

IGOS Statement at the Conference on Disarmament

Geneva, 4 February 2014

**Delivered by the
Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic,
H. E. Ambassador Kateřina Sequensová**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak to you on behalf of the Informal Group of Observer States to the Conference on Disarmament. The observer States would like to congratulate you on assuming the presidency. Especially, we appreciate your arrangement taken during the first plenary of the Conference on Disarmament which enabled us to be present for the UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon's official address. We also assure you of our full support.

We entirely share the UN Secretary General's analysis that the existing situation in the CD is disappointing. At the same time, we keep our hope that substantive work will resume this year. In this respect, the dual track approach you have proposed seems particularly forward-looking. We therefore support a renewal of the mandate of the Informal Working Group on the program of work and the adoption of the Schedule of Activities. The Informal Group of Observer States has shown continuous support to the goals of the Conference and wishes to contribute to returning the CD back to where it belongs – to the center of multilateral disarmament negotiations.

The IGOS members welcome the opportunity to offer their views with focus on their core interest – the expansion of the membership of the Conference. Given the fact that we keep receiving support from both you, Mr. President, and previous CD Presidents, numerous member states of the Conference on Disarmament but also from regional groups and other organizations, we believe that the issue of enlargement is not only essential to the CD but also of importance to the international community as a whole. The expansion could help the CD to regain its credibility, ultimately dispelling any doubts pertaining to the sheer existence or relevance of the CD.

The driving force of our longstanding interest for enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament consists of several components. Firstly, we still believe that the Conference can play a vital role in universal disarmament. This said, we also believe that such a universal goal must by definition be addressed by a universally represented body, reflecting developments in the global security

environment. Currently this is not the case of CD. In this regard, for the past 14 years no action was taken on the issue of enlargement even though the Rules of Procedures, rule 2, stipulate that “the membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals”. Secondly, we consider disarmament as one of the main paths to achieve a secure and stable international environment. It is in the interest of all of us present here today to attain such international setting. Mr. President, we want to share the common responsibility of achieving disarmament with the current members of the CD.

In order to commence practical steps with emphasis on the enlargement of the Conference we propose the following plan. Firstly, we urge the CD to appoint a Special Coordinator (or a Coordinator or even a 'Friend of the Chair' under the responsibility of the President). Secondly, to take necessary steps to initiate a structured debate on enlargement and thirdly to outline possible paths of enlargement. We therefore propose to include the topic of enlargement into the Schedule of Activities. At the same time, we are fully aware of the obstacles that lie ahead, nonetheless, we offer strong political will and commitment to work closely with the member states on this topic.

Mr. President,

We are prepared to contribute to the re-start of the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts in the CD that are long overdue.

Thank you Mr. President.