

The 2025 Session of the Conference on Disarmament

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Yuri STERK, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva

Mr. President,

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Bulgarian delegation, I would like to congratulate **Italy**, and you personally, **ambassador Bencini**, on assuming the first presidency of the Conference on Disarmament in 2025, wish you full success, and assure you of our full support and continued cooperation. This is also true for the other P6 members who will assume the presidencies later this year.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the new colleagues, ambassadors of **Hungary, Belgium, Brazil, Egypt and DPRK**, and we look forward to working with them throughout this session. At the same time, as we heard last Tuesday the farewell message of **US Ambassador Turner**, I would like to underline our deep appreciation of his personal contribution to the work of the Conference on Disarmament and to ask, through you, and through the US delegation, to convey warm regards and best wishes from me and my delegation.

Mr. President,

As we are continuing our agenda item from last Tuesday, and for the sake of saving time, I will not repeat Bulgaria's well-known views and priorities in the field of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation. These were well reflected in statements

already made, in particular the statement by Poland, on behalf of the EU, to which **Bulgaria fully subscribes.**

I would rather focus my brief statement on the important and immediate, concrete steps, we all expect the CD to take later today and in the coming weeks.

Last year's agreement on CD Program of work was a welcoming development, since we managed to make albeit limited, but important progress. The establishment of the **subsidiary bodies**, their respective first organizational meetings and agreed reports, which reflected our joint commitment to resume and continue the work of the Conference in 2025, with the same mandate and the same coordinators, **is the basis** we have to build on.

My country is grateful for your trust and confidence, and is proud to be part of this development. We take this role very seriously, **being optimists, yet realists**, at the same time. **Optimists**, since we detect **increased political will** to engage and move forward, despite the existing geo-political tensions. And **realists**, since we have no illusions that the simple establishment of subsidiary bodies will automatically pave the way to **solving the multitude of challenges** that the CD is facing today.

Let me assure you, and all Member states, that we will spare no effort and will work towards **finding common ground**, based on **flexibility** and **compromise**. Different and conflicting views, proposals and initiatives do exist, but they **should not mutually block each other**. We should rather try to find **the intersection of interests and positions**, which will facilitate constructive discussions and help us move in the right direction.

But because time is never in our favor, let's honor the commitments we already made and swiftly decide on this year's Program of work that would allow the CD to start its work on the merits, as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me again, and for the record, confirm that Bulgaria is a firm and staunch supporter of **inclusivity and transparency in multilateral diplomacy**. We will continue to call, as the vast majority of CD Member states do, for broadest possible participation in the work of the CD, including by supporting non-member States' right to participate as observers.

Thank you, Mr. President!