

**Statement on the occasion of the Certificate Award ceremony
for the 2011 Fellows on Disarmament**

By

Sergio Duarte

High Representative for Disarmament Affairs
United Nations



**New York
20 October 2011**

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to address the 25 young diplomats who have participated in the 2011 Disarmament Fellowship Programme.

As you know, the United Nations fellowship programme was launched by the General Assembly in 1978 with the aim of promoting expertise in disarmament in more Member States, particularly developing countries.

To date, the programme trained 833 officials from 160 Member States, a large number of whom hold positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament and international security with their own Governments.

I am pleased to note the contribution of the programme of fellowships on disarmament toward a greater awareness of the importance of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

The programme continues to offer an important opportunity to facilitate a better understanding of the work of the Disarmament Machinery, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and of the other institutions working in the areas of international disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control at the global level, as well as of the security concerns of Member States.

Even more importantly, it allows to participating diplomats to build informal networks which will undoubtedly help them in the execution of their future tasks.

I am grateful to note that the number of women nominated by Member States remains impressively high. As a matter of fact, in 2011, 14 women diplomats out of 25 participated in the Programme.

I wish to recognize the important contributions to the Programme by organizations, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague, by national delegations who organized and participated in formal and informal discussions both here as in Geneva, by a number of institutions, and I wish in particular to thank the Monterey Institute for International Studies for their generous contributions, but in particular I wish to express my appreciation to the individual countries who have contributed to the success of the Programme.

This year, the Fellows have been invited on study tours by China, Germany, Japan and Switzerland. I am extremely appreciative for the invitations extended by these countries and I hope to be able to count on these and other Member States to contribute to the success of the Programme in the years to come.

As the fellows of 2011 have come at the end of a very enriching experience, I wish to take the opportunity to wish them the best of success in their further careers.