

**Videotaped intervention of the Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Nikos Dendias, at the Conference on Disarmament 2021  
(United Nations, Geneva, 23.02.2021)**

« Mr. President, Dear Colleagues,

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the international community and our respective societies in ways unimaginable just a year ago. COVID-19 has, also, affected the disarmament and non-proliferation edifice. It has, also, disrupted the works and meetings of the Conference on Disarmament.

However, it is our duty to do our utmost to overcome these challenges. And this, in the conviction that arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation remain key components of the stability of our rules-based international system.

Greece is committed to a Treaty-based, legally-binding, viable and functional arms control system. This must be:

- cooperative in nature,
- consistent with the principles of international law,
- adaptive to the current scientific and technological developments, and
- able to provide credible security assurances to all state parties.

By addressing asymmetries and imbalances. We remain steadfast in the belief that the way towards complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament is achievable. This can be done through a step-by-step approach. To that end, we welcome the extension of the new START Treaty.

At the multilateral level, we:

- call upon all states that have not yet done so to become parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and

- urge the international community to start negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament.

We firmly support the preservation and universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its three pillars. These are at the core of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Addressing the triptych of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in a balanced approach will be a central issue at the upcoming 10<sup>th</sup> Review Conference in August.

Mr. President,

I would like now to refer to the issue of enlargement, to which Greece attaches great importance. As you all know, we are the longest-standing observer that has formally expressed its interest to join the Conference on Disarmament.

Given our contribution to the preservation of peace and our constructive engagement in all disarmament fora, we see no legitimate reason or justification to prolong this limbo. It is indeed an anachronism that the only negotiating disarmament forum does not evolve accordingly to meet the demands of the post Cold War international system. In the same spirit, it is equally outdated to hold the participation of observers, hostage to bilateral issues. Issues which have absolute no relevance to the subject matter of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference cannot afford to remain in an indefinite negotiating deadlock. It should begin substantive work, through the adoption of a Programme of Work. If this is not possible, the Conference on Disarmament should restart the deliberation in the format of subsidiary bodies aiming at building convergence on all agenda issues.

Greece, bearing in mind the central position of the Conference in the international security architecture, has recognized the success of the

Conference as a priority. And stands always ready to substantially contribute to this effect.

Thank you very much. »