

**Statement by H.E. U Htin LYNN, Permanent Representative of Myanmar
at the Plenary Meeting of the Conference on Disarmament
(Geneva, 30 January 2018)**

**Mr. President,
Mr. Director-General,
Dear colleagues,**

- At the outset, allow me to congratulate you Mr. President on your assumption of Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this critical juncture. We are confident that, under your able guidance, the Conference will be able to make substantive progress in our work. You can be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

- My delegation thanks High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu for her importance message delivered in this chamber last week.

- I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues, Ambassador Michael **Gaffey** of Ireland, Ambassador Claudio De la Puente **Ribeyro** of Peru, Ambassador Socorro **Flores Liera** of Mexico, Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato of Italy and Ambassador Zbigniew CZECH of Poland, Ambassador Alaa **Youssef** of Egypt whom I met here in this room for the first time twenty years ago.

- Taking this opportunity and as Chairman of the Way Ahead Working Group last year, I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to Friends of the Chair Ambassador Michael **Biontino** of Germany, Ambassador Yury **Ambrazevich** of Belarus, Mr. Hellmut **Lagos** of Chile and their teams for their invaluable contributions.

- I also would like to extend my best wishes to Ambassador Alexey Borodavkin with whom I enjoy working together in the last year. I wish you every success and happiness in future.

Mr. President,

- Global peace and security today is marked by rising challenges, continued uncertainty and worrying trends.

- The tension and danger in Korean Peninsula is the most worrying peace and security challenge in the world today. While the UN Security Council Resolutions are yet to be implemented. Recent developments such as high-level

talks and Olympic diplomacy are rare rays of sunshine in Korean Peninsula. Such engagement must continue to allow more room for diplomacy and dialogue.

- We recognize the progress achieved so far under the New START Treaty. However, uncertainty is still looming beyond the expiration of New START in 2021. Modernization campaigns are also taking us away from a world free of nuclear weapons.
- It is disturbing to note that global military expenditures now exceed Cold War levels. In the general debate of the First Committee last year, I have indicated that if we channel 20% of global military expenditure for 15 years into investing in rural and urban areas and in social protection, we would achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030, as we desired. Achieving SDGs shall bring about just, peaceful and prosperous societies and better security environment for our future generations.
- Threat from terrorism is still unabated. Such common threat requires our collective responses.

Mr. President,

- Despite frustration at the impasse in the CD for over two decades, Myanmar continues to attach great importance and believe in its potentials as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.
- From the very first General Assembly resolution, Nuclear Disarmament has been a principled objective for the United Nations. It is also the highest priority on the disarmament agenda of Myanmar.
- As urged in the resolution A/RES/72/38, Myanmar supports for the establishment of a subsidiary body in the CD to deal with nuclear disarmament, to immediate commencement of negotiations on **a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention**.
- The same resolution calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable **treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices** on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator and the mandate contained therein.

- Bearing this call in mind, I explored how we can open a door for a treaty on fissile material in the work of Conference. Different positions on level of priorities, scope of a future treaty and **balancing it with other national priorities** are among the key questions to find answers. Given the feedback and initial support already expressed last year, I tend to believe that *we could look at the possibility of establishing a subsidiary body to initiate, without preconditions, negotiation of a treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices*. However, it is not a secret that a standalone decision on this treaty for a programme of work cannot be taken.
- The work of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group led by Canada can definitely contribute to our work here in parallel or when the time comes.

Mr. President,

- Speaking from my experience, **the prevention of an arms race in outer space** remains a priority in the CD. The Conference on Disarmament could also explore possibility of establishing a subsidiary body with an appropriate mandate. How we define and consider what is an appropriate mandate is also interdependent.
- Pending elimination of nuclear weapons, it is urgent and legitimate for non-nuclear-weapon States to call for unconditional **security assurances** in the form of a legally binding instrument. The Conference should be responding to this call by creating a subsidiary body with an appropriate mandate.

Mr. President,

- Let me share a few additional thoughts on our way forward.
- There were different views on the creation of the Way Ahead Working Group and its work last year. But there are hard facts. First, substantive discussions on all agenda items of the CD took place. Second, these discussions brought us to a better level of understanding on each other's security concerns and approach to them. While the work of the working group cannot replace a PoW, it is next available alternative to the absence of a programme of work. *I see the glass as half full.*
- Let me briefly refer to the end-game of the Way Ahead working group.
- As I was tasked by CD/2090, among others, to identify common ground for a programme of work with a negotiating mandate, and to consider steps for the way ahead. Following this mandate, I developed and circulated a non-paper

outlining draft recommendation for a possible Programme of Work on all agenda items of the Conference. Despite positive response by some, there was no consensus on the draft recommendations. More time was needed to resolve remaining substantive questions and I decided then not pursue the non-paper any further. However, I believe that non-paper is an honest reflection of our consultations at that point in time although more consultations were required to make it acceptable by all.

- In my reflection on the work of the CD, the following elements strike me most:-
 1. Reviving the Conference, a goal all CD members and the international community fully shared, and the other goal which is giving a new momentum and impetus to global disarmament efforts through negotiating disarmament treaties are intertwined. These goals should be at the core of our considerations in launching our activities this year;
 2. As every effort is being made to adopt and implement a balanced and comprehensive Programme of Work on the basis of its agenda and the core issues, we should not limit ourselves to traditional priorities. New challenges such as Lethal Autonomous Systems, Cyber security Threats and Chemical and Biological Terrorism and rapid evolution of Technology, as just outlined by the DG himself should also find their way into our work as part of “reframing and modernizing” long-standing disarmament and non-proliferation priorities;
 3. While we are proactive, greater political will, flexibility and accommodation by all member states of the Conference is essential to translate all are security concerns into a programme of work;
 4. Lastly, we cannot remain complacent, passive and even overwhelmed by the frustration. I have this argument in the room quite often.

Mr. President,

- Let me conclude by underlining that we all have an obligation to our profession, to our governments and to the international community in delivering what is expected from the CD.
- *Together, we can cut the Gordian knot.*
- I thank you, Mr. President.
