United Nations Disarmament Commission
2016 substantive session

Closing statement by the Chairman
Ambassador Odo Tevi, Permanent Representative of Vanuatu

Friday, 22 April 2016

As I noted during my opening remarks three weeks ago, the Disarmament Commission conducted its deliberations against the backdrop of a challenging security environment this year.

Nevertheless, I wish to strike a more positive tone on this occasion. I take note of the separate, yet significant, discussions occurring around us right here at the United Nations. This week, the General Assembly held a Special Session on the World Drug Problem setting an important milestone in international cooperation to address this matter. Today, the United Nations is hosting a high-level event for the signing of the landmark Paris climate change agreement.

I believe it is important to remember that our work on disarmament matters is not done in isolation and progress made in this Commission is progress towards a more peaceful and secure world.

I am heartened by the positive and constructive work that has taken place in this Commission over the past three weeks, in the plenary meetings, during the working group meetings, as well as during informal consultations.

In particular, I am pleased that at Working Group 1, delegations were engaged in in-depth discussions on many critical issues with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Although there persist significantly divergent views, the deliberations shed light on common ground and helped delegations better understand their positions.

Working Group II also held constructive discussions on recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Member States have made tangible progress by narrowing their differences of views on some of the key issues.

I am convinced that both working groups have taken forward their deliberations on the respective agenda items and laid the groundwork for making further progress next year.

We also held very useful consultations and discussions on a third agenda item. It is my intention to continue my consultations on this matter during the inter-sessional period.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and express my sincerest appreciation to the Chairs of the Working Groups, Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov of Kazakhstan and Mr. Bouchaib Eloumi of Morocco. I also wish to express appreciation to Ambassador Barlybay Sadykov of Kazakhstan, who ably assisted Ambassador Abdrakhmanov in steering the deliberations of Working Group I. Their tasks were not easy, but I believe they truly rose to the challenge.

(Delivered by Mr. Tigran Samvelian (Armenia), Vice-Chairman)