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Message / granted
Advisory Board

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE TO THE ADVISORY BOARD ON DISARMAMENT MATTERS

Geneva, 5-7 July 2000

It gives me great pleasure to convey my greetings to the 35th Session of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

Since the last meeting of the Board, I issued my report to the Millennium Assembly, *We the Peoples: the role of the United Nations in the Twenty-first Century*. As you know, the report is an attempt to step back from the press of daily crises and to reflect on the broader, longer-term state of the world. Arms control and disarmament issues are set in the much wider perspective of our collective pursuit of human security and freedom from fear. They are also framed in the context of the overall purposes of the United Nations as a universal forum for information sharing, negotiations and norm-setting.

As you will have seen, the report focuses on two issues of special concern to Board: nuclear disarmament and small arms and light weapons. My message today will focus on nuclear issues.

Reducing the dangers that arise from existing nuclear weapons and from further proliferation calls for a reaffirmation of political commitment at the highest levels. I have proposed that consideration be given to convening a major international conference that would help to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. I was encouraged that the 2000 NPT Review Conference took note of that proposal.

Since the Report was issued, there have been promising developments in the nuclear field at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

First, in April, was the ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START II) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the Russian Federation. That launched a re-engagement by the two major powers in a negotiating process that should lead to further reductions. I will continue to urge Russia and the United States to seize the moment, maintain the momentum and pursue those negotiations vigorously. An opportunity to advance the much-longed-for norm of nuclear disarmament does not arise often. As I stated in my report, it should not be jeopardized by unilateral plans to deploy missile defences. All parties concerned must be engaged when the foundations of strategic stability are put into question.

Second, in May the States parties to the 2000 NPT Review Conference adopted a Final Document by consensus. The significance of the document lies not only in the fact that the 158 participants were able to achieve consensus on a broad array of Treaty-related issues. The agreement also demonstrated that States parties wished to reiterate, thirty years after its establishment, the essential relevancy and viability of the Treaty and its nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation norm.

The document contains the decisions and commitments made by all the Parties, including nuclear-weapon States, to future pursuits and future “benchmarks”, in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. They represent important linguistic and conceptual breakthroughs in nuclear weapons deliberations at the multilateral level. Among these are:

- Commitment by nuclear-weapon states to eliminate nuclear arsenals.
- Application of the principle of irreversibility to nuclear disarmament.
- Agreement to establish, within the Conference on Disarmament, a body to deal with nuclear disarmament.
- Acceptance of further reductions in non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons.
- Reduction in the role of nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize their risk of being used.

The challenge now is for States parties to implement them. There remains no less at stake than the credibility and relevance of the Treaty and the non-proliferation regime itself.

I look forward to the outcome of your discussions on the results of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and to the closely related issue of reducing nuclear dangers. I also note that the Board is embarking on a discussion of the “Revolution in Military Matters” and the effect that an increasingly information-and-technology-driven battlefield will have on disarmament and international security.

Please accept my best wishes for a productive session.

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Executive Office of the Secretary-General

Rolf Goran Knutsson

Mr Anders

I should appreciate it
if the attached elements
could be turned into a
proper message.

RL 26/6

Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters
35th session
Geneva, 5-7 July 2000

Elements of the message of the Secretary-General

- Since the last meeting of the Board, I issued my report to the Millennium Assembly, *We the Peoples: the role of the United Nations in the Twenty-first Century*. I should like to thank once again the members of the Board for the contribution they made last year with a rich assortment of ideas about the security and arms control issues the Organization will be tackling for, at least, the first part of this new century.
- As you know, the report aims at a broader, longer-term view of the state of the world. Thus, arms control and disarmament, the topics of specific interest to this Board, are set in the much wider perspective of the pursuit of human security and freedom from fear.
- Pursuing arms reductions is also framed in the context of the broader purposes of the Organization as a universal forum for information sharing, negotiations and elaborating norms. Promoting arms reductions and limitation, and seeking new multilateral norms in the field, also invoke another great purpose of the United Nations, that of “transform[ing] relations among states and the methods by which the world’s affairs are managed.” (para. 9)
- As you have seen, I have focused on two issues in the report, those of nuclear disarmament and small arms and light weapons. My message today will focus on nuclear issues.
- I stated in my Millennium Report that “reducing the dangers that arise from existing nuclear weapons and from further proliferation” calls for a reaffirmation of political commitment at the highest levels. (para. 252). I have proposed that consideration be given to convening a major international conference that would help to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. I was encouraged that the 2000 NPT Review Conference took note of that proposal.
- Since the Report was issued, there have been promising developments in the nuclear field at the bilateral and multilateral level.
- First, I welcomed the ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START II) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the Russian Federation in April. That launched a re-engagement by the two major powers in a negotiating process that should lead to further reductions.
- I will continue to urge Russia and the United States to seize the moment and the momentum to pursue those negotiations vigorously. The world is watching. An opportunity to advance the much longed for norm of nuclear disarmament does not arise often. As I stated in my report, it should not be jeopardized by unilateral plans to deploy missile defences. All parties concerned must be engaged when the foundations of strategic stability are put into question.
- In May, the States parties to the 2000 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty adopted a Final Document by consensus. The significance of the document lies not

only in the demanding task of achieving consensus among 158 participants on a broad array of Treaty-related issues. Agreement also demonstrated that States parties wished to declare the essential relevancy and viability of the Treaty and its nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation norm thirty years after its establishment.

- The document also contains the decisions and commitments made by all the Parties, and particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to future pursuits, future “benchmarks”, in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. They represent important breakthroughs in terms of concept and language of the nuclear weapons deliberations at the multilateral level:
 - the “unequivocal” undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament (Final Document of the 2000 NPT, p.20, para.15:6);
 - the principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament (FD,p.20, para. 15:5);
 - the acceptance of the necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament (FD,p.20, para. 15:4);
 - the acceptance of the further reduction of non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons (FD,p.21, para. 15:9, tick 3);
 - the diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that they ever be used (FD, p.21, para. 15:9, tick 5).
- Agreement on those decisions and commitments are a step forward. The challenge now is for States parties to implement them. There remains no less at stake than the credibility and relevance of the Treaty and the non-proliferation regime itself.
- I look forward to the outcome of your discussions on the results of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and to the closely related issue of reducing nuclear dangers, called for by General Assembly resolution 54/54 K.
- I also note that the Board is embarking on a discussion of the “Revolution in Military Matters” and its effect on disarmament and international security. An examination of this item by the Board is like a leap forward into the new century, into the information and technology driven battlefield of the future. I look forward to hearing the Board’s thoughts on that matter.

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Michael Cassandra
23/06/2000 10:50 AM

To: Richard Amdur/NY/UNO@UNHQ, Ruxandra Ferascu/NY/UNO@UNHQ

cc:

Subject: Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters



sgmessage.d annotated agenda draft agenda.d

Ra

I attach an advance copy of the elements that could be included in the message of the Secretary-General to the 35th session of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, 5-7 July in Geneva. Mr. Dhanapala will deliver the message to the Board.

I also attach the draft agenda and annotated agenda for background information.

The other documents used for source material were the Millennium Assembly report (you have) and the

Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference (also attached)  advance copy of Final Docu .

Mr. D will be sending up an official note to the SG today.

Please advise me on estimate for when the text will be ready. My last day in NY will be on Friday, 30 June and I will be in Ge Fax 41-22-917-0034 as of Monday, 3 July. I believe same applies to Mr. D.

Michael

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Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters
35th session
Geneva, 5-7 July 2000

Elements of the message of the Secretary-General

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