



5 March 2014 - The world's only multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations has decided to renew an informal working group aimed at reinvigorating discussions which have stalled since the 1990s.

The President of the United Nations General Assembly described the decision as “crucial,” as he urged members to follow up with real progress.



Addressing the first part of the 2014 session of the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, John Ashe reminded participants “to stay focused on the bigger picture, overcome your differences and live up to your responsibilities.”

Yesterday, the CD decided to reestablish an informal working group with a mandate to produce

a programme of work that is “robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation.”

Established in 1979 and with a current membership of 65 countries, the Conference has produced landmark disarmament instruments such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

During the [opening](#) of the CD in Geneva, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addressed its members and reminded them of the crucial task ahead. “My message is clear. Do not wait for others to move. Be the first mover. Do not hide behind utopian logic which says that until we have the perfect security environment, nuclear disarmament cannot proceed,” Mr. Ban [said](#)

The Conference on Disarmament has been plagued in recent years by an inability to overcome differences among its members and start its substantive work towards advancing those goals.

“We cannot afford a complete stalemate in the Conference year after year. The Conference has an irreplaceable responsibility in the advancement of the international agenda, and you must do your part to ensure progress is made,” Mr. Ashe urged member States.

“This work and its purpose are far too important not to be pursued with vigour until success is achieved,” he added.

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*UNRIC's library backgrounder on disarmament:* <http://www.unric.org/en/unric-library/29029>

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