

## Conference on Disarmament

Geneva, 29 January 2019

Statement by Mr. Jerzy Makarowski

Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the Conference on Disarmament

Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Let me assure you of the full support of the Swedish delegation in your efforts to achieve a successful start to this year's session of the CD.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate new ambassadors to the Conference: the Permanent Representatives of China, Ecuador and India. A warm welcome also to the new Secretary of the CD, Ms. Radha Day.

Sweden's views on a number of current disarmament issues and priorities were expressed in the statement delivered last week on behalf of the European Union. This includes the call to preserve the INF Treaty and ensure its full and verifiable implementation. The Russian Federation must urgently address the serious concerns expressed about its compliance with the INF Treaty in a substantial and transparent way.

In addition to the EU statement I would like to add, in a national capacity, some words about the work of the CD.

Mr. President,

We are looking forward to your draft programme of work that will be presented in the coming days. We trust that the draft will provide us with a foundation to commence substantive work in the CD without delay.

Over the many years of impasse in the CD a notion of "a programme of work with a negotiating mandate" was developed. As it has proved impossible to agree on a negotiating mandate for any issue, this notion has, in effect, contributed to blocking substantive work in the CD. It became an "all or nothing approach". The results are known.

That was the state of affairs in the Conference for over two decades. Something started to change in the last couple of years. We seem to have embarked on a way towards a pragmatic approach to advance our work – first in the Way Ahead working group in 2017, then in last year's subsidiary bodies. Instead of only debating what we should be doing, we actually conducted some substantive work.

Mr. President

Success is nowadays not a word frequently associated with the work of the CD. Nonetheless, last year's work in the subsidiary bodies was, in the relative terms of the CD, something of a success.

It was not the breakthrough that would make the CD return to do what it was created to do, but a step in the right direction. It proved to be a working solution, as illustrated by the adoption of the reports of four subsidiary bodies.

As the Ambassador of the Netherlands reminded us in his statement last week, it was a similar approach that the CD had adopted in the 1980's and 90's. For many years after its establishment by SSOD 1, the CD's programme of work was merely a schedule of activities that enabled discussions, often of a technical nature. Was that a futile exercise? The subsequent adoptions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the CTBT would suggest otherwise.

Until we reach an agreement in the CD to start negotiations on an FMCT—the perennial next logical step—or another international disarmament instrument, we should continue other structured and substantive work.

Mr President,

For all practical purposes last year's decisions on the subsidiary bodies was a programme of work. We could not agree to call it that, for known reasons, but that did not prevent us from carrying out substantive work.

Should the Presidency conclude that the continuation of the work of the subsidiary bodies, in one form or another, be the preferred solution, Sweden would support such an approach.

Let us not spend time on procedural debates while waiting for the perfect solution. It is an elusive target, easily missed. We must now show the political will to move beyond old mantras and focus on what we know works. Let us adopt a realistic and pragmatic approach and continue to work on the areas where we find commonalities that will carry us towards negotiations in a not too distant future.

Thank you.