



S L O V A K I A

STATEMENT

by

**His Excellency
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**Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic
to the United Nations**

to the First Committee
of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

on Disarmament Machinery

- Check against delivery -

New York
31 October 2012

Mr. Chairman,

Slovakia fully associates with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. Nevertheless, I would like to add few comments from a national perspective focusing on the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

We continue to see the CD as a single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament matters. And we believe that it is so important that we cannot afford its further inactivity and its deadlock to continue. We are convinced that the CD is still the best place to produce global, well-founded and viable instruments. The CD concept offers a potential to find negotiated solutions.

At the same time, the CD needs to offer a perspective and serve its purpose. We cannot overlook aspirations to open other disarmament avenues and take multilateral disarmament negotiations forward. If the critical mass can be collected and engaged, alternative ways and means might be explored.

Because of the deadlock in the CD, the international community is prevented from advancing on issues - in or through this Conference - that it believes would strengthen security for all. That is why the CD's stalemate is intolerable in security terms. The continued impasse is unsustainable. Current status of the CD, however, questions ability and relevance of this forum or its components to international security.

The history of the negotiations in the CD has shown that this body has a potential to deliver. We need to resuscitate this body and to revive its potential.

Mr. Chairman,

We understand that there are different priorities for the negotiations in the CD. But the fact that the CD is in a stalemate not due to its failure in negotiations but due to its inability to agree on the Programme of Work on which negotiations should proceed is a matter of serious concern. We need to show increased flexibility and political will, which would be reflected in trust and confidence and will help us to bridge our views.

In this regard, we share remarks of the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Ms. Angela Kane who reminded us at her address to the CD on 13 September this year that *“while many efforts have been undertaken to explore alternatives to the CD, greater attention should arguably be directed to exploring diplomatic means of establishing a political climate that can enable the CD to commence negotiations”*.

Negotiating a new instrument requires new ideas and new approaches. However, we do not believe that adding new preconditions to future possible negotiations with an aim to define their scope and to prejudge their outcome can make it more interesting or bring us closer to commencing such deliberations. On the contrary, only real negotiations can show which issues and in what way can be addressed in the negotiations thus generating a negotiated outcome.

All issues on our agenda deserve careful consideration about their future perspectives. There may be a question whether any issue or what issue is ripe for negotiations. But we would find an answer to it only if we deal with an issue. Only if we start, we can find out how far we can reach. So we need to commence dealing with issues on our agenda as soon as possible.

We noted with interest suggestions to conduct parallel negotiations on at least two core issues, which could create an opportunity for taking nuclear disarmament negotiations forward.

In building our future global security environment and in considering future perspectives, we need to look beyond individual steps and focus at a final goal, a world free of nuclear weapons. We believe that we can achieve this goal through a comprehensive framework of ensured measures and instruments. Such an approach should ensure that negotiations would continue beyond the achievement of an individual step. We need to provide assurances and confidence that individual steps, which may create temporary imbalances, would be followed by other steps, which would eliminate concerns on a framed way towards an ultimate goal.

Mr. Chairman,

According to the rules of procedures the Conference may establish subsidiary bodies whenever it deems it advisable for the effective performance of its functions. At the same time, we also understand that the CD is not compelled to establish subsidiary bodies and that the rules of procedures do not prevent the CD to do the business without them.

My delegation pays also due attention to a desire and interest in the CD membership expressed by many countries. We believe that this issue deserves proper consideration. In this regard, Slovakia welcomes the increasing support for appointing a special coordinator on the expansion of the CD membership.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me express our deep gratitude to the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for its work, including its most valuable contributions to the debate in the CD on various topics during this year's session. We appreciate UNIDIR's inputs and hope that such cooperation could also continue in the future.

We have also noted ideas for merging the CD with the UN Disarmament Commission. Given a different nature of these two components of the disarmament machinery, such an action would perhaps not improve the situation on the ground nor would it create a new dynamics necessary for taking multilateral negotiations forward.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.