



STATEMENT BY PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY
CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

21 JANUARY 2019

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the first Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament in 2019. I assure you of Turkey's full support and cooperation in your efforts to advance the work of the CD.

The CD, as the single multilateral disarmament platform, with its unique structure and special mandate of negotiating legally binding disarmament instruments has been at the centre of endeavours to achieve the ultimate goal of creating a safer world.

As we begin each new year with cherishing hopes, the prolonged stalemate at the CD should not restrain us from putting utmost efforts to achieve a breakthrough this year.

Therefore, we call upon all members to help create an atmosphere of compromise and flexibility to maintain the relevance of the Conference by enabling the resumption of its substantive work.

Mr. President,

The 2018 session was not an easy year for the Conference indeed. Following the adoption of the agenda of the CD, a consensus over a Program of Work did not emerge during the session.

A lot of work and tremendous efforts have been put forth, but it was only possible to adopt a "technical and procedural report" on 14 September 2018.

This result should not discourage us. Although all was not reflected in detail in the Report, very important and positive steps were taken at the CD in 2018.

The Conference made a promising start under the guidance of Sri Lankan Ambassador H.E. Ravinatha Aryasinha, and it was possible to adopt a decision (CD/2119) on establishment of five subsidiary bodies in accordance with the agenda of the Conference. Accordingly, four subsidiary bodies were established on agenda items 1 to 4, and one subsidiary body was established on agenda items 5, 6 and 7.

It was also agreed with the decision that reports on the progress achieved and agreed on in each subsidiary body would be submitted to the Conference.

In retrospect, the expanded mandate of the subsidiary bodies and the reporting responsibility were their stronger aspects when compared with the Way Ahead Working Group (WAWG), which was established in 2017.

We believe that, these two elements should be considered as steps forward at the Conference and similar incremental steps have to be taken in the 2019 session.

During the year, seven meetings were held by each subsidiary body. In the end, they all submitted their substantive reports to the Conference, and four of them were adopted. The report of the 4th subsidiary body on the Negative Security Assurances (NSA) was not. However, I am confident that in this session of the Conference, we will also further develop the work on the NSA, which is a very important topic for many delegations and close the so-called gap between the agenda items of the CD.

It is also worth underlining that the meetings of subsidiary bodies and their reports provide us with the possibility to better understand the converging and also the diverging positions of the delegations on different topics. They certainly constitute a solid basis for the future work of the Conference.

Mr. President,

One important responsibility of the last President of the CD is to prepare the report of the Conference to the UN General Assembly. Being aware of the circumstances and controversial issues of the 2018 session, our objective was to produce a factual and objective annual report in an impartial and transparent manner during Turkish Presidency in 2018.

The initial reactions to the first draft were very positive and constructive. Most delegations acknowledged the first draft as a solid basis. Although it was possible

to provisionally adopt majority of the paragraphs, there were intense and lengthy negotiations on some issues as well.

Preparing the CD Report was a long and exhaustive exercise for everybody. After having held 9 formal Plenaries, 12 informal plenaries and dozens of bilateral consultations and small group meetings in the course of four weeks, the Conference was only able to adopt a “technical and procedural report” though many parts, including the controversial ones were dropped.

In the aftermath, discussions of similar nature took place during the informal meetings held on the Resolution on the Report of the CD. The delegations managed to agree on the draft resolution in Geneva and finally it was adopted in New York.

A presentation which summarizes the 2018 session of the Conference was given on 30 October 2018 at a Panel under “Disarmament Machinery” cluster of UN 73rd General Assembly First Committee meetings.

We are also pleased to have the chance to come together with you Mr. President during the intersessional period to discuss the current affairs of the CD.

We would like to once again thank all member states for the enormous efforts that has been put in to advance the work of the CD since the beginning of the 2018 session. 2018 will definitely be a year which will not go unnoticed in the history of the CD.

Today, the most essential issue is to maintain the relevance of the CD. We all need to assume our responsibilities to enable this august body perform its main task again.

To conclude, let me reiterate our support to you Mr. President and your successors and wish you all success.

Thank you Mr. President.