nuclear weapons following a specific timeframe. For it is obvious that piecemeal solutions without a clear strategy will not address the required objective as it is clear that such measures taken up to now have failed to achieve the requisite quantitative leap. The remains therefore a gulf between the present situation on the ground and the requirements of nuclear disarmament.

In this regard, nuclear weapon States are invited to comply with the commitments that they have undertaken in particular the unequivocal undertaking to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

The first preparatory meeting of the NPT Review Conference of 2015 will meet in few weeks in Vienna. I hope that this process will lead to concrete results expressing the resolve of nuclear States to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their military policies with a view to their ultimate elimination.

The effectiveness of this Convention and the achievements of its objectives are dependent on its universalization.

In this regard, banning nuclear weapons from the Middle East is of momentous importance. The fact that one State from the region remains outside the treaty and disposes of a nuclear arsenal is a source of tension because of the strategic unbalance it brings about in the region. If this situation continues to prevail it will trigger a dialectic conducive to nuclear proliferation to restore a strategic balance in the region.

However, the only reasonable solution is to eradicate the nuclear weapons that exist in the Middle East and to act decisively to prevent any proliferation in the future.

We have an appropriate framework to reach this objective. I am referring to the resolution that we adopted at the 1995 Review Conference on the NPT concerning the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East region. So let us move to implement it, in order to bring to a final end the danger of nuclear proliferation in the region.

Mr. President,

Against the backdrop of the growing challenges that are threatening peace and stability in the world, there is an emphatic call by the world community advocating the resumption of the activities of the Conference. However it remains sadly unable to respond to this call. We should now pause and consider alternative solutions to find the way out of the impasse.

The debates that took place at the last General Assembly of the United Nations as well as the draft resolutions that were discussed bring out clearly the alternative options that have been put forward.

I wish to pay tribute to the ideas put forward by Mr. Jomart Tokayev Secretary General, during our meeting of 14 February 2012 concerning the holding of a High-Level Conference and the appointment of special coordinators to review the agenda of the Conference and its procedures, which could be useful.

I fear however, that new discussion on the Agenda or on procedural issues as well as the transfer of the negotiations outside the scope of the Conference are unlikely to solve the substantial issues.

As I already mentioned in previous meetings of the Conference the essential factor on which the progress of our work depends is political will and this is an opinion that the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters included in document A/66/125 of 11 July 2011. It was clear from the incipient stages of the Conference that political will was crucial for it to fulfil its mandate.

I wish to refer in this regard to the words of H.E Abdelaziz Bouteflika in his opening address to the Conference in January 1979. Quote: "Such machinery can play an important role only in so far as States demonstrate political will which, as emphasized in the final document of the tenth special session remains the decisive factor for the implementation of genuine disarmament measures, and the Committee on Disarmament is precisely the forum in which such political will should be demonstrated and given effect" Unquote. Thirty four years later there is still a dire need for this political will.

Mr. President,

According to the Rule of Procedures, the Programme of Work is subject to adoption by consensus but it bears recalling that there are rules and precedents that are clear to guide our behaviour in this regard.

I would refer in this regard to the judicious call addressed to the Conference in his valedictory speech last year by H.E John Duncan, the predecessor of H.E Joanne Adamson, the Permanent Representative of the UK. He emphasized at the time the necessity to move from a diplomacy of cross regional coalition or of power politics towards a diplomacy based on shared interests and values.

In reality, we are not starting from scratch. Nor are we in the process of elaborating new concepts. We have agreed together in the UN Charter on the foundations of collective co-existence "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". To this end we have agreed on common values including the respect of national sovereignty, refraining from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and non interference in internal affairs of States and the right to self determination.

Such are the values that we should be guided by so as to enable the Conference to restore its vitality to contain unilateral security ambitions and to rely on multilateral standards in the field of disarmament.

Mr. President,

We have a momentous responsibility to preserve the credibility of the Conference. This will not be achieved if we do not adopt a Programme of Work that enables it to resume its substantive work. In this regard, I want to express my deep-felt belief that decision CD/ 1864 which was adopted in 2009 remains the logical basis to engage in the search for a solution to our dilemma.

With this in mind, I hope that your efforts will guide you towards a consensus outcome on the Programme of Work under your presidency.

I encourage you to pursue your consultations to introduce limited amendments which may help to overcome reservation which stood in the way of the implementation of CD/1864.

Should this endeavour not materialized, the alternative would be to consider the proposal I made on the 31st of January 2012 to adopt a simplified Programme of Work that would provide for discussions in plenary meetings of the Conference. It would be helpful in this case if a synthesis of the substantial deliberations could be recalled in the Annual Report of the Conference.

If this option cannot be agreed upon either, it will become necessary to call a Special Session of the UNGA on disarmament to examine the crisis confronting the multilateral disarmament machinery.

Mr. President,

Finally, permit me to add that during the time I had the great honour to represent Algeria in the Conference; I enjoyed the company of an outstanding group of highly professional diplomats. Despite differences in views, our deliberations have always taken place in a congenial atmosphere, contrary to the situation prevailing in other fora in Geneva where discussions tend to be politicized and where tension prevails.

I take this opportunity to salute the Representative of civil society who follow our deliberations from the gallery and who express their commitment to the cause of disarmament and world peace. I hope that the Conference will open up more in the future to the NGOs and that it can be inspired by its contributions.

Last, but not least I want to express my sincere thanks to the Secretariat of the Conference and to its leader H.E John Tokayev for the invaluable support given to our work. I include in my thanks the translators who provide the bridge permitting us to connect and to engage in dialogue despite our different languages.

Thank you for your kind attention.