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First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Rattray (Jamaica)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda items 87 to 104 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and related international security agenda items

Mr. AlAjmi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Sir, it is our pleasure to congratulate you on your election to chair this Committee at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We underscore that your experience and wisdom will contribute to the successful achievement of our goals. We also congratulate the other members of your Bureau. We wish also to express our thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Libya, for his role in conducting the work of the Committee at the previous session.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by the representatives of Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

We reiterate our principled position vis-à-vis disarmament and international security, in line with the United Nations noble mission to maintain international peace and security. We have acceded to and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and the Chemical Weapons Convention. We have also ratified the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its five Protocols. We stress the importance of all these Conventions and the need

for a balanced approach to the three components of the conventions, especially with regard to research, studies and the acquisition of nuclear technology under the NPT safeguards regime.

Ms. Angela Kane was right when she mentioned in her introductory statement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2) that we need a new approach to objective frameworks in order to implement resolutions whose outcomes can be quantified, and that we must avoid all obstacles that hinder the disarmament efforts of the international community. The impasse of international efforts in the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which has entered its second decade, makes it incumbent on all Member States to find ways and means to address the increasing challenges. In this connection, we underscore the importance of the multiple United Nations platforms for addressing disarmament and international security issued, which will be successful only when all Member States honour their individual and collective commitments under all international instruments.

The establishment of zones free of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is an important step in achieving the lofty mission of the United Nations. However, the Middle East is still far from achieving that goal due to the position of Israel on nuclear weapons. Israel must therefore accede to the NPT and place its nuclear installations under the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That is why we regret that Israel did not fulfil its commitments in accordance with the NPT Review Conferences of 1995 and 2010, and

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that it has reiterated its rejection of the international will. We insist on the organization next year of the Helsinki conference that was announced in response to the international consensus of the 2010 NPT Review Conference but was later postponed.

With regard to the Iranian nuclear programme, we call for a peaceful settlement of this issue in order to uphold the right of Iran and all other countries in a similar position to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We stress the importance of the implementation by Iran of all the components of its cooperation with the IAEA and all the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on this issue.

Despite the increasing challenges, we have some hope for the ongoing efforts of the international community. In this respect, we welcome the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 68/32, on the follow-up to its 2013 High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, whose provisions underscore the importance of achieving a comprehensive convention prohibiting the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, and we call for convening of a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament in 2018.

We stress the importance of self-defence and the right to self-determination of nations under foreign occupation and the illegality of the acquisition of the lands of other countries.

In closing, we call for transparency and flexibility in order to achieve the aspirations of Member States to a world of peace and security in the international arena.

Mr. Molnar (Hungary): Let me join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. Chair, on assuming your very important post. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

Hungary fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). However, I should like to make a few remarks from our national perspective.

May I start by recalling that the Hungarian statement delivered in the general debate last year (see A/C.1/68/PV.5) noted certain positive developments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, which are fundamental to ensuring that our collective ambition for a more stable and secure world is fulfilled. The two concrete examples we referred to were the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the General Assembly

and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), along with the decision of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council on dismantling Syria's chemical weapons.

One year later, I am pleased to note that, having reached the required number of ratifications, the ATT, which has already become an important point of reference in regulating trade in conventional arms and curbing illicit trade, will enter into force on 24 December. Hungary is proud to have contributed to this success by signing the Treaty on the day it was opened for signature and by depositing its instrument of ratification last April. We look forward to actively participating in the work of the First Conference of States Parties, which will have to take important decisions with a view to ensuring the effective implementation and universalization of the Treaty. In our view, the process of informal consultations has made a good start and will be instrumental in preparing those decisions.

The Joint Mission of the United Nations and the OPCW established to remove and destroy Syria's declared stockpiles of chemical weapons has also successfully completed its work. This serves as a concrete example of how practical cooperation between international organizations can achieve tangible results. At the same time, it also underlines that the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW continue to play a vital role in the field of security and disarmament.

The Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague last March was an important milestone of our endeavours to strengthen the control of weapons of mass destruction in general and nuclear security in particular. We were honoured that the head of the Hungarian delegation was one of the five panelists to make introductory remarks in the "leaders only" informal discussion on the future of the Summit process. Although the responsibility for nuclear security rests with States, in our globalized world no State can ensure effective nuclear security on its own. Hence international cooperation in this field has also become indispensable, and the Summit process is an excellent example of that. In a mere four years, it has resulted in high-level political commitments and has generally facilitated national efforts with regard to mitigating the threat of nuclear and radiological terrorism.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is a body that Hungary continues to hold in high regard as one of the major multilateral forums in the field of

disarmament and non-proliferation, with the special task of negotiating disarmament treaties. We are convinced that the reasons for the stalemate in the CD are not of a procedural but of a political nature, and that our collective efforts are needed to revitalize that important piece of the disarmament machinery.

The very first step towards a functioning Conference would be the adoption of a programme of work. This should remain the focus of future presidencies as well. The re-established informal working group mandated to produce a programme of work robust in substance and progressive over time proved useful again this year in helping presidencies in their efforts by turning the drafting of a programme of work into a collective endeavour. In our view, a truly robust programme of work is one that allows for the beginning of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

We are convinced that a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices would constitute a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and, at the same time, also contribute to the implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Hungary is privileged to be a member of the Group of Governmental Experts set up by the General Assembly to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to future negotiation of a treaty. In our view, under its competent Canadian chairmanship, the Group had substantive and constructive discussions during the first two sessions on a broad range of issues. We trust that, in accordance with its mandate, the Group of Governmental Experts will be able to produce a report providing the international community with a full picture of the complexity of the issue and a detailed analysis of the available options.

We believe another essential building block still missing from the legal architecture of nuclear disarmament is a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Given the number of States signatories to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, it represents a nearly universal norm. Nevertheless, almost two decades after its adoption, the entry into force of the Treaty remains elusive. That motivated us to undertake the duties of an article XIV coordinator for the period between 2013 and 2015. Over the past year, Hungary and Indonesia, jointly and individually, have been striving to reach out to States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, in order to promote its entry into

force and its universalization. In the months ahead we will further intensify our efforts to bring us closer to that goal.

The success of the fast-approaching 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, is of paramount importance. I wish to reiterate the firm commitment of Hungary to the Treaty in general and to the fulfilment of the objectives of the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference in particular. Hungary attaches equal importance to each of the three pillars of the NPT.

As far as nuclear disarmament is concerned, we fully share the long-term goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We believe that a realistic and feasible approach is the key to achieving this goal. Hungary is of the view that the elimination of nuclear weapons cannot be a single act but has to be a gradual, comprehensive process that fully engages the nuclear-weapon States and at the same time preserves the integrity of the NPT. The generally recognized devastating humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has to be addressed in this context as well, including at the upcoming Vienna conference, which should contribute to strengthening the NPT.

In conclusion, let me remind delegations that Hungary, following the practice of previous years, has prepared a draft resolution entitled “Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction”, a fundamental pillar of the international community’s efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We hope, as has been the case very year so far with similar resolutions, that the draft resolution will again be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Der Kogda (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first, on behalf of my delegation, to sincerely congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Committee. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). However, we would like to make a few observations at the national level.

Disarmament remains one of the key questions on the United Nations agenda that all Member States must support if we are to maintain international peace and security, which are the guarantees for a safe world free from the scourge of wars. Burkina Faso has never spared any effort to make its contribution to disarmament through its participation in the development and implementation of standards and measures at the international and national levels in order to stop the arms race.

My country has therefore ratified several subregional, regional and global instruments, including the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Mine-Ban Convention, and other treaties on non-proliferation and banning nuclear weapons.

My delegation voices its satisfaction at the adoption of the latest, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), as well as its speedy entry into force on 24 December, having reached the necessary 50 ratifications, including that of Burkina Faso, which was made on 3 June. It will therefore be noted that in the annals of international disarmament instruments, the ATT will be the first to establish binding international norms regulating the transfer of conventional weapons and hindering their proliferation. That will contribute hugely to tackling conflicts, insecurity, instability and banditry, which are all sources of suffering for its victims. That is why Burkina Faso accords particular interest to the implementation of the Treaty and took part in the informal consultations of the States parties, the first of which were held on 8 and 9 September in Mexico City ahead of preparation for the conference of States parties.

In its willingness to translate its commitments into concrete action, Burkina Faso has established several institutional bodies designed to implement conventions and treaties at the national level. These include a high authority for the control of arms imports and their use, a national commission for combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, a national nuclear energy authority, a national authority responsible for the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), a national authority on radioprotection and nuclear safety, and a technical secretariat of the national authority responsible for implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention. Other initiatives under way include the establishment of a national authority

responsible for the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention, and the development of a national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Moreover, Burkina Faso has undertaken an outreach campaign on the appropriate approach to adopt with a view to implementing the ATT. In cooperation with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, on 1 October the Government organized in Ouagadougou a workshop for parliamentarians and representatives of the high authority for the control of arms imports.

Despite the existence of legal instruments and oversight mechanisms, the world continues to live in the shadow of a potential nuclear Armageddon due to the absence of tangible progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The dangers awaiting our planet in the event of a nuclear war are real, and it is clear that nuclear one-upmanship is futile, since the accumulation of nuclear weapons can never be a source of security but is rather a threat to all. It is therefore vital to reject any purported nuclear deterrence policy and to engage in a genuine policy of general and complete disarmament in the nuclear sphere.

Burkina Faso reiterates its call for the entry into force of the CTBT and the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). My country calls for the full implementation of the three pillars of the NPT in order to allow developing countries to enjoy the benefits of nuclear energy in the civil sphere. It is regrettable that the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT did not reach a consensus. It is our hope that the intersessional consultations will allow differences to be settled so as to guarantee the success of the Conference. It is desirable for countries in the Middle East, like Africa, to pursue negotiations to ensure the holding of the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons.

Huge military spending has had a major impact on development, as noted in resolution 68/37 of 5 December 2013, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development". In that regard, Burkina Faso has established a security and defence policy that takes its economic realities into account. For the past decade, it has undertaken a reform of its army with a view to improving human resource management so as to participate in the socioeconomic development of the

country. Burkina Faso calls on all countries to engage genuinely in disarmament, allowing the substantial financial resources to be diverted to development.

Non-respect for the various conventions on disarmament and non-proliferation, and unilateral measures by States, are threats to international peace and security. The response to these threats must be collective and envisaged within a multilateral framework through the launch of negotiations on all extant treaties. To that end, the States members of the Conference on Disarmament must show genuine political will to transcend their differences and allow the Conference to move forward and achieve its goals. Burkina Faso supports the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In conclusion, my delegation reaffirms the support of Burkina Faso for the promotion of multilateralism in the field of disarmament and calls on the entire world community to move towards general and complete disarmament by focusing on common interests, since the consequences of any war, regardless of its nature, would be catastrophic not just for the belligerents but, sadly, also for many innocent populations.

Ms. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly and assure you of our confidence in your ability to lead the work of the Committee successfully. I also wish to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Libya, for his good efforts in managing the work of the Committee during the last session.

The United Arab Emirates wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, as well as the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

My country's strategy, which is founded on respect for international agreements, particularly those relating to international peace and security, emphasizes the importance of supporting all efforts aimed at establishing security and stability for the people of the Middle East and eliminating all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the region, which has become a matter of urgency.

We commend the recent efforts of the international community to establish a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We hope that these efforts — which included the declaration of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, holding a review conference on disarmament in 2018, and increasing awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons through the Oslo and Nayarit conferences and the upcoming conference in Vienna — will pave the way for the disarmament of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We also welcome the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, which my country signed in July 2013, at the end of this year.

My country pursues a consistent national policy and has a clear position on the issues of disarmament and non-proliferation, based on its firm belief in their importance to achieving the objectives of international peace and security. We also believe in the importance of involving women in international disarmament efforts, and of viewing women as principal partners and effective agents in preventing wars, resolving conflicts and playing a central role in combating violence and promoting peace and security in the world.

The peaceful use of nuclear energy requires transparency and commitment to the obligations of non-proliferation. Accession to and full implementation of international agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation are therefore of great importance to my country. We support all international efforts aimed at advancing the common goal of establishing a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we express our concern at the lack of progress in the areas of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, despite their serious impact on efforts to achieve international peace and security.

My country attaches special importance to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and nuclear disarmament, and to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We also emphasize the importance of the Agency's Additional Protocol, which is a key tool for assuring non-diversion of nuclear materials and facilities and ensuring that they are used for peaceful purposes only.

In this context, I should like to stress my country's firm position that all States must fully implement their

obligations relating to the safeguards regime and any other relevant international commitments. We reaffirm our conviction that the peaceful use of nuclear energy is a necessity to fulfil the world's growing energy demands, and we are proud to be pioneers of a successful model in the region for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, a model that is surrounded by the highest standards of transparency, safety and security.

My country also emphasizes the need to continue negotiations between Iran and the P-5+1 in order to reach a comprehensive settlement of Iran's nuclear issue within a specific time frame. We call on Iran to resolve all outstanding issues with the IAEA in order to restore confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme and exclude any possible military objectives.

With regard to making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons, we express our deep concern at not making any tangible progress or implementing all the commitments resulting from the 2005 NPT Review Conference or the steps of nuclear disarmament agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference or the action plan of 2010. We also express once again our disappointment at the failure to convene the 2012 conference, as foreseen in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and we call for its convening as soon as possible in order to maintain the credibility of the NPT. We also renew our call on Israel, the only State in the region that has not yet acceded to the Treaty, to join the NPT, and we urge all States of the region to work constructively towards achieving the objective of making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons.

The world has witnessed the adoption of several international conventions and treaties that have genuinely contributed to achieving many of our aspirations to live in peace and security. However, the people of the Middle East remain unable to enjoy peace, and the time has come to settle all pending issues in the region, especially with regard to eliminating all nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction from the region. In this connection, we emphasize the importance of the international community's reaching an immediate consensus on developing the work of this Committee in order to achieve the goal to which we aspire — strengthening regional and international peace and security.

Mr. Andanje (Kenya): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman

of the First Committee. I assure you of my delegation's support and cooperation.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

Kenya attaches great importance to matters of international peace and security. We firmly believe that none of the global challenges we face today can be resolved by any one nation, however powerful. Multilateral cooperation is therefore imperative. I reiterate Kenya's commitment to strengthening peace and security through nuclear disarmament. The ongoing general debate provides us with the opportunity to reflect on developments on the disarmament and international security agenda. More significantly, I believe we must assess where we stand on the key issues and what we need to do to reinvigorate the disarmament machinery, and consider new approaches to advancing our objectives.

This year we have marked some important milestones. It is exactly 44 years since the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) came into force. More recently, on 26 September 2014 we observed the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. However, we have achieved nothing in nuclear disarmament that could underline the significance of honouring these events.

Military spending is not actually being cut at all but is increasing at an alarming rate. Kenya is convinced that the NPT requires disarmament and not increased armament. However, the modernization of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, the pursuit of pre-emptive strike doctrines and the threat of the use of nuclear weapons do not create an atmosphere conducive to nuclear disarmament. Despite the rhetoric on arms reduction initiatives, the reliance on nuclear weapons attests to the central role they continue to play in security policies. That is counterproductive. It calls into question the implementation of the NPT action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, especially the disarmament pillar.

The nuclear-weapon States have made little or no attempt to fulfil their obligations to disarm under article VI of the Treaty. Others are non-signatories despite our appeals to them to sign on. Considering that the third session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, held in April, was inconclusive, the prospects for a

favourable outcome at the 2015 Review Conference seem distant. It is unlikely that the action plan will have been implemented before the Conference. That raises the question of the credibility of the NPT regime. These are some of the realities we believe we have to address. Not doing so would be delusional.

Kenya is fully committed to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. These weapons pose a grave threat to peace and security in our region. We believe they deserve our attention. My delegation welcomes the recent adoption by consensus of the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States. We urge Member States, particularly the major arms producers, to ensure that the sale of small arms and light weapons is limited to Governments or to entities duly authorized by them.

I am pleased to report that Kenya has taken practical measures that we believe will contribute significantly to the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national level. Clear legislative and administrative procedures for arms management and control have been put in place. In addition, a policy framework has been developed in accordance with the provisions of the Programme of Action on guidelines on legislative, institutional and regulatory measures governing the control and management of small arms and light weapons. We also have an elaborate centralized stockpile management system for purposes of accountability.

Despite these efforts, Kenya is deeply concerned by the enormous security and socioeconomic consequences arising from the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons. These arms still end up in the hands of extremists who are continuing to carry out acts of terrorism on our continent. Kenya underlines the need for a balanced, full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, and stresses the importance of international cooperation and assistance to combat the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

Kenya believes that the conferences that have been held over the past two years on the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons are a small step but nonetheless a significant one. They add a new

dimension to the debate on nuclear disarmament. Many delegations will recall that not too long ago in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), a refrain heard quite often was "If the CD is unable to live up to its mandate, we will move the disarmament negotiations elsewhere".

However, since the Oslo and Nayarit conferences there seems to have been a change of heart. The CD is now the preferred multilateral forum for pursuing multilateral nuclear disarmament. These are some of the inescapable contradictions that we have to live with. The fact that there is overwhelming support on the part of Governments, non-governmental organizations and civil society groups for the conferences on humanitarian consequences demonstrates the growing opposition to the constant threat that nuclear weapons pose. People are beginning to stand up. Very soon they will say "enough".

Every citizen of the world community has the right and duty to oppose the existence of nuclear weapons. Naturally the talk of banning nuclear weapons is the next logical step. It should not cause anxiety. It is the conviction of my delegation that the humanitarian conferences can help to delegitimize nuclear weapons not only in the minds of people but also in mainstream media. Kenya therefore looks forward to participating in the International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons to be held in Austria later this year. My delegation urges those nuclear-weapon States that have stayed away from past conferences to summon the courage and participate in this important endeavour. It is a collective responsibility that requires States to show leadership.

My delegation welcomes the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. While we appreciate the need to reach consensus on common understandings on the existing and potential threats in the spheres of information security and possible measures to address those threats, it is our hope that the use of information and communications technologies by States will not be undermined.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that to achieve our goals in nuclear disarmament and international security will require genuine commitment to build on our shared interests. There are opportunities and constraints that accompany multilateralism, but we must realize the potential it offers to advance

national security interests. However, we cannot achieve that without addressing the need to demilitarize international relations, reduce military budgets and end the creation of a new generation of weapons in space. If we fail to do so, disarmament will be just a pipe dream.

My delegation looks forward to working with you, Mr. Chair, and others to bring this session of the First Committee to a successful conclusion. We will comment more comprehensively on some of the issues before us during the thematic debate.

Ms. Harbaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I wish on behalf of the Tunisian delegation to convey our congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee and my delegation's pleasure at the work carried out by Libya at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of Arab States and the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

Our Committee is meeting at a critical time, when more than half of the world's population is living in nuclear-weapon States or States that are members of nuclear alliances. Despite the growing concerns over the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from the use of a single nuclear weapon, so far not a single nuclear weapon has been destroyed pursuant to a bilateral or multilateral treaty. We must therefore make fresh efforts towards nuclear disarmament so as to free up the resources that are currently devoted to the manufacture and maintenance of these weapons, and devote them to economic and social development, the promotion of democracy and the protection of our environment, and hence international peace and security.

Tunisia therefore attaches great importance to multilateral disarmament efforts and will continue to support all efforts to promote the limitation of nuclear weapons and reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation. Comprehensive nuclear disarmament will be the best way to ensure that such weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorist groups or non-State actors. Allow me to express our pleasure at the first observance, on 26 September, of the first International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, pursuant to resolution 68/32, and to affirm Tunisia's support for the holding in 2018 of the United Nations high-level

conference on nuclear disarmament to review progress towards disarmament.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is one of the pillars of the world's nuclear order, has slowed nuclear proliferation without preventing it. The accession of most States to the NPT and its indefinite extension in 1995 have helped to strengthen it. Despite the Treaty's imperfections and fragilities, Tunisia takes this opportunity to reaffirm its conviction that the NPT is an irreplaceable instrument for international security. Since there is no other alternative than to support and strengthen the NPT, nuclear-weapon States are called upon to draw up a legally binding international document guaranteeing security to non-nuclear-weapon States and to sign the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) comprehensive safeguards agreements and their optional protocols, all with a view to promoting "zero nuclear" and to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Middle East is one of the most affected areas primarily because of the refusal of certain stakeholders to sign up to the NPT and to place their nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system, despite the many appeals made by other States of the region and the General Assembly in its many relevant resolutions. We therefore call on the international community, and especially the influential Powers, to take urgent and practical measures to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. It is our view that establishing and implementing a status declaring it to be a nuclear-weapon-free zone would be a good way to advance nuclear disarmament. Tunisia strongly supports this approach and calls for the holding of the conference on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction as soon as possible.

With globalization, the international global arms trade has changed in nature. Throughout the world, acts of violence are committed during and after conflicts with small arms and light weapons that are easy to obtain because they are part of a lucrative trade and are not sufficiently regulated. Thus the uncontrolled proliferation of such weapons, which continue to undermine peace and security, has devastating consequences for civilians in armed conflict. Women and children are often the main victims. Similarly, the emergence of new companies offering maritime security services because of the increase in acts of

piracy, and the fact that more and more small arms and heavy weaponry are falling into the hands of terrorist networks in violation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), are causes for concern.

Tunisia is pleased, therefore, to see that the issue of the small arms trade is taking more pride of place in the mandates of peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, especially since these missions are already helping us to strengthen the rule of law and to curb the arms trade in the context of their programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and for security sector reform. To that end, Tunisia underscores the importance of carrying out consistent, comprehensive and coordinated action encompassing governance, security, development, human rights and humanitarian issues.

We also welcome the positive results of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. My delegation embraces the recommendations aimed at giving new impetus to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We wish, however, to express our concern at the increase in the number of small arms and light weapons in circulation throughout the world.

I am sure that members are aware that Africa has suffered the lion's share of the impact of the excessive and uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and is indeed the continent most affected by conflicts of all types. Our continent is one of the biggest staging grounds for the illegal circulation of weapons of all types, calibres and origins, which strengthens the activities of terrorist groups. It is for that reason that all members of the international community must maintain a firm commitment to implementing the Programme of Action, which we believe to be the main framework for our activities to prevent, combat and eliminate the illegal trade in these weapons in all their forms.

In this connection, my delegation stresses the need for regional and subregional efforts to tackle the supply-and-demand sides of this illegal trade and to curb cross-border movements of illegal weapons, including illicit brokerage, with respect for international law, especially a country's right to self-defence.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the importance that Tunisia attaches to all multilateral disarmament issues and its commitment and readiness to fully cooperate with all stakeholders. We also call on the competent organizations to establish and strengthen cooperation and to work with States nationally and regionally to ensure that the world can enjoy peace and security.

The Chair: Before proceeding to the next speaker I should like to request delegations that are conducting consultations in this room kindly to do so outside so that speakers can be clearly heard.

Mr. Niyazaliev (Kyrgyzstan): First of all, let me join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau. We assure you of our full cooperation and support in executing your important duty.

Commitment to a policy of disarmament and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are among the most important principles of the Kyrgyz Republic's foreign policy. We believe that in strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and its foundation, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) should be the main focus. The Kyrgyz Republic hopes that the upcoming 2015 NPT Review Conference will assess the implementation of the commitments and outline further measures to strengthen the three main aspects of the NPT: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Today, a number of new opportunities have opened up for progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We support the process of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and are ready to take part in the upcoming third international conference in Vienna in December. In considering the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, special attention should be given to the environmental damage caused by uranium mining in the past and the ensuing process of nuclear fuel production.

Kyrgyzstan welcomes the declaration of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the decision to convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made in this regard. At the same time Kyrgyzstan will continue to support efforts aimed

at drawing attention to the importance of educational programmes in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

We consider the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which the Kyrgyz Republic ratified in 2003, to be one of the key instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, strategic stability and security. In this regard, we took part in the seventh Ministerial Meeting of the CTBT on 26 September this year and became a party to the joint ministerial statement. Attaching particular importance to the expeditious ratification and entry into force of the CTBT, we add our voice to those calling on all States to demonstrate their commitment to ending nuclear tests, and urge those States listed in annex 2, whose ratification is necessary, to do so without further delay.

We attach importance to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), aimed at countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technology and materials. It is vital to prevent non-State actors from gaining access to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, technologies and materials and to their means of delivery through the implementation of the resolution. In this regard, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has developed and approved a national action plan. We also welcome the decision to hold a comprehensive review of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in 2016.

My delegation looks forward to the revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which continues to make little progress in its work. That delays negotiations on a number of key issues such as nuclear disarmament, a fissile material cut-off treaty, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and negative security assurances. We encourage all States to demonstrate the necessary political will so that the disarmament machinery fulfils its mandate.

In speaking for the peaceful use of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in 2005 the Kyrgyz Republic made a commitment not to be the first to deploy weapons of any kind in outer space. In this regard, we welcome the draft resolution entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”. We also believe that to successfully promote this idea, we should use all international platforms.

One important contribution to the process of nuclear disarmament was the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia. The treaty

on its establishment was signed on 8 September 2006 and entered into force on 21 March 2009. Article 18 of the Treaty established the Kyrgyz Republic as the depositary of the Treaty, which indicates the Kyrgyz Republic’s role in the creation of the zone.

We welcome the signing by nuclear States of the Protocol on negative security assurances to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia on 6 May. The importance and relevance of this event are undeniable in light of the currently observed increase in the number of disputes among the leading world Powers and the absence of a clear and comprehensive vision for the future of the world order. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to ratify the Protocol as soon as possible. The Kyrgyz Republic is the depositary of the Protocol and is ready faithfully to carry out these functions.

The Kyrgyz Republic is the main sponsor, together with other Central Asian States, of the draft resolution entitled “Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia”. I take this opportunity to invite everyone to join the draft resolution as sponsors. I welcome co-sponsorship of the draft resolution by France and China, and appreciate the support of New Zealand, along with more than a dozen other countries. Those who wish to co-sponsor the draft resolution may approach the delegation of Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan.

Ms. Richards (Jamaica): Jamaica associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). We wish to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, for her introductory statement and express our appreciation to her team in the Office for Disarmament Affairs for their work during the past year.

Our deliberation at this sixty-ninth session takes place against a global security landscape that is increasingly complex and challenging. That demands greater urgency in our efforts to find solutions to the unfinished business of the disarmament agenda, while addressing a paralysing array of new and complex emerging challenges. From Jamaica’s perspective these developments, coupled with the ongoing work of the international community to elaborate a post-2015 development agenda, of which peace and security are a prerequisite, give particular importance to this session of the First Committee.

Nearly 70 years ago the Charter of the United Nations established the framework for a system of collective security based on the prohibition of the use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the formation of multilateral institutions for enforcing these principles. The progressive reduction of armaments and the achievement of the goal of general and complete disarmament are of the utmost significance in realizing these objectives. We believe it is important that these general principles be reaffirmed as the foundation for our efforts. No matter what may be the challenge and the perceived realities of the moment, the promotion of multilateral disarmament must play a central role.

The question we continue to confront in the face of the urgent tasks before us and the obstacles to progress is how to move multilateral disarmament forward after nearly two decades of little action. Can we build on the successes we have had in the past, and more recently with the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)? Is it time for a major paradigm shift to expand the prism through which we view our agenda to include the humanitarian perspective? How do we overcome the structural inadequacies for dealing with significant and intractable problems? How and to what extent do we give greater consideration to the participation of women and civil society groups? What is clear is that we need to nurture an atmosphere of mutual confidence, non-discrimination, increased transparency and trust, and to exercise the political will and commitment to achieve the stated goals and objectives of this Committee and the wider disarmament machinery.

We recently witnessed the exercise of concerted will and action with the adoption of the landmark Arms Trade Treaty. A little over a year ago the international community took a significant and resolute stand to regulate the international trade in conventional arms and to reduce human suffering, in defence of global peace, security and stability. As a country that has been disproportionately affected by the irresponsible trade in conventional weapons and a strong advocate for the Treaty, Jamaica welcomes the recent deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, which provides the basis for its early entry into force on 24 December. We take pride in our active contribution to this process and in being among the first to sign and ratify the Treaty. This we were able to accomplish thanks, in part, to the support of our partners both within and outside of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). We commend the Government of New Zealand for developing model

legislation, which assisted us to achieve our goal of early ratification.

With the entry into force of the Treaty fast approaching, we need to turn our attention to its full and effective implementation. We therefore welcome Mexico's timely offer to host the First Donference of States Parties, in 2015, at which we will commence the important work of operationalizing the Treaty. Critical to its implementation will be a dedicated and properly resourced secretariat. In this regard, we fully support CARICOM's endorsed candidate, Trinidad and Tobago, as the site of the ATT secretariat.

As we continue to grapple with the sobering reality that small arms and light weapons kill an estimated 300,000 people each year worldwide, Jamaica views the inclusion of these weapons in the scope of the ATT as an important complement to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which remains integral to our efforts to address this scourge. We are pleased to be part of the fruitful discussion and successful outcome of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in June. Critical to future efforts will be the establishment of a legally binding instrument on marking and tracing for small arms and light weapons and the incorporation of ammunition in the Programme of Action; so too will be our engagement in substantive discussions on issues such as brokering and border controls and consideration of the complementarities between the Programme of Action and the ATT.

The positive action in the area of conventional weapons is juxtaposed against the lack of progress in the area of nuclear disarmament. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not yet entered into force; the threat of a nuclear detonation, whether deliberate or by accident, remains a part of our daily existence; there are still unresolved concerns over the nuclear activities of some States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); a number of States remain outside the NPT regime; and the Conference on Disarmament remains in a state of dysfunction. Next year, we will have an opportunity at the 2015 NPT Review Conference to make good on our commitments, to agree on new and creative

means to strengthen the implementation of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. But we are not yet sure whether we will achieve success. The clock is ticking. With less than seven months to go before the Conference, we are confronted with the seriousness of the challenges we face in addressing the lack of implementation in nuclear disarmament obligations.

As we approach 2015, we welcome and join the renewed momentum led by a growing cross-regional group of States and civil society to take concrete action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. To this end, we were pleased to participate in the recent ministerial meeting to mark the inaugural International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September. We also strongly support efforts to place humanitarian concerns at the forefront of the discourse on nuclear weapons. This position reflects our deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation, whether accidental or deliberate, which highlights the urgent need for a ban on these weapons. Our participation in both the Oslo and Nayarit conferences is evidence of our strong desire to see much-needed progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. We therefore look forward to participating in the third conference, in Vienna later this year.

Jamaica applauds the role that nuclear-weapon-free zones have played in strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the promotion of regional security and stability. We in the Caribbean are party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which has long served as a model for the establishment of other zones. We therefore join the call for the convening of the conference to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction without further delay. The conference presents a fortuitous opportunity that we dare not squander.

Jamaica continues to attach high importance to the participation of women in all decision-making processes with regard to matters relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. We are well pleased, therefore, at the recent recognition of the importance of promoting the participation of women in the United Nations Programme of Action and the inclusion of strong provisions on gender-based violence in the Arms Trade Treaty. Thus we are fully supportive of the annual draft resolution introduced by Trinidad and Tobago, entitled "Women, disarmament,

non-proliferation and arms control", and look forward to its adoption this year by consensus once again.

In less than a year our leaders will gather in a high-level summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, at the core of which is the eradication of poverty. Our deliberations cannot be divorced from the elaboration of the new development agenda in the coming months. Indeed, in the context of huge global military expenditures, the link between disarmament and development merits greater attention. The figures are indeed startling. Roughly \$1.7 trillion is now spent annually on weapons and military equipment of all kinds, consuming a massive share of the world's financial resources. As a small island developing State, we are of the view that now more than ever is the opportune time to redirect significant portions of these funds to aid global development initiatives and poverty eradication strategies.

Ms. Nguyen (Viet Nam): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to convey our warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee this year. It is our strong belief that with your able leadership this year's session will have a successful outcome. It is my great honour today to represent Viet Nam at the United Nations for the first time. I sincerely look forward to working closely with friends and colleagues in discharging my responsibilities in the time to come.

Viet Nam associates itself with the statement made by Ambassador Desra Percaya of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement made by Ambassador Libran Cabactulan of the Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

We begin the work of the First Committee this year against the backdrop of a number of novel challenges. From Africa to Asia and Europe, crises and simmering tensions have characterized international security over the last year, despite much effort to peacefully settle disputes. As the Secretary-General has put it, not only has it been a terrible year for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, but disarmament itself is also now viewed as a distant dream.

In the face of such daunting challenges, it is crucial to redouble our efforts to lay a further foundation for an atmosphere of strategic trust that will be conducive to better international security for each and every Member State. In our view, core elements of such an

approach include respect for fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, especially respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the peaceful settlement of international disputes and efforts aimed at reducing reliance on a resort to the use of force in international relations.

Towards the goal of general and complete disarmament, nuclear disarmament should remain the top priority. We are heartened by recent efforts towards that end, including the recent informal ministerial meeting in observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and recent meetings on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. We are of the view that all States need to accelerate efforts to address outstanding issues related to nuclear disarmament. These include consultations on a nuclear disarmament convention, negotiation of a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances and the initiation of negotiation of a fissile material treaty. We call for more signatures and ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity, especially those by States whose ratifications are necessary for the Treaty to enter into force.

In this connection, we reiterate the pivotal role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in the global regime of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The 64-point action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference must be seriously and expeditiously carried out. As we are nearing the next Review Conference, there are serious concerns that we are lagging behind in terms of both substantive and procedural preparations. The upshot — and the atmosphere at recent meetings within the NPT framework clearly shows this — is that more serious commitment and practical achievements are badly needed if we are to produce good results at the Review Conference in less than seven months.

On a more positive side, we are encouraged by the efforts made by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in ensuring nuclear security and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology. We commend the hard work by the Agency, through which more and more States, including developing countries, have benefited from its technical assistance.

Viet Nam always places a premium on nuclear safety and security. We exerted our utmost efforts

to fulfil our responsibility as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the IAEA for the term 2013-2014 in a balanced and efficient manner. We are grateful for the kind cooperation and support of all member States. Viet Nam is also cooperating closely with the IAEA and international partners in developing our nuclear energy infrastructure. We also actively participated in the recent Nuclear Security Summit in the Netherlands.

Another important element of the global regime for nuclear issues is nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. Therefore ASEAN always attaches great importance to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and is working closely with the nuclear-weapon States with a view to concluding negotiations on the signing by the nuclear-weapon-States of the Protocol to the Treaty without reservations. We are pleased by the resumption of the meeting between ASEAN States and the nuclear-weapon States on Wednesday, 8 October, at the margins of the First Committee, and look forward to continued engagement with the nuclear-weapon States. It is also our hope that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction will soon be convened, with a substantive outcome, before the next NPT Review Conference. It is crystal clear that the outcome of the Review Conference will hinge, in no small part, upon that Conference.

We share the view that it is the sovereign right of States to retain, import and manufacture conventional weapons for legitimate self-defence. We support the continued implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons across borders. We would like to stress that the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, given its entry into force later this year, should be carried out in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

We also support the humanitarian purposes of the conventions on cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines. At the national level, Viet Nam is in fact implementing various elements of these conventions, including establishing a national mechanism and an action plan to address consequences of explosive remnants of war in Viet Nam. We are also working closely with international partners in this important arena.

Progress in the field of disarmament depends largely on the international security environment. But it also devolves on the disarmament machinery, which is more and more widely seen as falling short of producing results. While upholding multilaterally agreed principles, we could explore ways to promote efficiency in the disarmament machinery—for instance, probing synergy among emerging mechanisms, such as the resolution on the follow-up to the high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament and the initiative on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. We are also open to more discussion on improving the work of the First Committee.

In conclusion I should like to reiterate our willingness to work closely with you, Mr. Chairman, and other Member States to ensure a successful outcome for this year's session, thus contributing to building momentum for further successes next year when we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Ms. Dagher (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee, as well as the other members of the Bureau. Thanks also go to your predecessor and members of the Bureau.

My delegation endorses the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

We meet today as wars rage on throughout our region. We struggle against violence and terrorism and crime—a war for peace. The path to peace is better than the path to war. We should like to see efforts redoubled to strengthen these institutions in order properly to exercise justice, human rights, the rule of law and sustainable development in addressing the root causes of violence and putting an end to the hotbeds of terrorism so that the climate of crime that seems to reign over regions will be replaced by tolerance and dialogue between religions and peoples.

It is true today, as the Secretary-General has said, that there is no good purpose for bad weapons. Nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, are a sword of Damocles hanging over international peace and security. Lebanon reiterates the need to strengthen and coordinate international efforts to put an end to the threat posed by these weapons. Lebanon supports the declaration

of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Lebanon aspires to see the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and to reach a global treaty to achieve that goal.

Lebanon reiterates that the total destruction of nuclear weapons remains the absolute and appropriate guarantee against the use of those weapons or the threat of their use in order to achieve peace, security and stability, and a just peace at a global level on a sustainable basis, in the Middle East region and throughout the world. That is why Lebanon calls again for the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as part of a general integrated regional vision without double standards. Lebanon reiterates the importance of convening a conference on this issue as soon as possible, with the participation of all parties concerned. Lebanon reiterates that Israel is the only State in the region that has not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and therefore calls on the international community to pressure Israel to subject all its nuclear facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

While reaffirming the right of States under the NPT to develop research into nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Lebanon stresses that the human consequences of nuclear weapons must be addressed as soon as possible. Lebanon welcomes the conclusions of the Oslo and Nayarit conferences and hopes that the conference in Vienna will strengthen this awakening on these issues in order to find adequate means to ensure that scientific development is not held hostage and is used for the development of peace at the international level.

Lebanon also reiterates the right of States to legitimate self-defence in step with the Charter of the United Nations and to the acquisition, manufacture and export of these weapons. At the same time, we welcome the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, in the hope that it will help us to control the availability of those weapons and to prevent their use in violating international humanitarian law or in supporting or encouraging acts of terrorism or of organized crime, which would be in violation of that Treaty. We hope that the means to put pressure on States that do not respect their commitments under United Nations resolutions will be defined.

Lebanon calls for the international community to redouble its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons based on its own experience. Lebanon has greatly suffered through acts and threats that continue on its aerial, maritime and land borders, and we continue to suffer repeated aggression and attacks against our infrastructure, making victims of innocent Lebanese civilians.

My delegation reiterates its full support to you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau. We wish you every success and trust that you will achieve the very best results.

Mr. Kmentt (Austria): At the outset, I should like to join others in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair and assure you of the full support of my delegation.

Austria aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union earlier in this debate (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

The First Committee is always an opportunity to look back at the past year as well as forward, and to assess where the international community finds itself in this most vital area of international relations. This past year has brought us some very encouraging developments. Other developments and trends, however, are deeply disconcerting and raise serious worries about the future of the rule-of-law-based international security architecture.

High among the positive developments ranks the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Austria was proud to be among the first 50 States to ratify the ATT. With its imminent entry into force and through its effective international standards to regulate the international arms trade, we expect the Treaty to make an important contribution to human security, human rights and development. Its universalization and effective implementation will be crucial to translating the obligations of this robust and strong instrument into concrete measures on the ground. We thank Mexico for a successful first preparatory meeting and look forward to the next meeting in Germany. Austria has offered to host the future permanent ATT secretariat in Vienna, a global hub for security and development issues, which we believe would offer a great spectrum of expertise and valuable conditions for a secretariat to carry out its duties in a transparent, effective and efficient way.

The decisive and effective cooperation of the international community to remove and destroy Syria's

declared stockpile of chemical weapons was another key positive result of last year. We commend the work of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In fact it, was an example of how the international community should respond to such grave breaches of international law and international humanitarian law. At the same time, we are gravely concerned about new allegations of the use of chlorine gas. Such horrific acts fit into the overall degradation of or loss of respect for basic principles and the protection of civilians in armed conflict that are apparent in Syria.

We continue to be hopeful that the negotiations between the E3+3 with Iran, which are to resume this week in Vienna, can lead to a successful solution of the Iranian nuclear issue. There has been progress since the new diplomatic opening a year ago, but much work remains to be done to resolve this issue in a manner that solves all concerns of the international community about the nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

While we hope that these negotiations will reinforce the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in the non-proliferation pillar, we are deeply concerned about the overall situation of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The Treaty's lack of universality weakens its credibility and effectiveness to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to serve as a framework to achieve nuclear disarmament. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programmes continue to be of grave concern. We observe significant nuclear weapons and ballistic missile developments on the Indian subcontinent. The difficulties encountered in following through on the 2010 decision to convene a conference on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which Austria fully supports, are also evidence of this.

Austria has always been a staunch supporter of the NPT and the most stringent non-proliferation rules. However, the focus on proliferation is not sufficient. As we look towards the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the limited progress on the disarmament actions of the 2010 action plan is a source of growing concern and disappointment. We acknowledge that some proposals have been made and some steps taken by individual nuclear-weapon States, such as reductions and limited modifications in doctrines. However, the clear change of direction away from reliance on nuclear weapons that we and others hoped would be initiated after 2010

is not at all apparent. In fact, developments such as the crisis in Ukraine, on which the European Union has expressed its position, are used by some to even question the feasibility of nuclear disarmament.

We also maintain that we fail to see how large-scale investments, modernization and replacement programmes of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons infrastructure, and consequently the obvious intention to rely on these weapons for generations to come, could be interpreted as being compatible with the obligations and commitments under article VI and the 2010 action plan. Such continued reliance on nuclear weapons is possibly the greatest driving force for the proliferation of these weapons. This behaviour may not proliferate the weapons and the technology, but it certainly proliferates the symbolism and status associated with nuclear weapons.

Forty-four years after the entry into force of the NPT, and 19 years after its indefinite extension, we see this as a fundamental and increasing threat to the credibility of the NPT. We urge all Member States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to redouble their efforts to increase the credibility, direction and focus of nuclear disarmament efforts. In this context, Austria would like to call on all the remaining annex 2 States to take decisive action towards the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in advance of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Its continued lack of entry into force also undermines the credibility and fabric of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

As all additional areas of cooperation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to ensure compliance with such obligations are important and consistent with the NPT, so are all efforts to promote and facilitate nuclear disarmament and the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons. Austria considers the growing momentum and focus on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons as embedded in the NPT preamble and recognized by the 2010 Final Document, to be a very important development. The facts-based discussions at the two international conferences, in Norway in 2013 and Mexico in 2014, made a compelling case that the broad range of humanitarian consequences are even greater than we previously understood. Even a so-called limited nuclear exchange using a small fraction of today's nuclear arsenals could result in an immediate humanitarian

emergency of enormous scale. The images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki would pale in comparison.

No national or international capacity exists to deal with such consequences in any adequate manner. There would not and could not be a winner in such a scenario. All humanity would lose. In the words of Ronald Reagan, a nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought. New information has also become available about risks associated with nuclear weapons. These risks are there; they are more serious than previously known and can never be eliminated completely. Humankind has been very lucky on several occasions in the past, and reason should demand urgent action to move beyond nuclear weapons.

For these reasons, and to continue and deepen this important discourse, Austria will host the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons on 8 and 9 December. Austria seeks to strengthen the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and generate momentum for concrete progress on nuclear disarmament. As the credibility and effectiveness of our treaty-based regimes are increasingly challenged, we believe the international community should unite around the humanitarian imperative that underpins all of our work. We are extremely grateful for the widespread interest and expressions of support for this initiative, not the least in the many statements delivered here in the past few days. All States are welcome and all have been invited. The Conference will also be open to international organizations, academics and civil society. We are encouraging open, substantive and constructive discussions. We look forward to the active participation of all stakeholders who want to see progress in our shared objective of nuclear disarmament and a world without nuclear weapons.

Conventional weapons continue to cause casualties and human suffering on the largest scale. Efforts to reduce and prevent armed violence and human suffering caused by conventional weapons must remain a priority for the international community.

I see that my light is blinking so in order to be on time I will stop here and our points will then be made in the statement on conventional weapons later in the session.

Mr. Al-Shanfari (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Sir, I should like, on behalf of the delegation of the Sultanate of Oman, to extend my sincere

congratulations on your election as Chair of the First Committee at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We are confident that your long experience and renowned diplomatic skills will lead the work of this Committee to the desired positive results. Allow me also to extend to your predecessor, the representative of Libya, Chair of the Committee at the sixty-eighth session, and the members of his Bureau our appreciation for their unique efforts.

My delegation supports the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

In his statement in the general debate of the General Assembly (see A/69/PV.20), my Foreign Minister expressed Oman's firm conviction of the responsibility of the international community to protect the world from the threat of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Despite a series of international meetings and conferences held during the previous three decades, no progress has been made in nuclear disarmament talks or a reduction in proliferation.

My country expresses its concern at the delay in convening the international conference on the Middle East that was scheduled to take place in 2012, according to the decision of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That conference has not materialized to date, which is evidence that some parties do not understand its importance and goal. As we approach the day of the convening of the Review Conference next year, we believe that it is about time to resolve the issue of convening the international conference on the Middle East. Setting up a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, is of primary importance. The international community and especially the NPT depositary States should support these efforts.

We call on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear installations under the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency in implementation of the 1995 agreement, which included the adoption of a resolution on the Middle East. That would establish, in an objective manner, the link between the indefinite extension of the NPT, the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and the accession by Israel to the NPT. However, no progress has been made to date.

My delegation expresses the hope that progress plans adopted by the Review Conference will lead to the acceleration of steps to go forward on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The possession of nuclear energy for peaceful uses is a legal right for all States. We hope that talks on the Iranian nuclear programme will achieve the desired results through understanding and in the common interests of all.

We welcome the declaration of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, pursuant to resolution 68/32 and upon the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement. This is an occasion to bring us together to remember and address this issue of concern to the world and to all mankind, in order to live on a planet free from the risks of destruction and war.

My country confirms its full commitment to the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It has enacted many laws and regulations to combat this phenomenon. My country submitted its instrument of accession to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction on 20 August, thereby becoming the 162nd State party to the Convention and to avoid all the ravages of war and conflict.

In closing, my delegation calls on all Member States to fulfil their commitments under treaties and conventions related to disarmament, especially nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We hope that under your stewardship, Sir, we will achieve our aspirations in order to live in a world of security, peace and stability.

Mr. Kolga (Estonia): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the position of Chair. My delegation and I personally assure you of our full support in your endeavour.

In aligning ourselves fully with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.2), we would like to highlight some specific issues to which Estonia attaches particular importance at this year's session of the First Committee.

My country shares the view of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is an extremely important instrument in curbing the illicit and illegal transfers

of conventional arms to conflict zones or parties to an armed conflict. Estonia is also very pleased to see that far more than half of the Member States have already signed, and more than 50 countries have ratified, the Treaty. As a result, they will ensure that the Treaty enters into force on 24 December this year. That is a major achievement for the international community. I should like to encourage States that have not yet signed the Treaty to do so before its entry into force. As a next step the international community has to focus on the implementation and universalization of the Treaty. My country is strongly committed to work for that.

The entry into force of the ATT reminds us of the previous time the international community was able to make progress in concluding a universal treaty of disarmament and non-proliferation. Unfortunately today, 17 years later, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force. We urge the States, particularly those whose adherence is required for the CTBT to enter into force, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

For Estonia, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We reaffirm our full support for all three pillars of the Treaty and to the implementation of all commitments assumed under it or undertaken during previous Review Conferences. Estonia will continue to promote the full implementation of the 2010 action plan — which includes concrete steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — which is our common road map towards the 2015 Review Conference. Ensuring the implementation of the 64 actions in the action plan is a collective responsibility shared by all States parties to the NPT without exception.

Now I should like to turn to the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The judgement that its ongoing stalemate remains deeply troubling is constantly repeated over the years, and has already become the unofficial slogan of the Conference. This year is no exception. The CD's agenda encompasses global concerns, and we believe that those concerns should be negotiated in a non-discriminatory, transparent and multilateral way, with the wider participation of interested States. At this point, I should like to reiterate Estonia's request to participate fully and equally in the disarmament discussions as a full member of the CD.

I also reiterate our call for the early nomination of a special rapporteur to review the issue of membership.

In this respect, we underline the importance of continuing consultations on the expansion of the membership of the CD and welcome the nomination of the Ambassador of Albania as a Friend of the CD President on enlargement. That is indeed a progressive and forward-looking step that enhances consultations on the expansion, as required by the rules of procedure as well as by the resolution on the CD. It is unfortunate that such a factual mention was not made in the CD report or in the resolution on the CD. We nevertheless wish to reaffirm our strong commitment to the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Given the universal nature of the United Nations, we do not see any reason or moral justification why an interested State should not be allowed to participate fully and equally in the disarmament discussions and negotiations and to contribute to its aims.

I welcome several positive developments over the past 12 months in the extraordinary effort to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons programme. These developments constitute significant steps towards the complete dismantling of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. All this has been achieved safely and without harming the environment and represents a considerable success for the international community and a remarkable example of international cooperation.

However, we note with deep concern that the Fact-Finding Mission established by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Director-General has brought us the compelling confirmation that a toxic chemical was used as a weapon systematically and repeatedly in Syria. The Fact-Finding Mission also reported that new allegations continue to be made. Therefore, we welcome the decision by the Executive Council of the OPCW to have the Fact-Finding Mission continue its work, and firmly believe that all perpetrators of war crimes in Syria, including the use of chemical weapons, must be held accountable. In order to support the OPCW in implementing its decisions on Syria, Estonia provided a voluntary financial contribution to the OPCW special trust fund.

I note with concern that ballistic missiles and related technologies are still used throughout the world as operational weapons. It is clear that the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) plays a central role to prevent missile proliferation. That is exactly

why my country, following its initial candidature 11 years ago, recently presented a renewal of the technical dossier to the MTCR. We believe that Estonia's membership in the MTCR will serve the Regime well. It will extend the territory of MTCR specific controls, add expertise on unmanned aerial vehicles and space technologies, enlarge the circle for intelligence sharing and information exchange on law enforcement and thus support the non-proliferation efforts of the MTCR. We also strongly speak for the membership of all European Union member States in the MTCR, since they all meet the highest standards and criteria of the MTCR, given that they are part of the European Union single market.

Supporting mine-clearance activities remains essential for the stabilization processes of post-conflict States and the safe return of refugees. Estonia is determined to support humanitarian demining and mine action. Estonia increased its contributions over the past few years and continues to do so. That includes financial support to the United Nations Mine Action Service, as well as to the clean-up of various explosive remnants of war and mine-clearance activities under several bilateral and international humanitarian projects. We also urge all States that have not already done so to join the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Finally, cybersecurity is an issue that we cannot take lightly. As each connection to the Internet means more targets and potential vulnerabilities and brings new risks that challenge defenders to provide enhanced levels of protection, we will most probably never be able to build a perfect system, but what we need is a better understanding of cybersecurity issues. The United Nations, including its First Committee, is an important forum for sharing information on efforts taken at the national level to strengthen cybersecurity.

The report of the 2013 United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (A/68/98), which specifies that international law applies in cyberspace, was truly a landmark agreement that has changed the political landscape. Applying international law to cybersecurity, finding agreements on norms of responsible State behaviour and identifying areas in the cyber field where we can be more transparent are things we believe need to receive more attention. Although we cannot take security lightly, security cannot be used as an excuse to limit Internet freedom. Cybersecurity and Internet freedom are intrinsically linked and in no way incompatible.

Mr. Šćepanović (Montenegro): Allow me first to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and other members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of the full support of the Montenegrin delegation in discharging your important duties.

Montenegro fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). In addition, I should like to stress certain points that are of particular importance to my country.

Montenegro is strongly committed to the objective of a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We acknowledge that considerable reductions in nuclear arsenals, particularly on the part of the United States and the Russian Federation, have been made since the end of the Cold War. But we currently see the existence of around 17,000 nuclear weapons, which leads us to conclude with concern that more than 40 years after the entry into force of the NPT, rather limited progress has been made in the field of nuclear disarmament. Moreover, ongoing efforts to modernize and upgrade nuclear weapons do not go hand in hand with the letter and spirit of the NPT.

With the continued existence of nuclear weapons, the risk presented by their proliferation and the potential impact on international peace and security are constant concerns that cannot ever be fully eliminated. Furthermore, despite the preparations and tireless efforts of the facilitator, which we applaud, the convening of the conference on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction has not been possible so far. All this points to the need to place renewed focus and greater importance on the full implementation of existing obligations and outcomes under the auspices of the NPT. Real and substantive progress in nuclear disarmament on the path to total elimination is long overdue. It is in this context and with a sense of urgency that we must approach the NPT Review Conference next year if we want to make it a success and preserve the relevance and credibility of the NPT structure for international peace and security.

A modern and pragmatic approach must prevail — one that is not trapped in the past but would instead be future-oriented so as to try to bridge existing differences and unite the efforts of nuclear and

non-nuclear countries. Sooner rather than later, we must achieve the orientation towards our common, peaceful future, where nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction have no place.

We wish to acknowledge the campaign to increase awareness of the possible catastrophic humanitarian consequences that the use of nuclear weapons presents for humanity. We welcome the holding of the conferences in Oslo and Nayarit and look forward to the opportunity to further discuss and gain better understanding of this issue at the Vienna conference later this year, as we prepare for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We sincerely believe that this initiative can strengthen and not undermine the NPT. Similarly, we expect the Vienna conference only to make stipulations and contribute to a successful outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

The early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) must continue to be our priority. Montenegro subscribed to the joint statement from last month's CTBT Ministerial Meeting calling for a prompt entry into force. Another high priority remains the beginning of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. We welcome the two meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts and hope the work of the Group can contribute positively to this aim.

Weapons of mass destruction other than nuclear weapons also present a key challenge. With regard to Syria, the removal and subsequent destruction of the declared chemicals is an essential step forward towards the complete and irreversible dismantling of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. That was a major achievement of the international community. But the work is not finished, since the second report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Fact-Finding Mission found convincing evidence of the systematic and repeated use of a toxic chemical since last April. The use of chemical weapons is not permissible under any circumstances, and Montenegro strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons in Syria. My delegation emphasizes the importance of bringing the perpetrators of these horrific acts to justice.

Fully aware of the serious threat that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses to international peace and security, authorities in Montenegro — in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and with

the participation of experts from the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) — have prepared and in June this year submitted the national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), with the aim of ensuring the full and most effective compliance and implementation. This year Montenegro also submitted a national report on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) reaffirming our dedication to this subject.

We are pleased that so far 121 States have signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and, more importantly, that 53 States have ratified it, which allows the Treaty to enter into force before the year's end. Montenegro is honoured and proud to have deposited its instrument of ratification for the ATT on 18 August, becoming the forty-fourth country to do so. Our ratification is yet another illustration of my country's firm commitment to the ATT and to promoting a responsible arms trade throughout the world. From the beginning, Montenegro has been an active supporter of and advocate for the ATT. We were among the first to sign it.

Now that we are approaching the entry into force of the ATT, we expect that this instrument will be decisive in putting an end to the illegal diversion and uncontrolled arms trade that fuels armed conflicts, thereby making a real difference to the lives, livelihoods and human rights of millions of people worldwide. Montenegro will be devoted to the full and effective implementation of the ATT, as well as to upholding the principles and standards enshrined in the Treaty on a global scale. Our efforts will continue in order to make sure that the Treaty truly becomes universal, with as broad and effective an application as possible.

We express our gratitude to Mexico for organizing the first round of informal consultations. We look forward to the second preparatory meeting, to be held in Berlin in November, as well as to the First Conference of States Parties to the ATT, in 2015, which Mexico has kindly offered to host, as it represents a crucial development for the implementation of the Treaty following its entry into force. I should like to express hope that the encouraging developments around the ATT will provide a positive example and stimulus to regain much-needed momentum for other global disarmament and non-proliferation actions.

We note with regret and share the wide range of frustration at the continuing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United

Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), both of which have been unable to perform their roles for more than a decade. Montenegro strongly supports ongoing efforts to break the deadlock in the CD and the UNDC so that they will be in a position to carry out substantive work as soon as possible.

We must do our best to use the opportunities presented to us so that significant strides can be made on our long path towards a safer and more secure world. We need to galvanize our efforts and recommit ourselves to the principles of effective multilateralism, compromise and mutual trust in order to revitalize the United Nations disarmament machinery and strengthen the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

In this regard, I should like to touch upon the opening intervention made by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). Her message about a results-based approach both in disarmament and the regulation of armaments has a lot of merit and demands our full attention and consideration going forward in order to make our work meaningful and tangible. Montenegro for its part is firmly dedicated to playing an active role and constructively contributing to that end. The Montenegrin delegation looks forward to engaging in issues that are on the agenda of the First Committee and is open to pragmatic cooperation in all fields. So I reaffirm our support to you, Mr. Chair, to bring this session to a fruitful conclusion.

Mr. Ferreira (Cabo Verde) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee and to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I should like to assure you of the cooperation of my delegation in discharging your duties.

Cabo Verde associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

Issues of disarmament and international security are by their nature major challenges for the international community, given that they require responses at the global level. We believe that the promotion of international cooperation and the strengthening of multilateralism, allied to political will, are key elements of an appropriate response to these challenges.

The delegation of Cabo Verde believes that in the context of multilateralism it should be possible to create adequate and effective conditions and mechanisms to help us make significant headway towards global disarmament. I reiterate the commitment of the Government of Cabo Verde to the principles of peace, disarmament and cooperation among States, particularly in the field of international security, as set out by the Charter of the United Nations. To that end, we actively support the legal provisions of international instruments in the field, and are therefore firmly committed to dialogue and platforms for international discussion that seek appropriate avenues and solutions for reducing weapons of mass destruction.

Persistent crises linked to nuclear proliferation are still a major concern for my Government, given that they pose a threat to global peace. We welcome the declaration of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons under resolution 68/32. As recognized at the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), the intentional or accidental usage of nuclear weapons would have a fatal impact on the planet, on life and on humankind. With that in mind, we advocate the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Similarly, we thank Mexico for hosting the second international Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, in Nayarit in February, and welcome Austria's announcement that it will host the next conference on 8 and 9 December.

Cabo Verde has signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and hopes to conclude the ratification process very soon. We welcome its entry into force by the end of the year, on 24 December. This step forward towards disarmament proves once again the capacity and effectiveness of multilateralism. We wish again to congratulate the Mexican Government on its willingness to host the First Conference of States Parties, in 2015.

Moreover, and as we have had occasion to say a number of times in the past, my delegation believes that the effective implementation of the provisions of the ATT will undoubtedly have a significant impact in reducing existing or potential dangers at the international or regional level, particularly with regard to terrorism, armed conflict and other international crimes. Moreover, the ATT will help in the struggle against urban crime, which affects all countries. We highly value to that end the adoption on 24 September

of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”.

At the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in June, the Government of Cabo Verde noted the need for better regional cooperation and to mobilize resources to confront the illegal trade in weapons, above all in West Africa, by drawing attention to the challenges that it poses to small island States, where control over maritime areas constitutes a particular vulnerability.

Despite progress made in the field of disarmament, we encourage the members of the Conference on Disarmament to establish a plan to revitalize its work in order to find active and intelligent responses to events threatening international peace and security. For the Government of Cabo Verde, it is necessary to seek solutions and mechanisms able to guarantee peace in a comprehensive manner that can guarantee security and stability, and finally, the sine qua non conditions for the development of all countries.

Finally, I should like to recall the words spoke by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon last year:

(spoke in English)

“We simply must do more to meet the disarmament challenge ... This agenda cannot languish. It must advance for our common humanity.” (A/68/PV.II, p. 3)

Mr. Bonny (Papua New Guinea): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. My delegation offers its support to you and the Bureau members.

My delegation also associates itself with the statement presented by the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

While disarmament issues include nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction such as chemical weapons, the main focus of my delegation will continue to be on small arms and light weapons.

But the successful outcome of debates on these issues is very much dependent on the engagement and

participation of nuclear-weapon States and other major arms-producing States, including their full compliance with all the protocols to the relevant treaties. Through the concerted efforts of the United Nations, as well as willingness on the part of relevant parties, much has been gained over the past several years in the concrete reduction of nuclear arms of Russia and the United States and other weapons of mass destruction.

A recent notable achievement of the United Nations was the disposal of chemical weapons in Syria. We note the continuing engagements with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea regarding the development of their nuclear technology. This is attributed in part to open debates and negotiations through multilateralism through the United Nations as well as in other relevant forums.

Papua New Guinea again calls for a peaceful and nuclear-free world. However, we support the view that the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, with scrutiny from the International Atomic Energy Agency, is the inalienable right of every country. We therefore call for more openness on the part of all concerned parties to eliminate doubts about their nuclear programmes, as well as for efforts to develop this technology for the benefit of all humankind in the areas of health, modern science, food, agriculture and many others.

With regard to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, Papua New Guinea faces a very difficult challenge. Given our vast unprotected coastal borders, the trafficking of arms and light weapons and other illicit materials is extremely difficult to control, due to resource and capacity limitations. The use of illicit weapons in criminal activities, including tribal fights, is of growing concern, as it negatively impacts on the economic and social development of the country, especially in rural areas, due to the destruction of property and the mass migration of people fleeing the fighting zones.

Papua New Guinea is doing all it can to prevent the smuggling of small arms and light weapons into the country. That by itself will not assist in curbing the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and stopping them from falling into the hands of criminals and other non-State actors. That also requires efforts by weapon-manufacturing States and regional countries to deal with this issue effectively.

For its part, the Papua New Guinea Government has increased cooperation with regional police forces to exchange information and monitor the movements and activities of people linked to terrorist groups and activities. In this regard, I am pleased to inform the Committee that as a result of such cooperation, individuals and groups that may be linked to terrorist groups have been detected and the Government is taking appropriate action to deal with this issue.

The disputes in Ukraine and the conflicts in the Middle East are of major concern to everyone. Terrorists have taken advantage of these conflicts to cause instability and chaos by using conventional weapons to destroy towns and cities, resulting in the deaths of many innocent civilians. We fear that such conflicts between major Powers could escalate to a much higher and more dangerous level. We call on the Security Council to take appropriate decisions to de-escalate these situations. We also support the call of many States and non-governmental organizations for compliance with and ratification of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, with the ultimate objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Papua New Guinea supports the Arms Trade Treaty and will in due course declare its position on formalization.

Mr. Balé (Congo) (*spoke in French*): The Congolese delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

We wish to assure you, Sir, of our support and full cooperation. I also take this opportunity to convey to you my sincere congratulations on your election as Chair of the Committee and in so doing wish you every success.

Practically everywhere in the world, we are witness to the persistence of hotbeds of tension and conflict. Terrorism and extremism are staking their claims to territorial conquest, demonstrated by acts of unspeakable barbarity. The abominable aims of the Islamic State and the dangers represented by Boko Haram have shaken our certainties as to the nature of the threats to the peace, security and stability of our countries. Today, one of the most sensitive regions of the world, the Middle East, is experiencing the worst armed violence and instability.

Given that the link between the nuclear proliferation regime and terrorism is increasingly evident, we believe that in such an environment we will not be able to avoid the spectre of nuclear weapons once they fall into the hands of non-State actors. I wish to strongly reaffirm our shared conviction of the need to strengthen oversight and monitoring mechanism for all nuclear activities, be they civil or military.

The accumulation of waste, radioactive materials and spent fuel is, as we know, a potential source of widespread contamination in the event of a technical malfunction. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related materials therefore pose a real threat to life if we do not take effective measures to rid ourselves of them once and for all. In this context, my country supports all international efforts aimed at prohibiting the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons for military purposes. My delegation further stresses the need to take relevant action with the strictest respect for internationally respected norms.

My delegation takes this opportunity to announce the deposit on 2 September by the Republic of Congo of its instrument of ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. This action is in keeping with Congo's support for measures to promote international and regional peace and security. We also take this opportunity to encourage all other countries that have not yet done so to follow suit.

My country also welcomes international efforts to conclude an international instrument to ban nuclear fissile material. My delegation wishes, however, to express its strong concern over the protracted deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), which in our view is the ideal forum for multilateral negotiations on issues of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Furthermore, the dissensions that have bedevilled our discussions on the working methods of the Disarmament Commission and the disagreements that have marred the preparatory process for the upcoming Review Conference in 2015 are unlikely to dissipate the fear that there will be a deadlock on an issue as fundamental as that now facing us, which touches on the very future of humankind.

Nevertheless, we believe that we can place our hopes in the meetings of this session to find suitable responses to pending issues, thereby enabling us to relaunch negotiations in different bodies on disarmament. That

should be one of the objectives that we should try to achieve during this session.

Concerning other weapons of mass destruction, the Government of the Republic of the Congo welcomes the partnership that has been set up with the Swiss Government, the European Union and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which enabled us to hold, from 2 to 13 June in Brazzaville, a training workshop to build assistance and protection capacities against chemical weapons.

The proliferation and illegal circulation of light weapons are another source of concern for my country, which does not have the technology for their manufacture. My delegation welcomes the impending entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty. Our irreversible move towards the implementation of the provisions of that universal instrument is testament to our shared will to rid the world of weapons that are most often used in conflicts in developing countries. That is why my country welcomes the initiative of the Government of Mexico to organize in 2015 the First Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

By the same token, the Republic of the Congo supports all other international, regional and subregional measures to effectively halt the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and calls for further efforts to eradicate this phenomenon. To that end, my delegation calls for international cooperation and assistance with a view to exchanging good practices to ensure synergy among all stakeholders. The Congo unequivocally reaffirms its commitment to the confidence-building measures taken by the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa to address the non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

The total elimination of anti-personnel mines is another challenge facing the international community today. We welcome all efforts geared towards the universalization of the Ottawa Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. We must bear in mind that it is thanks to cooperation among our respective States that we will eventually realize our aim of a world without mines.

The Republic of the Congo also welcomes efforts to eradicate cluster munitions and supports various actions to promote and disseminate the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Driven by these commitments, Congo ratified the Convention on 2 September.

After so many failures and setbacks to our determination, and so many attempts to move ahead in promoting disarmament and the non-proliferation of all categories of weapons, we must nevertheless persevere. Moreover, we are convinced that we must also rethink these issues together, guided by our mutual responsibilities and the extreme gravity and complexity of the international situation that is facing the world today. It is through collective efforts that we will find the best solutions to disarmament and non-proliferation issues, and we must continue to pool our efforts to that end. As many delegations have stressed, we must press on towards realizing the ideals of disarmament and non-proliferation and work to create a peaceful, stable and prosperous world.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of this very important Committee. We trust that your experience will allow you to carry our work to a successful conclusion. I also congratulate Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, on the comprehensive statement that she made at the opening of the Committee's work (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

We endorse the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States, respectively, and support the statement made on behalf of the Group of Arab States (*ibid.*). The Sudan will participate positively and effectively in the work of this Committee.

Our session this year takes place at a time when the world is anticipating the holding of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, pursuant to the resolution to that end. We welcome the preparatory measures that have preceded the conference and call for it to be held as soon as possible, with the participation of all countries of the Middle East and in line with the action plan of the outcome document of the 2010 Review Conference. We call on the world community to support all efforts to ensure the success of that conference so that we can achieve practical results and clear mechanisms for the implementation and follow-up in line with a binding timetable to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

We reiterate the importance of all nuclear facilities in the Middle East being placed under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

which means that Israel needs to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The regional and international upheavals that the world has seen, particularly in the Middle East, show that measure to be the only way to bolster international security and the channels of multilateralism, especially the conference on the Middle East. The Sudan is an effective partner in international efforts to achieve disarmament and has been among the first countries to accede to numerous international instruments and conventions, including the NPT, not to mention all our other efforts regarding the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

In 2004, we hosted a conference on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which issued many recommendations, including on the creation of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Africa. The measures adopted by the countries in this sphere should be exclusively peaceful and without prejudice to the inalienable right of any other country to take advantage of chemical and nuclear technology for scientific civilian purposes in the sphere of development.

One priority for the Sudan in the field of disarmament is small arms and light weapons. Like many other countries, we have suffered from this phenomenon. This issue has been repeatedly linked to economic dimensions that make it all the more complicated when certain population groups seek to use force against others. That is why we need to put an end to this phenomenon. We have sought in many international and regional forums to resolve this problem and have also joined regional efforts to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

We are very confident that the proliferation of such weapons and organized cross-border crime are interlinked phenomena. The Sudan has hosted a regional workshop on combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We have made major bilateral efforts with countries of the region to delineate frontiers and establish checkpoints and customs offices at the borders.

The proliferation of these weapons must be stopped above all by producer countries, and not exclusively by the countries that suffer from the phenomenon. Producer countries should not export their weapons to non-State groups and actors, as those arms may end

up in the hands of illegal groups and actors. We need to offer all kinds of logistical support to all countries that suffer from this phenomenon in line with part II of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to help them to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

At the national level, the Sudan has come a long way in implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We have established administrative structures to implement the Programme and a national contact office within the Interior Ministry as the focal point for implementing plans, programmes and policies at the central level. We have opened provincial offices to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, in step with a well-studied and very detailed plan that we will be implementing over the next five years. We will strengthen border controls in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

We all agree that the 2010 Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development clearly identified the link between development and armed conflict. The Security Council needs to take account of this reality in developing countries, particularly when it sends peacekeeping or peacebuilding missions to those countries. If the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes is to be truly effective, the development environment must be taken into account.

The lack of resources, especially as a result of drought, desertification and climate change, should also be addressed. The conflict in Darfur is a clear example of the need to resolve this problem in a comprehensive manner. We also need to boost the capacities of developing countries and not just send groups of experts, as the Council does today. Expert groups seek to resolve only the symptoms and do not seek the root causes of conflicts, such as the proliferation of weapons in the hands of groups and individuals.

The Sudan has come through a great upheaval in its modern history. Many political parties and organizations have launched a comprehensive national dialogue. We have reached a crossroads that will have an impact on all citizens, all parties and all political streams of the Sudan, and on the armed groups, if they can reach an agreement. We can all achieve stability and security.

That will have a positive impact on regional peace and security and the country's resources can be spent on construction, development and prosperity.

Mr. Mati (Italy): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your appointment as Chair of the First Committee at its sixty-ninth session, and to assure you of the full support of the Italian delegation for a successful outcome of this session.

Italy aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.2), and I should like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Italy attaches great importance to disarmament in its broadest sense. We are fully committed to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as essential components of our foreign policy. These topics are high on the agenda of the Italian presidency of the European Union in the current semester. We firmly believe that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial to effective, concrete and long-term results in the field of disarmament. Italy will therefore continue to be actively engaged in the main multilateral and international forums, particularly at the United Nations and in the Conference on Disarmament, as well as in the framework of the major international treaties on both conventional arms and issues related to weapons of mass destruction.

One multilateral success is the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which Italy welcomes. Far from being exclusively a treaty on the arms trade, the ATT will also be a binding multilateral instrument that fosters respect for human rights. By envisaging binding criteria for the prevention of gender-based violence, the Treaty has, for the first time, included a gender perspective and a concept of human security in the broader context of global security.

In the nuclear sector, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is still the cornerstone of our international action. The Italian Parliament has committed the Government to playing an active role in supporting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Our national priorities are full implementation of the NPT 2010 action plan, strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime, implementation of negative security assurances, early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, early commencement of the start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of

fissile materials, universalization of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) additional protocol, and the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East.

The nuclear-weapon States have clear, unequivocal responsibilities in moving forward on nuclear disarmament. We welcome the encouraging steps they have taken and their increased transparency. Italy fully supports the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which will strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. We commend the ongoing work of the Group of Eminent Persons to facilitate the process. Italy is deeply involved in this exercise and committed to the goal of a global, legally binding prohibition of all nuclear tests.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) plays a crucial role in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The current deadlock in the disarmament machinery is no longer acceptable. We would therefore like to express our satisfaction at the efforts made during the 2014 session of the Conference on Disarmament to find a way forward to revitalize the work of the CD, and we stand ready to support similar efforts in 2015. In the framework of the Conference, the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material remain a priority. From our perspective, that treaty will promote both disarmament and non-proliferation. We welcome the constructive discussions within the Group of Governmental Experts, in which Italy actively participates, and we hope they will lay the ground for future negotiations.

Italy reaffirms its support for the process leading to the full implementation of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference resolution on the Middle East and the practical steps endorsed by the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Therefore, we reaffirm our support for convening a conference, to be attended by all States of the region, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction on the basis of the arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region. We regret that so far it has not been possible to convene the conference, and we acknowledge with gratitude the tireless efforts of the facilitator, Mr. Laajava. We will continue to support his action, and we call on all States of the region to engage constructively with him.

We note that since the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the issue of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear

weapons has gained attention and has been examined from both the disarmament and non-proliferation perspectives — in particular what the use of such weapons might mean for States and international organizations in terms of risks and response capacity. This issue will be further discussed at the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, in Vienna on 8 and 9 December, which we hope will make a positive contribution to a successful outcome of the next NPT Review Conference, in 2015.

Italy looks forward to achieving a comprehensive, negotiated, long-term settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue. In this prospect, we welcome the Joint Plan of Action reached on 24 November 2013 in Geneva, the Framework for Cooperation between Iran and the IAEA, and Iran's continued implementation of the measures under the Joint Plan of Action. It is vital that Iran engage fully with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues in order to achieve a long-term settlement that builds international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

Italy would like to express its concern over the fact that Syria has yet to remedy its non-compliance with the IAEA safeguards agreement by providing the requested cooperation with the IAEA and signing, bringing into force and implementing an additional protocol as soon as possible. We also condemn all use of chemical weapons in that country.

The recent use of chemical agents reminds us once again of the catastrophic effects of weapons of mass destruction. We consider the plan for the removal and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons the most important multilateral disarmament operation of the last decade. Italy actively contributed to the success of this operation by lending financial support to both the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations, as well as by providing the Gioia Tauro port for the transloading of chemical substances.

Italy fully agrees that the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis are top priorities. In line with recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, we see value in pursuing political commitments, and we support the European Union's proposal for an international voluntary code of conduct. This proposal is one of the transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities contained in the consensus report of the Group of Governmental Experts (see A/68/189), which the General Assembly invited Member States to review and implement in last year's resolution 68/50.

Italy strongly supports the goal of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). Italian health and academic institutions actively participate in international training and capacity-building initiatives on biosecurity and biosafety and other matters related to the BWC.

Italy is likewise fully committed to international efforts to address the humanitarian, socioeconomic and security impacts of conventional weapons with a view to halting their indiscriminate use. In this framework, we actively promote the full implementation of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. We attach great importance to the universalization and national implementation of these Conventions and full compliance with their provisions. We acknowledge the positive role played by confidence-building measures, international cooperation and assistance, as well as by partnerships between States and all the other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Conventions. In this respect, we welcome the fundamental contribution that civil society is providing.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.