

January 26, 2017 Oral History Interview with Sven Jurschewsky

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Summary:

Senior Advisor for Non-proliferation and Deputy Director of the Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs.

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- English Transcription

Sven Jurschewsky

Canada

Oral history interview conducted by Michal Onderco by Skype on 26 January 2017

Michal Onderco:

First, I would like to understand what is your role in the Canadian delegation. So, how did you become involved with the 1995 dossier?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay [laughs]. The early '90s, I was getting divorced and the Canadian -- my department was very good to me. They gave me a big chunk of money and put me in charge of the South Pacific. And a large travel budget with the admonition, "Sven, go heal yourself." I spent the year traveling around the South Pacific. It was very nice. Learned that no matter how nice paradise is, human beings will figure out a way how to screw it up.

And at one point I got a call from personnel, "Come back," and I was put in charge of the policy end of NPT extension. And at the time, that was one of three pillars of Canadian foreign policy. If you look at my record, I've done this thing, in a background kind of way, in a number of important Canadian issues over the years. You know, I'm also the guy who arranged for Canadian recognition of North Korea. You look at my record, that's the kind of thing I did. And I was put in charge of that. I had a background in nuclear negotiations and nuclear issues so I didn't have to do a lot of briefing up. We had an ambassador at the time for disarmament -- oh God, Peggy -- just a minute, let me look that up. Peggy. Let me --

Michal Onderco:

I can look it up --

Sven Jurschewsky:

It's Mason. Peggy Mason.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Peggy Mason subsequently left her position and Chris Westdal was put in. Chris had very little experience. He's now become a very experienced person in nuclear policy but at the time had almost no experience. And so, it fell on me -- well, it was my job anyways, to develop a policy -- and I had a small, four-man unit team, which also had other responsibilities to do that. And their role was very, very important in how we went forward on this.

But basically, the policy end of it, and how to put it across, was put to me as to how to do it. That was my role in that initiative on the part of Canada. Now, at the time, I have to say there were very low expectations that I would succeed.

Michal Onderco:

And --

Sven Jurschewsky:

Even in the limited stuff that I did.

Michal Onderco:

So, in terms of time, when did Canada start thinking about the 1995 RevCon?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I was put in charge of the unit in '92.

Michal Onderco:

In '92?

Sven Jurschewsky:

And this would allow me -- I insisted on a fairly large travel budget, which allowed me to go to things like PPNN meetings to brief myself up to speed on the nuclear issues as they were feeding into the NPT extension process. And also, to -- it fell to me to, from a headquarters perspective, manage Canada's participation in the then ongoing nuclear negotiations. You'll remember that Canada was the author of the strategy of susication.

This was sort of the leitmotif of the basis of Canada's nuclear disarmament efforts. And so, I was -- under me, people were responsible for the CTBT negotiations at the time. The FMCT negotiations were launched at the time. Largely in terms of a bit of stage dressing for the review and extension conference. So, we were trying to get all of these bits and pieces to fit together into a coherent strategy --

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- on behalf of Canada's role in the extension process.

Michal Onderco:

When you had the phone call from personnel, that you were to be put in charge of this dossier, was there already at the time a decision that Canada is going to advocate indefinite extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes.

Michal Onderco:

And who made that decision? Or how was the decision made?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was made at the highest level.

Michal Onderco:

So, by the minister, probably? Or by a prime minister?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was probably a cabinet decision, but the prime minister --

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- Prime Minister Chrétien at the time had a cabinet system, okay?

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

Little different now.

Michal Onderco:

So, there was very strong political support for it as well?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Well, yeah. I reported -- my efforts are reported to the deputy minister.

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was kind of taken out of the regular reporting system. I reported to -- in addition to the, you know, I have to keep my Director --

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- and [Director General] informed. But at the end of the day, I reported to the deputy.

Michal Onderco:

And was there anyone who internally challenged the decision? Was there anyone who said, "Maybe we should go for 25 years," or for rolling extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I'm not aware of that.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. And in those early days, so before all other cooperation started, how much cooperation or coordination was there either with the United States or the other countries of the Western group?

Sven Jurschewsky:

None.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. So --

Sven Jurschewsky:

I was tasked to prepare a strategy for Canada and I prepared that strategy in terms of Canadian interests and the acquiescence of Canadian involvement in nuclear negotiations.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Once we had our own position down, of course, then we started looking at other countries. But, you know, this raises some delicate issues of diplomacy in terms of the Western countries. It was my feeling from the beginning that too close an association with Western countries, and the U.S. in particular, and the U.S. was aware of this, I told them this --

Michal Onderco:

Yes.

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- would render our efforts much more difficult and problematic, and largely with respect to the NAM radicals and those countries that were wavering, the moderate majority.

Michal Onderco:

So, you mentioned the NAM, you probably knew from the beginning that NAM are really important, but --

Sven Jurschewsky:

No, of course I did. But you know what? A little more sophisticated than just the NAM.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was -- I was looking for partners. Early days were spent in amassing a huge database of country positions --

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- on the extension conference and on all the issues that fed into it.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And embassies to state parties were tasked with -- I remember it was a 20-page telegram, "We want answers to x, y, and z."

Michal Onderco:

Oh, wow. So, and you collected the database, and what did the data speak to you from the database?

Sven Jurschewsky:

The database told me exactly what I suspected, that there was a small-ish group of radicals that wanted a time-limited extension to put -- periodically to be able to put the feet of the weapon states to the fire. A large group of moderate states that were wavering in one direction or in another --

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- and the weapon states that wanted indefinite extension. Aligned with that was, of course, WEOG, the western states.

Michal Onderco:

Yes. So, if just to set the record, so who were the radicals?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Well, there were a whole bunch of them. Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Venezuela. It wasn't something that I paid close attention to them, but I looked at them as a group. I didn't see that as a way -- I didn't see a way through to persuading these countries.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. And so, how did you -- so, in the large group of the moderates, how did you pick your friends?

Sven Jurschewsky:

That is something that happened much later.

Michal Onderco:

So, what happened afterwards?

Sven Jurschewsky:

The initial intellectual problem was how to craft a Canadian initiative --

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- that, in terms of -- to use a metaphor, was a price that the weapon states will be prepared to pay and that was deemed adequate by the NAM majority.

Michal Onderco:

So, how did you go about this?

Sven Jurschewsky:

That took a lot of effort. And this is where the -- I knew that if Canada played it directly, our relationship with the U.S. was known, that we would have grave difficulties no matter what we put forward. And so frankly, I was looking from very early on for a NAM member that was credible --

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

That had the intellectual noose --

Michal Onderco:

[affirmative]

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- and the diplomatic expertise to partner with us.

Michal Onderco:

And so --

Sven Jurschewsky:

And that is the genesis of the famous pool table conversation with Peter Goosens.

Michal Onderco:

So, tell me more about -- how did this come about? Did you have any contact with South Africans before --?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No. No.

Michal Onderco:

-- the famous meeting in Southampton?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Nothing.

Michal Onderco:

So, tell me about the -- how did it all happen? How did it all happen?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Well, basically Peter and I discussed. And Peter talked to me about how since --remember, this is shortly after the liberation of South Africa. About how South African foreign policy was developing. What kind of a role South Africa wanted to play a large role in this conference, and so on and so forth. And how, in terms of the nuclear equation, this was just shortly after the South Africans had

given up their nuclear program. And I think that -- Peter never told me this, but I suspected at the time, that the South Africans wanted to burnish their nonproliferation credentials. And this was part of the impetus too of them partnering with us.

Michal Onderco:

So --

Sven Jurschewsky:

So, over time, one of the things we did -- I knew perfectly well that whatever we did could not -- would have to be kept secret.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

That we could not, in any way, with anyone, reveal what we were thinking about and how we were doing it. And over the next, I would imagine, what was it? About a year, at various, you know, before these big conferences you have all of these expert meetings, hosted by PPNN [spelled phonetically] and others. Peter and I made sure that we would meet from time to time, would meet at these things. And in the course of our discussions, we developed the two papers, which we never wrote down. It was never written down. It was entirely in our heads.

Michal Onderco:

Before we move to the two papers, how much -- was there political approval in Canada to go ahead with South Africans on this?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I felt it wise to, again, to keep that knowledge within a very tight circle. Of course, senior people were apprised, but orally, not in writing.

Michal Onderco:

And do you know how much Peter Goosens had been --

Sven Jurschewsky:

No, you'll have to talk to him. And for me, it's always been - and when we come to that, it's always been a mystery how Alfred Nzo approved this initiative from the South African perspective without ever seeing a bit of paper before the conference.

Michal Onderco:

And do you know whether at least -- so was Goosens already certain at the time that he wants to push for indefinite extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes. Again, we're back to South Africa wanting to burnish its nonproliferation credentials. I do think that there was debate inside South African foreign ministry on this question. But I think the preponderance of opinion at the time was in favor of playing a major role in terms of indefinite extension. That's a guess on my part.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. So, tell me more about the -- when we talk about the two documents, you mean the principles and objections and strength and review process, right?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay. A version of strength and review process was shared with the Mexicans before. This caused me grave concern at the time. And largely, there was a Three Amigos meeting in El Paso. And I got a call from the prime minister's office that I was to help the Mexicans. And the prime

minister's office was aware of the two papers, which had not been written, in fact.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And I was to help the Mexicans by giving them one of the papers.

Michal Onderco:

But Mexicans were at the time, opposed to the extension, right? To the indefinite extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

This was a bit of a -- Marin Bosch was a player who -- look, in the world of 'UN-ery', there are no foreign minister perm reps in New York. Actually, quite a number who do not refer to headquarters.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Marin Bosch, in many respects, because of his huge role on nuclear affairs in the past, had a lot of free play. And I'd never figured out exactly what happened there, but I do think there was a bit of a disconnect in Mexico, this is something to discuss with the Mexicans perhaps, between what the minister was saying and what Marin Bosch was saying.

But anyway, against my better judgment, I shared the paper with Marin Bosch, with the Mexicans, the Mexican embassy, with great admonitions. There were conditions that were -- my conditionality as I put it to the Mexican embassy at the time was that under no circumstances was any conditionality to be associated with tabling that paper in the conference.

Michal Onderco:

And did Peter Goosens know that you were sharing the document with Mexicans?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes, I told him that. And he was worried in much the same way that I was.

Michal Onderco:

The worry was that the Mexicans would leak it?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No. The lead was the stay with us, okay? And that there was how to play it --

Michal Onderco:

No, but that they would leak it to the others.

Sven Jurschewsky:

I'm not aware that they did. I do not think that they did.

You've got to remember that at the time, the various intelligence agencies -- this is why Peter and I had such stringent secrecy rules -- there was a full court press-on on signal intelligence. And I wasn't prepared to take any chances, and so that's why we never wrote it down.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

On surprise. Which was key to the effort.

Michal Onderco:

So, tell me about how these two documents come about. So, basically the stepping stone --

Sven Jurschewsky:

So, basically, Peter and I discussed them intensively over the course of a year or so. A little bit longer. And the night before the conference, we met in a bar on Second Avenue in New York and we wrote it down on the two papers. And then that night and early -- I think that night, Peter actually wrote them out, and the next morning they were presented to Alfred Nzo who said, "Yes, let's go for it."

Michal Onderco:

And when you started talking about how these two documents should look like, what were the major differences from how they turned out to look like?

Sven Jurschewsky:

What do you mean?

Michal Onderco:

So, was there, for example, in either of the document, something that you later decided to take out for the sake of greater --

Sven Jurschewsky:

We knew what was going to be in the documents. We talked about this for a year and a half, okay? Grosso modo -- how to strengthen and what kind of milestones and principals and objectives and all that type of stuff there should be in it. The way -- the major problem was drafting it in a way that was acceptable to the weapon states as well as to the moderate majority. It was -- in that sense, it was a serious effort at bridge building. It was very easy to write the documents. I mean, we did it in about an hour and a half and a few beers because of the intense discussion we had had over the years. And the paper on strengthening, it was really only the one paper that we wrote, the paper that I had given to the Mexicans that went forward pretty much as I had written it.

Michal Onderco:

There was the strengthening the review process?

Sven Jurschewsky:

That was the strengthening the review process, yeah.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. So, let's unpack each of the two documents in a little more detail. I'm really interested in starting with the principles and objectives. What was your motivation behind the document and why did you write it in such a way?

Sven Jurschewsky:

This document was intended to appeal to people, to appeal to them. That here was a way forward over the long run, over the medium to long run, to structure NPT conferences. And how the discussions between the moderates who were interested in nuclear disarmament and the weapons states was to go forward.

Michal Onderco:

But ?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was a way of shaping the conduct of future conferences. Don't forget, we were also faced at the time with an appalling record of failure of the review conferences.

Michal Onderco:

But, I mean, that document starts by calling on countries to adhere -- for universal adherence?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay. Here, we're getting into what Peter's and my intentions were. Peter can speak to his intentions. I won't.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

What was approved at the conference - were the words on the paper.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Not swaying Peter's intentions. And so, I do not want to talk about except in the broadest terms what the intentions were, okay?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah. Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

I'll say it again. It was an effort to bridge the strategic realities that the weapon states were faced with in terms of their confrontation.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And on the one hand and the desire of moderate countries to move forward on nuclear disarmament and related issues in a consequential way. The papers were not just about disarmament. They were about the three pillars of the NPT.

Michal Onderco:

Yes. Okay, so if I may, to the other document, from the strengthened review process, was the goal behind the whole document to talk about -- to bring some substantive issues into the review process?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes, of course. It was a reflection of the dismay of many countries about the appalling record of review conferences. I think in the -- since the first review conference, there had only been one conference that actually produced a final document.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

If I remember right.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

So, I mean, that's not a very good record. And so, we were looking at the conferences and structural and process terms to try and effect a process that had a better chance of success.

Michal Onderco:

And when you were thinking about -- I mean, one of the criticisms that was about the review process before was that in the run-up to review conferences, the nuclear weapon states would not be interested in discussing substantive issues in the prep coms but they would only talk about the organizational issues.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yeah, that was one thing. That was, again, it was to address that was part of the bridging function, okay? The weapons states, and the U.S. in particular, were not really interested in paying a great deal for this, okay?

Michal Onderco:

For the whole extension, you mean?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yeah, okay?

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And my conversation with the U.S. delegation was, "Fellas, you've got to think about what you're going to pay."

Michal Onderco:

And what were they ready to pay?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I think you better ask them that.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

I'll tell you one little funny sidebar. The head of delegation whose name escapes me at this moment --

Michal Onderco:

Tom Graham.

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- went on a tour and at every stop, people had their hand out and I was saying to him, "You know, the more you travel, the higher the price will get because all you're showing people is how desperately you want this extension, this indefinite extension. So, my advice to you is stop traveling."

Michal Onderco:

And how was your cooperation with other P5 countries in the run-up to the conference?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I can't say that there was a lot of cooperation. We were trying to position ourselves as an intermediary. And we were not a weapon state and our policy on nuclear disarmament was clear and was still in place, which was disarmament to the lowest level consistent with stability. And that was it. In terms of how we were going to proceed, you know, I would meet with the P5 --

Michal Onderco:

Yes.

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- at various PPNN and other meetings. In particular, I would meet with the French, Therese Delpeche, I think her name was?

Michal Onderco:

Yes.

Sven Jurschewsky:

With the U.K., U.K. ambassador. But none of these discussions were ever -- there were no substantive discussions. I wanted to keep my powder dry. Again, the strategy I had foreseen and that Peter agreed with was one of surprise.

Michal Onderco:

[laughs] So, you wanted to surprise everyone on the first day of the conference?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No. That was not --

Michal Onderco:

So, when did you want to surprise them?

Sven Jurschewsky:

-- Originally, Peter and I thought we would insert the two documents into the conversation in what's generally called the end game. So, week three or four.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

But discussions and sort of reading the entrails, we decided that already efforts were entrained to -- on the part of the NAM radicals, on the part of the weapons states and some of their allies, especially, Australia. And so, it was important from our perspective to -- we then decided [to involve] Alfred Nzo. We hoped that Alfred Nzo would in his initial address - you know, those conference national statements - that he would table those two documents in the initial -- the very first statement that he made. And this is what Nzo agreed to do.

Michal Onderco:

Who came up with the idea that you would collect the signatures under the resolution?

Sven Jurschewsky:

As far as I can remember, that was Jayantha.

Michal Onderco:

So, did he come up with that in the small group discussion or --

Sven Jurschewsky:

You mean the president's committee?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah, in the president's committee.

Sven Jurschewsky:

I think Jayantha made that decision himself. I don't remember that being discussed in the president's committee. The president's committee was constituted to discuss those two papers. And there was some discussions that I was not party to about the membership of that committee.

Michal Onderco:

But Canada was part of it?

Sven Jurschewsky:
Yes.

Michal Onderco:
And the person who was from Canadian side in that committee was Ambassador Westdal?

Sven Jurschewsky:
No, it was me.

Michal Onderco:
It was you?

Sven Jurschewsky:
Yes.

Michal Onderco:
So, let me first talk about the NAM radicals undermining and then let's talk about the president's committees if that's okay?

Sven Jurschewsky:
Yeah.

Michal Onderco:
So, let's start with the NAM radicals. When did you realize that the situation was really serious?

Sven Jurschewsky:
What do you mean serious?

Michal Onderco:
By, well you alluded to the fact that there was -- already there was activity of the NAM radicals trying to [...]

Sven Jurschewsky:
Oh yeah - well that's to be expected. That's normal in a conference like this that people pursue their objectives by the means they consider appropriate. I didn't see this as particularly surprising or anything, but it was something that we had to counter. And from the Canadian perspective, we countered it in two ways. One, we formed two discussion groups, the continental group -- we realized that the people who are interested in an indefinite extension, who were persuadable of an indefinite extension -- and I have to say Ambassador Westdal made salient efforts in developing this part of the strategy by a series of meetings he had before the conference with [Permanent Representatives] in New York. And he'd fly down periodically and meet with these guys for discussions. And so, we realized you couldn't put everybody in the same room. This would have been disastrous. And so, we organized two discussion groups which would meet off outside away from the conference to discuss the progress of the conference in the president's committee and the three substantive committees. So, we had these two groups who -- one of them was the continental group and I can't remember what his name was. And they would meet. And this was an important -- don't forget that we almost made it, if I remember right, to everything being approved, okay?

Michal Onderco:
Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:
And this group system, which was -- it dawned on me very early on, and this was largely as a result of discussions with Peter Goosens that the NAM was no longer really a sensible group. That there

were countries in the NAMs whose national interests were close to WEOG, others that were close to China, what have you. There were substantive divisions in that as there were in WEOG, and one of my criticisms of the UN these days is that the geographic system no longer makes sense, and especially for emerging economies. And this is something that Peter brought and put into my head. And the interests of South Africa, for example, as he explained to me at the time, were somewhat different than some of the African countries. Ditto in Latin America, ditto in Asia, okay?

Michal Onderco:

So, in the conference, the attempts to undermine were mostly the ones who wanted to have a 25-year extension or those who wanted to have a role --

Sven Jurschewsky:

The way that played out was a little different, okay?

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Most people ignore the national statements.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And -- it's bullshit. And if you are in a national -- in a big conference like the NPT extension review conference, the room empties when these things begin. Alfred Nzo, however, didn't. And I sat beside him for most of -- and he listened very attentively. And what he reminded me of as he listened to these national statements unrolling at interminable length was how intently he listened. And this struck me very much. Don't forget I have a fair bit of African experience. Very much like an African village meeting where the chief listens and then decides on a path. And at the end of the speeches, Alfred looked at me and said, "You boys may really be on to something. This thing has a chance." And then he said, I remember during the conference, there was an anniversary meeting of the founding of the NAM.

Michal Onderco:

Yes.

Sven Jurschewsky:

In Bandung.

Michal Onderco:

Yes.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And he said to me, he says, "Right, now I have to do my part. I have to go to Bandung and kill the NAM radicals."

Michal Onderco:

[laughs]

Sven Jurschewsky:

And that is really, the NAM radicals had decided that the NAM summit, the NAM meeting in Bandung was the place where they could marshal support for time-limited extension. And I don't know what the hell Alfred did, but he succeeded. The result of that conference was very much in keeping with our hopes. So, as far as the extension decision was concerned, a large part of the --

at least from my perspective, other people will have other perspectives, but from my perspective, was at Bandung conference where, amongst the NAM, this issue of limited verses was largely thrashed out.

Michal Onderco:

So, let's move then to the friends of the president. When the two documents were being discussed, what were the main arguments against it you have heard, and from whom?

Sven Jurschewsky:

There was no real argument against the documents, per se.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

What there was, was a lot of textual stuff with, of course, with various perspectives in mind. And here, Peter, I have to say. I did not feel that I could play a full role in this.

Michal Onderco:

Why?

Sven Jurschewsky:

If I reveal -- because then it would be revealed that Canada had a role in this.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And it would not have the purity of this being a South African -- I remember Peter being very upset with me at the time and I suppose he still is. Because he had to defend those two papers largely by himself. I intervened very, very, rarely, and it was only on issues that threatened to sink the whole thing. The French, for example, put forward that there was no definition of complete disarmament for that phrase. And I intervened with -- boy the team back at headquarters did a [unintelligible] job. They produced a definition of utter and complete disarmament overnight based on statements and final document of UNGA in 1978.

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And when we tabled that, that was one wildly successful intervention on my part. But it was only that kind of thing, it was only that kind of killer intervention by another country that I intervened on.

Michal Onderco:

But this is unusual because, for example, the French have been seen as unusually cooperative in that conference. Or, at least, others have told me that they had been seen as unusually cooperative.

Sven Jurschewsky:

That may be in terms of previous -- don't forget that the French had not completed their cycle of testing yet.

Michal Onderco:

No. That's true.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And that conditioned their position at the conference. So, helpful is not a phrase I would use.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. So, coming back to the discussion, what were the -- so, if there was no massive objection, so how did, for example the NAM --

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was all textual, and it was an attempt obviously, on the part of weapons states to water the thing down, okay?

Michal Onderco:

But was it only weapons states that tried to water the thing down?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Well, everybody from their various perspectives tried, okay? It wasn't only the weapons states. It was everyone in terms of their national position tried to edge those two documents into greater conformity with their positions, okay? And that's partly how these things always go, okay? There's nothing unusual about that. The various members of the president's committee tried to edge the draft into the direction of their interest.

Michal Onderco:

And what was the president's position on the draft?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Jayantha was a chairman.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

You had to play a neutral role and he did. On the other hand, I do suspect that Jayantha also saw the two documents as a plausible way forward to indefinite extension.

Michal Onderco:

And did the negotiation in the president's group change something from your initial draft in such a way that you wouldn't expect it?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No, no, there were no real surprises, at least not for me. Don't forget I had this huge database of national positions. So, you know, I was aware -- there were no surprises.

Michal Onderco:

And in the president's group, the nuclear weapon states were not willing to give in anything in favor of these two documents?

Sven Jurschewsky:

You know, I said that earlier. But, you know, on reflection, that's a little bit strong. You know, they wanted to see how, like in every negotiation, one guy wants the highest possible price.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

The seller wants the highest possible price and the buyer wants the lowest possible price, okay? And the price here was defined in terms of the words on the paper.

Michal Onderco:

But it's interesting because, I could imagine that one would believe that the seller in this case is the nuclear weapon states who had massive interest in the indefinite extension.

Sven Jurschewsky:
No, in that sense, everyone was a buyer.

Michal Onderco:
Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:
And they were negotiating amongst themselves a price.

Michal Onderco:
Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:
Okay. The price being the final document, okay? It was bartering amongst different national positions in terms of different views of the future.

Michal Onderco:
And was there ever a serious risk --

Sven Jurschewsky:
Yeah, but it was through with a metaphor. But this is normal, this is how every conference goes. The only difference in this conference was the early tabling of the two documents that turned out to be central to the desired outcome. That's the only thing that was different. Normally, such a bridge-making effort comes in the latter stages of a conference. Conferences are a social event. And there is a sociology of these things in terms of how countries form alliances and roles and how they moderate their positions in terms of their desired outcome, okay?

Normally, all of that stuff defining that, defining the parameters of the possible deal happens in the initial stages of a conference. In this case, people were forced to that final position day one.

Michal Onderco:
And was there ever a serious risk that these two documents would not fly?

Sven Jurschewsky:
Yeah, Peter and I discussed that. After it was accepted that these two documents would constitute the substance of the negotiations and the president's committee - no, at that point, we were on our way. I did not have much concern. I mean, thrills and chills, but in the larger sense, no, there was not much concern. Not in my mind anyways, and that had a lot to do with how well Peter was defending the documents.

Michal Onderco:
Was its success also somehow related to the fact that you managed to get enough signatures on your resolution?

Sven Jurschewsky:
The signatures were the last thing that happened. Once it became clear that we were going to have a deal then the problem became how does this move forward procedurally, and Jayantha decided that we would have this resolution. Don't forget a lot of this stuff was made up procedurally as we went along. There was never a conference like this. There hasn't been once since. In procedural terms, this stuff had to be made up.

Michal Onderco:
But, there was, of course, a big discussion whether, for example, there should be voting and if that voting is going to happen whether it should be open or closed and so on and so forth?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yeah, there was all of that type of stuff. And that's where I was of the view that voting was not a good idea. And this is where Chris Westdal played such a remarkable role and the idea was that he gets enough people to sign on to sponsor that resolution that anyone who objected would be in a tiny minority. The idea was to avoid a vote, to avoid the divisiveness of something like that.

Michal Onderco:

And who helped Canada to collect the signatures?

Sven Jurschewsky:

As far as I know, Chris Westdal did it by himself.

Michal Onderco:

Because I heard from other participants that there was also interest once the collection of signatures started, there was also interest from others.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Oh, of course, other people -- once, you know, you're obviously winning, then other people come on board and say, "Yeah, I want a piece of the action too."

Michal Onderco:

Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay? Of course, that happened, of course. Who they were, I don't know. I didn't have much to do with it. Chris did that by himself and did, I think, a terrific job.

Michal Onderco:

So, when you talked about the --

Sven Jurschewsky:

What I'm saying is those other people, those other efforts came in at a very late date once the die had been cast.

Michal Onderco:

And I want to go a little bit to the start of the conference, because you talked about the NAM radicals, you talked about the great middle and you talked about your proposal. What were the plans of the P5 for the conference?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I have no idea. I have no idea.

Michal Onderco:

But, I mean, you must have spoken to them?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yeah, but -- not in any kind of a serious way. This was -- I didn't see that as helpful. In terms -- I mean, I would meet with the Americans and certainly afterwards, okay?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Clearly at the most senior level, given that we had given this paper to Mexico, this had been discussed at the level of country leaders, the Three Amigos. That came out of a summit meeting, okay?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

So, clearly it had been discussed at that level. And the worry, I know, for the American side was to build a golden bridge for the Mexicans to continue to have their nonproliferation credentials unsullied. A way -- I remember at the time, it was giving them that paper was a way of allowing them to clam down gracefully without loss of face. Which is always a good idea in diplomacy.

Michal Onderco:

But during the conference, I mean, there is this urban rumor that during the conference the Mexican president called Ambassador Marin Bosch to tone down his rhetoric.

Sven Jurschewsky:

That's right.

Michal Onderco:

So, I mean, there must have been some sort of --

Sven Jurschewsky:

Marin Bosch was -- remember what I said, Marin Bosch was a person who, in terms of his own status in the nonproliferation -- he got all kinds of awards during the conference, don't forget - very, very popular. And the man had a status and he played that to the hilt. Now, I want you to notice what happened to a number of people after the conference. Marin Bosch got a -- his reward was a very tiny one. He got to be consul general in Barcelona, okay?

Michal Onderco:

[laughs] Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

So, I mean, that tells you something. I thought it was a great pity. I found Marin Bosch to be a man of principle. He believed in nuclear disarmament, okay? What he and I would disagree about was the means to achieve it, that's all.

Michal Onderco:

So, another, of course, example is Venezuela ambassador Taylhardat, who --

Sven Jurschewsky:

As far as I remember, he was fired.

Michal Onderco:

Well, he resigned.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Same thing. [laughter]

Michal Onderco:

But was it also because he was staging up so much effort against the indefinite extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I can't comment. I don't know what went on. Venezuela was not a country -- I mean, I would have conversation with him over coffee and stuff like that. But in terms of his relationship to his foreign ministry, I have no privileged information on that. And I would hesitate to speculate.

Michal Onderco:

Okay. Well, the third thing, you talked about the two documents that you were involved. And then the first thing that of course that the conference is becoming famous for, or has become famous for, is the Middle East resolution.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay. Now, that was the last thing. And I had almost nothing to do with it. And we brought out a -- for, the director of the nonproliferation and arms control division who was an expert in Middle East affairs came out and handled that negotiation herself. I didn't have the expertise to do that and neither did anybody else on the delegation. And so, she ran that, she ran with that from a Canadian perspective. And that was, like, on the last two days of the conference.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

With that tabled, and that was, like, the final price. That was to bring the Arabs aboard. And I played no role in that whatsoever.

Michal Onderco:

But for me, the question is, would the extension fly if there was no Middle East resolution?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It would have been much more difficult. Then we probably would have gone, you know, this is entirely speculative, it would have gone to a vote.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Which would not have been good. And I expect the Americans played a very strong role in drafting and pushing forward that resolution.

Michal Onderco:

And when you started talking about the two documents with Peter, did you think the Middle East is going to be a sticking point?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes. But I didn't see a way in which we could address that.

Michal Onderco:

So, your plan on the Middle East was essentially to leave it out intentionally?

Sven Jurschewsky:

The strategy was to build such a degree of momentum, in favor of indefinite extension, that other issues would be seen as subsidiary.

Michal Onderco:

Including the Middle East?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Including the Middle East. There were others, of course, that were in the committees. You know, the pressure for more money for technical transfer and so, you know all of that type of stuff. The issue of money for safeguards, you know?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And how effective were some of those, and so on. This was all stuff that, you know, I put to the side.

Michal Onderco:

And the -- so, when the negotiation was on the two documents, the Middle East was never used as leverage or as a condition?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No. No. No. Not in, you know, look, other people may have used those two documents in terms of their discussions

in ways that I'm not aware of, but in terms of how Peter and I use them, no. That was not part of our thinking. Peter may have different views.

Michal Onderco:

In the final moment of approving the two documents and approving the extension, there was suddenly a position from Nigeria, from the Nigerian representative?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Michal Onderco:

Was that something that was expected, or can you tell me more about this?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Well, Nigeria was one of the ones that had a more rigid position. It's a country I'm familiar with. I was posted in Nigeria. I knew many of the members of the delegation from my time in Lagos. No, I didn't see the Nigerians in a different light than I would have the Malaysians or the Indonesians or even the Mexicans, for that matter. Somebody was going to do something like that. For whatever reasons, okay [laughs].

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

I mean, when you go to one of these things and you try to play this kind of role you've got to be very, very flexible in terms of not so much in terms of your objective, but certainly in terms of your tactics. The strategy, of course, being stopped by the objective. And the strategy being developed momentum and that was done with Alfred Nzo's speech and Jayantha accepting the two documents as the basis to go forward.

Michal Onderco:

Did you have to pressure him on that?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No.

Michal Onderco:

What does his own plan for the conference? What was his own plan to be successful?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I have no idea what that was. I have no idea what that was. Look, you know, Jayantha's once of the most experienced diplomats on the face of the planet. You know, from the standpoint of the chairman of something like this,

you've got to try and shape the movements. The ebbs and the currents of opinion, that's why I'm going back to, you know, it's a social occasion. Sociology plays a role in the analysis of these things. As a chairman, you've got to look at that and try to shape that in terms of a successful outcome. And I think Jayantha did a terrific job in precisely those terms. I suspect he saw those

two documents as the way forward to a successful conference.

Michal Onderco:

Did you have any coordination with him before the conference?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No. That would have been - I don't do that.

Michal Onderco:

Even though he was at the same meeting in Southampton?

Sven Jurschewsky:

That's right. Yeah, we'd have conversations and stuff but I never told him about this. Of course not. And neither did Peter, at least I don't think he did. Again, we're back to surprise as being an essential part of the strategy.

Michal Onderco:

I mean, I understand the reasoning behind keeping it secret before. But after the conference, what was the point of not revealing how it all happened?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was revealed. I gave PPNN --

Michal Onderco:

You gave an interview, did I recall?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No, I gave a speech, a presentation. And I remember Delpeche said to me, "You shouldn't have done it. People will be jealous." And I shrugged my shoulders. I didn't care. I mean, I was on to other things.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

You know, over the years, you know, I don't have a normal career as a Canadian diplomat. I don't know if you've looked at my LinkedIn site, but, you know, you name it, I was there. I was part of the coalface of almost every headline issue over the last 25 years and I was onto other things. And the other thing that I was onto was ending the war in Bosnia. I had, apart from that meeting in Southampton, I had no further interest in the issue.

Michal Onderco:

Did PPNN in any way help you to build the coalition in favor?

Sven Jurschewsky:

PPNN provided me the venue at which to meet people. You know, they had a huge number of meetings. They had to be very well funded. And really nice places I have to say, which allowed me to meet a huge number of people who turned out to, in fact - PPNN was very astute - play a major role.

And to discuss, you know, I came to the conference, in a sense, armed, and so did Peter, I would suspect, armed with a deep understanding of where different countries were coming from. And the personalities of the players and so on and so forth. That sort of thing that is critical to running a successful strategy at a conference. PPNN, from my perspective, was an essential part of the preparations that we made. And the social side of those conferences, the dinners, the walks in the garden, you know, all of that type of stuff that were very, very important.

Michal Onderco:

But, from what I heard, John Simpson was present as your pool table discussion.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes, he was.

Michal Onderco:

Was there no risk that he would leak that information?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I didn't think so at the time.

Michal Onderco:

And who else was there in that room at that time?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I don't remember. And don't forget, it was the initial conversation, the pool table discussion was simply a meeting of minds. How we were going to do it was not decided at the pool table. That we would cooperate, that was decided. The details, I mean, look, you know, putting together those two documents was a hugely complex task. It took us more than a year, okay, to find the formulas that would bridge the various gaps between moderates and weapon states. To find the proper form of words that we thought would fly. That's hard. That's really hard to do. Ideas are a dime a dozen. But to put them in a form that is actionable and that has a prayer of success, that's hard.

Michal Onderco:

And do you think those two documents would have flown in the same way if they were tabled by Canada and not by South Africa?

Sven Jurschewsky:

They would have been a failure.

Michal Onderco:

Even if this was the two same documents?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes.

Michal Onderco:

Was that because the standing of Nzo and South Africa?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Because South Africa was not transparently linked to a weapons state the way Canada is.

Michal Onderco:

Oh, okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Anything that Canada would put forward as Canada in that context, not in others, but in that context, was to my mind, would have been harmful to the result.

Michal Onderco:

So, when the conference ended with the three decisions and the resolution --

Sven Jurschewsky:

[affirmative]

Michal Onderco:

-- but without the final document, did you think that the conference was successful?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes.

Michal Onderco:

Were you satisfied as a diplomat?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yes. I was thrilled. I'll tell you, my wife was with me at the conference. And I think that she deserves a mention here. The president's committee went very, very late. I got very little sleep.

We would be negotiating until three in the morning. And she, at midnight, would come to the Security Council with dinner for Terry Grove [spelled phonetically] who attended the president's committee with me. In a sense, we were way ahead because we weren't starving and we weren't filling ourselves on potato chips. We were eating healthful bananas with potassium that improved our brain function. And hence we had energy to stay the course. She did an amazing thing, okay?

She also resulted in -- two short little stories -- she also resulted in my becoming a friend of Sha Zukang. First time she delivered our tiffens as it were, to use an Indian expression, she got lost and there was this Chinese guy in the hall smoking. And she said, "Excuse me, where is the president's committee meeting?" And he was the head of the Chinese delegation Sha Zukang and my wife is African, of course. And that plays with the Chinese. And he took her. And was mightily impressed that a) she was African and b) she was doing this at midnight with food and, we became very close friends, Sha Zukang and I. We'd started going out -- at that time, I was smoking. We'd go out for cigarettes. And when I went to China to do North Korea, Sha made it his business to explain to be in very frank and open terms what China was like and introduced me to the right kind of people and so on and so forth. An amazing thing.

Another thing and, you know, this might be a little bit of insight into Jayantha's thinking was when the decisions were actually going to be made and voted on, by a show of hands and so forth. Suvana [spelled phonetically] came to the general assembly and stood at the door and Jayantha got up from the podium and walked to the door and greeted her and said, "We've reserved a seat for you at the front, come and watch your husband make history."

Michal Onderco:

Oh.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Which I thought was -- I was super touched by that.

Michal Onderco:

What were your expectations about the future of the NPT at that time?

Sven Jurschewsky:

My expectations -- you know, I'm long in the tooth. Expectations? You don't have expectations, you have hopes.

Michal Onderco:

Okay, so what were your hopes?

Sven Jurschewsky:

My hopes were that those two documents would actually be applied and acted upon and they haven't been. And that is a disappointment.

Michal Onderco:

But some of the participants in the conference say that, for example, the seed of the humanitarian initiative has been sown in 1995.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Oh, yeah, sure there was good stuff that came out of it. But just look at the failures of the Review Conferences since. Okay? And that's because -- and neither of the two documents has been fully implemented. Never has been. And I doubt that it will ever be.

Michal Onderco:

So, how do you feel about this?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It's life. Okay? That's the way it is, okay? We move on. You can't take a personal involvement. I did my job for Canada. I did it well. Other people subsequently made decisions that were not in keeping with the logic of those two documents and that's unfortunate. And I won't just blame the weapon states on that.

Michal Onderco:

Even though that's where the usually the blame is laid?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Yeah, that's the usual way of doing things. But you know, there were things about those two documents that the weapon states were unhappy about. And with good reason from their perspective. And the subsequent committees did not, as they should have, in my opinion, institute those two documents in a full and complete way. And this is not just a decision of the weapon states, this is a decision of all the states party. So, to blame the weapon states for that, I think, is a mistake. Because what happened, at the end of the day was the result of the determinations of the states' party meeting in concert. And that, you know, you can't complain about that. It's the way things are.

Michal Onderco:

Some of the people -- when they say that they saw already the humanitarian issue there, they talk about it with disdain. They say that, you know, it's basically the troubles of that treaty were solved in the moment.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Look, look, look, and there are people who say we should have never given an indefinite extension.

Michal Onderco:

Yes.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay? And I ask you, are we better off or worse off because in nonproliferation terms, in terms of a firm legal basis for nonproliferation action are we better off or worse off? Grosso modo, grosso modo, we're better off. There are other things that have happened that are more significant in terms of the functioning of the treaty. And that has to do with action with respect to the countries that weren't signing the treaty. Like India, like Pakistan, okay? Again, those decisions were made outside the strict context of nonproliferation. But that's life, you know? Everything is ultimately connected to everything.

Michal Onderco:

Is there something I should have asked about the conference and I didn't?

Sven Jurschewsky:

One thing you could talk about was the -- I mean, it's something that I had not too much to do with, but, you know, and I'm sure there are others who would have views on that. The consequences of the huge civil society presence, okay?

You know, a hero amongst the people in the civil society that I cooperated with and who helped

apart from PPNN, was Greenpeace, for example. Greenpeace, in terms of civil society, played a very positive role on behalf of indefinite extension, okay? Which, I think, most people would be surprised of, but which did play a kind of role in terms of the atmospherics of the conference as a whole.

Michal Onderco:
In what way?

Sven Jurschewsky:
Think about it. Greenpeace, radical, crazy, Greenpeace.

Michal Onderco:
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:
Arguing in favor of indefinite extension. That has, just in terms of whose mouth that's coming out of, has an impact, okay?

Michal Onderco:
Yeah. How did you see the role of the P5 at the conference, and especially of the U.S. and Soviet Union?

Sven Jurschewsky:
I saw the P5 as -- how can I put this? They came in with the hopes of, I suspect, all of them came in with the hopes of indefinite extension. But with no clear idea of how they would achieve it. None of them. In fact, I don't think, apart from the Australians -- and what they were planning, I have no ideas, but the Australians always plan at these things -- I do know that the head of delegation after Alfred Nzo made that statement, the head of the Australian government went back to Canberra for consultations.

Why? I have no idea. And you'll recall at the one successful NPT review conference, it was the Australians who played the end game role that brought about a successful conclusion. I had pretty good relations with the Australians, but again, I wasn't tipping my hat. But, you know, they fought the good line and have similar relations to the U.S. as we do.

Michal Onderco:
And how about the Russians? Because Russia at that time --

Sven Jurschewsky:
My relations with the Russians - they weren't intensive, okay?

Michal Onderco:
Okay.

Sven Jurschewsky:
You know, the Canadian delegation, not just in the president's committee but throughout and in terms of those two other committees of states that we organized, we played our own hand, okay? And there again, Ambassador Westdal played a major role in organizing and carrying that forward. We had a very strong delegation in terms of people experienced in nuclear affairs. And so, in all the committees, we played a strong role. And that was orchestrated by Westdal.

Michal Onderco:
Well, thank you very much for all this insight.

Sven Jurschewsky:
Anything else you want to ask?

Michal Onderco:

Well, I wanted to ask, I have a few more probing questions, but you actually answered --

Sven Jurschewsky:

Go ahead, ask. I mean, don't worry, I'll just say no and that's fine [laughs].

Michal Onderco:

[laughs] I'm just finding -- one of the things that you sort of dismissed under the hand was of course the original division between the two proposals against the indefinite extension and the Canadian one. But was there any sort of serious momentum behind the sort of 25-year extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No, I didn't see that. I mean, the divisions in the NAM where this was coming from were too great. If the Canadian thing hadn't of worked then yeah, something like that would have happened.

Michal Onderco:

But --

Sven Jurschewsky:

Okay, my biggest worry was no decision at all because then we were in legal limbo.

Michal Onderco:

That's what I wanted to say, because that's what some observers, before the conference, were saying. So, what happens if the conference doesn't come to any conclusion?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No idea then, no idea now. What happens when -- I mean, the straightforward legal answer was, there's no more NPT, okay?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

But, you know, law and politics intersect.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

And there would have been some kind of political saw-off at the end of the day that would have papered over the thing I think. But what the shape of that would be, I have no idea. But a huge problem for the basis of the nonproliferation system that there'd be no decision was, in fact, my biggest worry.

Michal Onderco:

Was there any worry about whether all the western European states are interested in indefinite extension?

Sven Jurschewsky:

No, not in my mind, anyways. Not in my mind, no.

Michal Onderco:

But was it because you sort of found out from your database?

Sven Jurschewsky:

The database, the progress of the conference, WEOG meetings. You know, Britain and France had a pretty tight grip on the [Europeans], I didn't see a problem there.

Michal Onderco:

So, how did the fact that the, you know, Britain, and France and the U.S. had pretty good grip on the Europe and others could have pushed elsewhere.

Sven Jurschewsky:

That's where the problem with the NAM radicals comes in. Look, there are two ways in which you can talk about disarmament and one is the moral language.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

Which is what everyone normally uses in discussing nuclear weapons. And then there's the logic of nuclear confrontation. And there you get into MAD and stability and, you know, all of those concepts. A conference is carried forward in the language of morality, but its substance is the logic of nuclear confrontation. And we should never, ever, forget that.

Michal Onderco:

But to what extent was the successful outcome a result of countries coming on board with the two documents, and to what extent is that the result of them being pushed into the outcome by the United States or by the U.K. or by France?

Sven Jurschewsky:

I suspect there are two things that were happening. Two things. One, I have no doubt, I am not aware of in detail, but I have no doubt that the U.S., France, Russia, pushed very strongly in terms of that being an outcome because at the end of the day, I think the calculation on their part was, again exactly, let us avoid a null, a no result. That was one side of the equation.

The other side of the equation was the momentum. And nobody likes to be on the outside because then you get blamed politically for failure. And that was part of the strategy was to isolate the really radical ones that would then have to make a decision to come on board or be publicly tarred as the cause of failure. It was to whittle down the naysayers to as small a group as possible.

Michal Onderco:

And the strategy of doing that was -- or the strategy to do that was partly through the two documents?

Sven Jurschewsky:

Not partly. That was the whole thing.

Michal Onderco:

That was the whole thing?

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was to set up a momentum. It was to set up a momentum. You know, in a conference, you have often various games going on. People putting forward proposals in terms of their particular perspective and interests.

Michal Onderco:

Yeah.

Sven Jurschewsky:

It was to avoid all of that, to avoid that mess, as it were. To create one notable point in terms of the extension decision on which most minds were focused. It was to become the only game in town, that was the objective, at least from my perspective. Does that make sense to you?

Michal Onderco:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, it does.

Sven Jurschewsky:

You know? So, you know, as sort of a final comment, you know, I've talked about it from my perspective. A conference like this with, you know, well over 170 participants, there are many perspectives. All of us -- there's no truth to this. As there is most things diplomatically, there's no proof, there's only perspectives. And those other perspectives are as valid as my own, okay?

I reported to you in terms of how I saw the conference from my rather narrow vantage point on the president's committee and in terms of the preparations for that conference. That's all I can offer you. And that's the only thing I can offer you with certainty. I can also say with certainty that other people have other perspectives and see other dimensions of what is an enormously complex event as being critical. And they're just as valid as my own.

It's the skill of diplomacy to see those other perspectives and to take them into account. But the diplomacy of command, which weapon states have employed in the past, is no longer appropriate to the reality of multilateralism.

Michal Onderco:

Thank you very much for your insight.

[end of transcript]