

Mr. SERVAIS (Belgium) (translated from French):

... Having distributed barrowloads of compliments, I now come to the substance of my message. At a time when, under your enlightened leadership, the negotiations aimed at achieving a chemical weapons ban are entering a phase which we all hope will be decisive, I should like to spell out the position of my authorities on a particular point related to the choice of headquarters of the future organization. My authorities consider that The Hague offers incontrovertible advantages which many of us were able to see for ourselves last summer. There is no need to praise the traditions of hospitality or organization of our Dutch friends, and for that reason, while it fully appreciates the good points that other countries might offer, Belgium has chosen to give its firm support to the candidature of the Netherlands.

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Mr. RANJBAR (Islamic Republic of Iran): My Ambassador was supposed to make a statement today on behalf of the Group of 21, but unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond his control, at the last minute he found himself unable to do so. Although somewhat late, I wish, however, to make the following statement for the record.

... Let me also join the previous speakers in welcoming the women participating in the eighth congress commemorating International Women's Day. Normally, it is assumed that matters related to armaments are handled by men, whereas it is quite clear that women also encourage the cause of disarmament for peace. We hope that next year, when they come to visit us, we will have been able to conclude the chemical weapons convention.

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Mr. SHANNON (Canada):

... My second point concerns the site of the headquarters of the chemical weapons convention. I am pleased to be authorized to announce today that Canada supports the Netherlands offer to provide the site for the CWC headquarters.