

Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank UNIDIR and my good friends Tim Caughley and Kerstin Vignard for inviting me here at the opening of this meeting.

Age sometimes helps in bringing one to elevated places and this is why I am sitting today in this podium high. Age is also said to bring wisdom, although this is certainly not the case with me. Even if it were, however, all my wisdom would not be enough to solve the question of the prolonged lack of results at the CD. It must be said, in all fairness, that its members have not been idle; they have been very busy in the past few years trying to find a workable solution to that question.

What I might say in this regard is that in my view this is not a mere procedural issue. Some form of circumventing the rule of consensus at the CD has been advocated by some, while at the same time consensus is being invoked as an essential requisite for the ATT negotiations.

For several decades now the start of multilateral negotiations on concrete measures of nuclear disarmament has been effectively blocked in the CD, against the expressed wish of the vast majority of the international community. It is true that several agreements on different aspects have been concluded at the CD and elsewhere; however, no multilateral treaty has ever resulted in the physical destruction of a single nuclear weapon.

Since the end of history was proclaimed it became clear that the distribution of world power has changed dramatically, with the rise of new regional centers of power that find little, if any, recognition in the current structures. Nowhere is this more visible than in the Security Council. This also helps understanding the reasons for the lack of progress in the disarmament machinery.

My distinguished successor at ODA, Ms. Angela Kane, told the 1st Committee last Tuesday that the UN disarmament machinery would regain its momentum once Member States recognized that harmony among global interests would benefit individual States in turn. I could not have said it better.

Thank you.

Sergio Duarte, 11 October 2012