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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

Ms. Chan (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

Let me congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau on your assumption of your important duties. It gives us great pleasure to see a representative of a CELAC member State presiding over the First Committee. We would also like to thank the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Dabbashi, for his tireless work as Chairman last year.

Our region has a long-standing tradition of promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. We consider these to be priority issues on the agenda of the United Nations and an essential component in the maintenance of international peace and security. The 33 States members of CELAC stand here today as the first densely populated area in the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone. This was done through the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We are also very proud of the legacy and experience of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) in inspiring the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. In this regard CELAC works closely with OPANAL to achieve a world free of nuclear

weapons and also works with its Secretary-General, Ambassador De Macedo Soares.

The Community is also proud of the formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace on 29 January 2014, on the occasion of the second CELAC Summit, held in Cuba, an historic decision aimed at uprooting forever the use or threat of use of force in our region. Since its inception in 2011, CELAC has renewed the region's long-standing call for and commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. At the second Summit the Community adopted a special communiqué on the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that communiqué, we reaffirmed the importance of general, complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament as one of our highest priorities and reiterated the need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines, security policies and military strategies. We further reiterated that call at the observance of the first-ever International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September. CELAC welcomed the convening of the ministerial meeting to mark that inaugural International Day, aimed at mobilizing international efforts to attain our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

While recalling the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, CELAC reaffirms that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. The Community confirms that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their complete prohibition and elimination.

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The Community expressed its grave concern at the dire humanitarian consequences and global effects of any accidental or intentional nuclear detonation. CELAC urges the international community to reiterate its concern about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons whenever the debate takes place. In this vein, CELAC congratulates Mexico on hosting, in Nayarit earlier this year, the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. We strongly support that Conference's call for an international legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons. We call on all States to participate in the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in Vienna in December this year.

CELAC remains firmly committed to nuclear disarmament and pledges to continue to work towards convening a high-level international conference, no later than 2018, to identify measures and actions to eliminate nuclear weapons in the shortest possible time, with a view to adopting a treaty banning the development, production, procurement, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and providing for their destruction within a multilaterally agreed framework.

CELAC reiterates its call to the international community to begin negotiating and adopting a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances as soon as possible. It is a legitimate interest of all non-nuclear-weapon States, including all 33 CELAC member States, to receive unequivocal and legally binding assurances by nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons. CELAC reiterates its urgent call to nuclear-weapon States to withdraw all interpretative declarations to Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to respect the denuclearized character of Latin America and the Caribbean.

CELAC recalls the importance and validity of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms — the New START Treaty. Notwithstanding positive steps taken by both countries, the progress made so far has been insufficient. CELAC calls for further significant and accelerated reductions, including non-deployed and non-strategic nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner.

Moreover, CELAC rejects the modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons, as such acts are inconsistent with the obligation of nuclear disarmament. Many of these weapons are on high alert status. CELAC urges those States with nuclear weapons on high alert to decrease the operational readiness of their systems, which we believe is a small but necessary step forward.

CELAC reaffirms its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Our Community maintains its firm position in favour of the full implementation of the three main pillars — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — and reiterates that they require a balanced and non-discriminatory implementation. CELAC also confirms the inalienable right of States to develop research, production, and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT. The Community reiterates the commitment of all parties to the Treaty to facilitate and participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

CELAC stresses the importance of achieving universality for the NPT and urges States that have not yet done so to accede to that Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. We urge nuclear-weapon States to fully comply with their obligations to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the NPT and to advance the complete elimination of those weapons. We urge them fully and immediately to implement the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed upon at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference, in particular action 5.

CELAC has long recognized the important role that nuclear-weapon-free zones can play in strengthening regional and international security. So we are greatly concerned that the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has not yet been convened. The Community strongly believes that such a zone would be a significant contribution to the peace process in the Middle East and therefore reiterates its call for the conference to be held as soon as possible, with the active participation of all States in the region, as agreed by the States parties to the NPT in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

Despite the obligations stipulated under article VI, the NPT continues to face many challenges as it seeks nuclear disarmament. That is especially alarming as we approach the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The step-by-step approach has failed to meet the objectives of the Treaty. It has led neither to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) nor to negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty, let alone the requirement for the elimination of nuclear weapons. In this context, CELAC once again calls for the negotiation of an international convention to ban nuclear weapons, to take place as soon as possible.

CELAC reiterates the importance of the early entry into force of the CTBT and urges States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, whose ratification is essential for its entry into force, to accelerate the signature and/or ratification process. We continue to call on all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear-weapon test explosions, any other nuclear explosions, or any other relevant non-explosive experiments, including subcritical tests. Such actions are contrary to the objectives and purpose of the CTBT.

We believe that verifiable nuclear disarmament is imperative in order to build confidence. There is an urgent need to develop adequate and efficient nuclear disarmament verification capabilities and legally binding verification arrangements. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must have a central role in this regard. The IAEA Statute underscores that in carrying out its functions, the Agency shall conduct its activities in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations to promote peace and international cooperation, in conformity with policies of the United Nations on establishing safeguarded worldwide disarmament, and in conformity with any international agreements entered into pursuant to such policies.

CELAC reaffirms the role of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and recognizes the renewal of the mandate of the Working Group, co-chaired by Ecuador, with the objective of producing a robust and progressive programme of work. The Community once again deeply regrets that the CD has not yet been able to agree on its programme of work. CELAC urges all members of the CD to show the political will needed to ensure that it can begin its substantive work without delay by adopting and implementing a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that advances the agenda on nuclear disarmament, including negotiating a

nuclear weapons convention; a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States; an instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space; and a non-discriminatory and multilateral treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, one that would serve both non-proliferation and disarmament purposes.

The Community regrets that the Disarmament Commission was unable to make recommendations during its recently concluded three-year cycle. It is important for the Commission to fulfil its mandate, as set down at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. CELAC calls on all members to show the necessary political will and flexibility to enable it to fulfil its mandate and formulate substantive recommendations to the General Assembly in the upcoming cycle. CELAC is ready to cooperate with all members of the Commission to that end.

CELAC is aware of the urgent need to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, spare parts, components and ammunition. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects deeply affects stability, exacerbates violence and insecurity and undermines respect for international law, causing many deaths every year and absorbing sizeable resources that could be used for development.

Our Community reaffirms the relevance and crucial importance 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 as the global framework for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in such weapons. CELAC is committed to the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. The adoption of the outcome document of the Second Conference to Review the Programme of Action, in 2012, gives the international community a clear goal and timeline to strengthen its efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. CELAC also reiterates the importance of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In the framework of the Programme of Action, CELAC emphasizes that work must continue at the multilateral level to adopt legally binding instruments on marking and tracing and illicit brokering to prevent

the diversion of small arms and light weapons and ammunition to the illicit market. The Community also recognizes the value of addressing the illicit trade in small and light weapons across borders, with full respect for each State's sovereignty over its own borders. Our member States take note the final document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, which was held in June this year, and look forward to participating in the review cycle of the Programme of Action for 2014-2018.

We trust that the first legally binding instrument to eradicate small arms and light weapons will be adopted as soon as possible, given the serious threat to people posed by the trade in small arms and light weapons and the possibility of their diversion to non-State actors or unauthorized users, often linked to transnational organized crime. We hope that the Arms Trade Treaty will contribute to preventing armed conflicts, armed violence and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

At the same time, and in anticipation of the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty in December, CELAC calls for a balanced, transparent and objective implementation that would respect the sovereign right of every State to ensure its legitimate self-defence, in conformity with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. CELAC notes the desire of the Government of Mexico to host the First Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty in 2015. We support regional action to eliminate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and so we have established a working group to study the crime of illicit trade. The working group has a mandate to develop a mechanism and procedures that will enable us to better coordinate our efforts in an effective manner.

Since the adoption in 1997 of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, 24 countries have been declared mine-free, and more than 46 million stockpiled landmines have been destroyed in 87 countries. CELAC welcomes the declaration of Central America as a mine-free zone and notes the Maputo+15 Declaration, adopted at the Third Review Conference of the Convention, in June 2014. We also appreciate the assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Service. We stress the importance of cooperation in demining and providing assistance to victims, and we hope that the successes achieved in recent years will continue.

CELAC supports international efforts to reduce the suffering caused by cluster munitions and their use against civilian populations. It also recognizes and appreciates the desire of any State to take multilaterally agreed immediate steps to address the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions. We note the recent accession of Belize to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the establishment of Central America as a zone free of cluster munitions during the Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, held in San José in September this year.

CELAC believes that the complete elimination of chemical and biological weapons is a priority in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. We emphasize the importance of universal adherence by all States to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the importance of full compliance by all States parties to all of its provisions and requirements.

CELAC welcomes the decision taken by the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to carry out a plan of transportation and destruction of Syrian chemical stockpiles under the control and surveillance of the Organization. This has contributed to eliminating one of the world's last remaining chemical arsenals. We also note the establishment of the OPCW/United Nations Joint Mission, and we are confident that removing chemical weapons from a country where they have been used will deliver valuable humanitarian and security benefits.

CELAC recognizes the progress made with the accession of Syria to the Chemical Weapons Convention and welcomes the complete removal of declared Syrian chemical weapons from its territory. CELAC calls on the six States that remain outside the Convention to become parties to it.

CELAC is convinced that practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons play an important role in contributing to the promotion of understanding, transparency and cooperation among States and in enhancing stability and security, in strict observance of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and respecting their voluntary nature

and the specific security concerns and situations of each State. We recall the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. Our region has taken steps to implement confidence-building measures in conventional arms, which enhance international peace and security. We therefore encourage Member States to strengthen, improve and extend confidence-building measures at all levels, as appropriate.

Our Community welcomes all transparency and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms already voluntarily undertaken by concerned States in their respective regions or subregions, as well as the information on such measures provided on a voluntary basis to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures.

We recognize the opportunities provided by information and communication technologies (ICTs), including social media, as a vehicle to promote a better understanding among nations and to achieve internationally agreed development objectives, and as a tool to promote universal access to information. At the same time we strongly reject any illegal use of ICTs in violation of international law and strongly reject any such action that is directed against any member State. We underscore the importance of safeguarding the use of cyberspace for peaceful purposes and ensuring that the use of ICTs is fully compatible with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law — in particular, respect for the sovereignty of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and the promotion and protection of human rights for all.

CELAC reaffirms its commitment to enhancing transparency in military matters and to improving reporting of military expenditures to the United Nations as an essential step in building confidence and improving international relations. At the same time, and in the light of new challenges to the international community in the areas of social and economic development, including the eradication of poverty, CELAC reminds Member States that resources used for military expenses could be used to support economic and social development.

CELAC wishes to highlight the important work done by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, including assistance provided to

countries in our region to implement disarmament measures in various areas.

We believe that this Committee has important and pressing issues to tackle over the next few weeks. Let us work together to ensure that concrete achievements are reached at this session to help peace, security and disarmament. We are fully aware that a meaningful outcome will be possible only if we have the political will of all States.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): In the interests of time, I shall read out a shorter version of my statement, the full text of which is being distributed.

I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Committee's 2014 session. We have full confidence in your experience and diplomatic skills for carrying out this task successfully. I assure you of the support and cooperation of my delegation.

We associate ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

Since the end of the Cold War, the global security environment has increasingly deteriorated, contrary to general expectations. A just and secure world order continues to elude us. While decades-old disputes persist in several regions of the world, we continue to witness the eruption of new conflicts in others. According to some, we are on the threshold of a new Cold War, ranging from Europe to Asia. The cardinal principle of aspiring to equal and undiminished security for all States is being trumped by narrow, selfish interests as a zero-sum game. The ambition for world domination and hegemony has undermined accommodation and engagement as the basis of a rules-based, cooperative, multipolar world. Absolute security for one State or a group of States cannot come at the cost of diminished security for others.

These developments, coupled with renewed military build-ups and the trend of granting waivers and exceptions to long-held principles have severely damaged the international arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The aspirations and claims to a world free of nuclear weapons do not match practical action on the ground. We continue to observe the application of double standards, exceptionalism and revisionism based on narrow security, political and commercial considerations.

At the same time, new weapons systems are being developed, deployed and used. These include anti-ballistic missiles, non-nuclear strategic weapon systems with a destructive capacity equal to nuclear weapons, armed drones, and lethal autonomous weapon systems. Outer space, the common heritage of all humanity, continues to be threatened by the increasing prospect of weaponization. The hostile use of cybertechnologies, including for espionage and surveillance on other States, is growing.

The existing and emerging challenges to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament need to be addressed collectively, on the basis of cooperative multilateralism. Pakistan, therefore, has consistently called for evolving a renewed global consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, on the basis of equity, balance, restraint and cooperation among States. We recognize that consensus-building will be a difficult task, but as a first step we need to identify the fundamental prerequisites for global security.

First, in our view, is recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) adopted the principle of equal security for all States, in both the non-conventional and conventional fields and at the regional and international levels. This is an essential prerequisite for progress in areas of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament.

Second, we must address the motives that drive States to acquire weapons to defend themselves. These motives include perceived threats from larger conventional or non-conventional forces, the existence of disputes and conflicts with more powerful States, and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

Third, the nuclear-weapon States must demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieving nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame. Without that commitment, the “bargain” of the non-proliferation regime will continue to erode. The eventual objective must be the total elimination of nuclear weapons within the context of a re-energized collective security system.

Fourth, an agreed, criteria-based and non-discriminatory approach must be evolved for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States. The advances in technology have

made it possible to promote proliferation-resistant nuclear technology.

Fifth, until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States should be given assurances that they will not be threatened with the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons through a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty. As a nuclear-weapon State, Pakistan has repeatedly advocated such a treaty.

Sixth, we must evolve a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of anti-ballistic missile systems, which are inherently destabilizing while being of dubious reliability.

Seventh, we must strengthen the international legal regime in order to prevent the militarization of outer space.

Eighth, as a pragmatic step towards disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States need to halt any production and eliminate all stocks of fissile materials, or at least bring them under international safeguards through a fissile material treaty.

Ninth, the development and use of drones and lethal autonomous weapon systems need to be checked and brought under international regulation. Besides the United Nations and its First Committee, the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons also provides a forum in which to address these issues.

Tenth, regional issues that touch on nuclear and missile aspects require approaches that go beyond the traditional framework of disarmament and non-proliferation. We trust that the current controversy relating to the nuclear issues of countries in the Middle East and North-East Asia will be addressed in a cooperative framework.

Eleventh, there is also an urgent need for the balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. As laid down in the Final Document of SSOD-I (resolution A/S-10/2), these negotiations should be conducted with particular emphasis on militarily significant States.

In order to translate these fundamental norms into action for a more secure world, we require efficient arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament machinery. Unfortunately, however, this international machinery is not working. Neither the Conference on Disarmament

(CD) nor the United Nations Disarmament Commission has been able to make progress for more than a decade. In order to make such progress in these forums we must recognize that, first, the CD does not operate in a vacuum and functions under the prevailing political realities, and, secondly, no treaty can be negotiated in the CD that would be detrimental to the security interests of any of its member States. The consensus rule was designed precisely to ensure this point.

A comprehensive revitalization effort is therefore required. A new bargain for the twenty-first century is needed that reflects the existing realities. Pakistan reiterates its support for the long-standing call of the non-aligned countries, which comprise almost two thirds of the United Nations membership, to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That session should aim at an integrated and holistic approach towards achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, keeping in view the security interests of all States.

Mr. Jiménez (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are proud to see a brother from our Latin American and Caribbean region chair the Committee. The delegation of Nicaragua is happy to congratulate you, Sir, on your election and wish you every success. I also assure you of our full support. I should also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

My delegation associates itself with statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2), and of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) earlier today.

The promotion of peace and the preservation of international security is a fundamental part of the foreign policy of the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity headed by our President, Comandante Daniel Ortega Saavedra, as is the promotion of human development, understood as sustainable development.

At the domestic and Central American levels, it is our policy to ensure security for all our citizens and combat the scourges of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, which undermine the very foundations of our society.

Nicaragua has pointed out before the international community the importance of continuing to make progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament, including not only nuclear weapons but

also other conventional weapons of mass destruction, the use of which is contrary to the basic principles of international law and international humanitarian law.

It is therefore unacceptable that the world today sees more money spent on the development and testing weapons of all kinds than on promoting development for human beings. This is taking place as millions of people are suffering the impact of the economic crisis and poverty, and from sicknesses such as the Ebola virus — and our brothers and sisters in West Africa need resources to deal with that scourge — and yet military expenditure is currently growing every day at a dizzying rate.

It is urgent to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world and general and complete disarmament. We therefore welcome the proclamation of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, based on an initiative by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, with a view to fulfilling the call for States to start negotiations on a convention with a definite timeline for the elimination of nuclear weapons. The high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament scheduled for 2018 would be the ideal place for proposing a timeline. That will indeed be a historic day when the international community can together express its hope for a world free from nuclear weapons so that all those who live on Mother Earth can be saved from a nuclear — and ultimately humanitarian—catastrophe.

We support efforts to prioritize humanitarian concerns in the debate on nuclear weapons. In that connection, we commend Mexico on hosting the second International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. We strongly support the call made there for an international, legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. We urge all States to attend the third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in Vienna in December.

With respect to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Nicaragua is a State party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Moreover, my country is part of the first regional initiative that has declared a densely populated area as a zone free of nuclear weapons, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

We welcome the historic formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace,

on 29 January at the second CELAC Summit, held in Cuba, with a view to eliminating once and for all the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in our region. That includes a resolute commitment by the States of the region to nuclear disarmament as a priority goal. A call has been issued for a re-assessment of resolutions and declarations on this matter with a view to limiting the arms race and seeking ways of ensuring the complete elimination of nuclear weapons under an international, transparent and effective monitoring, all while reiterating that an immediate and complete halt to all nuclear testing would be the most effective step towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The terrible impact on human beings and on the environment caused by the more than 2,000 nuclear tests carried out since 1945 is still being felt in many parts of the world. That situation must be corrected.

Nicaragua respects every State's inalienable right to research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination and in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We urge the International Atomic Energy Agency to increase nuclear and radiological security by bolstering international nuclear safety preparedness and response standards in order to respond appropriately to any emergency, particularly in respect of protecting people and the environment from radiation. In that way, the Agency will be able to respond with full scientific knowledge and complete transparency appropriately in the event of another nuclear accident occurring.

The international community needs to take concrete steps, above all the immediate implementation by the nuclear-weapon States of their commitments under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as well as of the 13 practical steps to nuclear disarmament agreed in 2000 and in the Action Plan on nuclear disarmament adopted in 2010. We reiterate our desire for the negotiation and conclusion of a universal, legally binding, unconditional instrument on security assurances for all non-nuclear-weapon States, regardless of the type of weapon or where it is located. In that connection, we take note of the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and a violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Nicaragua resolutely believes that establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones could help to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, peace and international

security. That would be an important contribution to achieving nuclear disarmament. In that regard, our country regrets that there has been no implementation of the agreement to convene an international conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The reiterate that the holding of such a conference would be an important element of the final outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We urge all parties to convene it as soon as possible.

As a State party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, Nicaragua rejects the use of such weapons under any circumstances by anybody. We note the political will reflected in the decision of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to become party to the Convention, as well as its cooperation with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. That made it possible to successfully destroy all chemical weapons there and to carry out a work plan in a remarkable way. We trust that this will not only contribute to achieving a zone free of chemical weapons, but also make such a development universal and lead other States to follow this example, especially those in the region.

My country has committed itself and taken relevant steps towards preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in weapons. Mindful of its commitments to peace, including with regard to combating and preventing the illicit trafficking in weapons, Nicaragua and its peace-loving people have included in our national legislation the relevant Programme of Action and the International Tracing System. We have done so via special law No. 510, on the control and regulation of firearms, munitions, explosives and other related materials. This begins a new chapter that includes a robust plan to control and register civilian firearms, as well as to decommission military weapons. Those steps have enabled us to strengthen security in our country and yielded positive results as we struggle against organized crime and drug trafficking.

The recent United Nations Development Programme study entitled *Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America* indicates that Nicaragua is one of six countries with improved security indicators in Latin America, and the most secure in Central America. It also points out that the murder rate stands at 8.7 per 100,000 inhabitants. We reiterate that international assistance and cooperation,

including the relevant means of implementation, are essential to ensuring the success of the programme of action.

Nicaragua adhered to and ratified — and subsequently deposited its instrument of ratification on — the Convention on Cluster Munitions, an international legal instrument prohibiting the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of such weapons, which have a particular impact on civilians and produce suffering and death, including among women and children, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. We commend Belize on its recent accession to the Convention. We also welcome the establishment of Central America as an area free of cluster munitions, as declared at the fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Nicaragua is also making a further contribution towards promoting international peace and security by way of its participation in the Central American Integration System. Moreover, we are a State party to the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, as well as many regional legal instruments that reflect our devotion to peace..

Nicaragua was also proud to be among those leading the global fight against anti-personnel landmines. Having carried out a successful demining programme, Nicaragua and all of Central America are now the first subregion of the world to be free of mines. We underscore the importance of cooperation in the areas of demining and assistance for victims. We hope that the success of recent years will continue in future.

Nicaragua believes that the use of new information and communication technologies must be fully in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We therefore express our concern about, and rejection of, the covert and illegal use by individuals, organizations and States of the computer systems of other nations to commit aggression against third countries, even developing countries, given its potential to provoke international conflict.

The current deadlock in the disarmament machinery is due to the lack of political will on the part of some States. That is a real problem in making real progress on nuclear disarmament. As President Ortega Saavedra has said,

“Unfortunately, today’s world is one in which selfishness, individualism and the interests of those

who refuse to renounce nuclear weapons continue to prevail. And those who refuse to renounce nuclear weapons are thus those who refuse to save the planet. There are enough nuclear weapons to destroy our planet 100 or even 1,000 times over. Their position therefore comes as no surprise when we try to take up issues having to do with the environment and climate change — when instead betting on life they continue to wager on death.”

It is against the backdrop of such complex situations that we must work here in the First Committee in order to continue to build a world of peace. It is never too late if we have the will to change things.

The Chair: I should like to extend a warm welcome to the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, who is here today to share some thoughts with us on the work of the First Committee.

The President, as members know, is an accomplished diplomat who has made remarkable contributions to global efforts to advance the multilateral agenda on disarmament and international peace and security. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country, a post he has held since 2005, he has been actively involved in issues related to international peace and security, particularly during Uganda’s participation in the work of the Security Council between 2009 and 2010, when the Council considered pressing peace and security challenges, including those relating to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. During the same period, the President chaired the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, which addressed the consolidation of peace and stability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He also played a key role in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development’s regional peace process in the Sudan and South Sudan and in stabilization efforts in Somalia.

While convening the ministerial-level informal meeting of the General Assembly on 26 September 2014 to mark the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the President spoke directly to a recurring theme in First Committee deliberations, saying:

“The sobering prospect of the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons anywhere on our planet is a reminder of the need to work urgently and with determination to prohibit and eliminate these weapons once and for all.”

His pledge to work with Member States during this session to translate commitments into action in this regard is very encouraging to the disarmament community and should further energize our deliberations here in the First Committee. On behalf of all delegations, it is a signal honour for me to welcome him to this meeting, and I now invite him to address the Committee.

Mr. Kutesa (Uganda), President of the General Assembly: It is my pleasure to address the First Committee as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. Let me start by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur, on your election and stewardship of the Committee.

The matters addressed by this Committee are of the utmost importance to the international community and the work of the United Nations as a whole. A peaceful and secure world is the basic building block required for all peoples to enjoy lives of safety, prosperity and dignity. Our collective efforts towards arms control and disarmament are a fundamental component of the work of the United Nations under the peace and security pillar, and have broad implications for many other aspects of the Organization's work.

As we prepare to open a new chapter in history, we simply cannot fulfil our promise of a more sustainable and prosperous future without ensuring peace and security for all. We cannot send children to school, feed the hungry, provide care for the sick and develop our infrastructures and economies if weapons, wars and conflicts continue to divert our time, energy and resources. True security is based on people's welfare — a growing economy, strong public health and education programmes and on fundamental respect for our common humanity.

The reality we face today is that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, whether they are biological, chemical or radiological, pose a threat to our very existence. As I have said before, the sobering prospect of the disastrous consequences of their use anywhere on our planet reminds us all to work with urgency and determination to prohibit and eliminate them once and for all. With the rise of terrorism, the possibility that these weapons, even in the most basic form, could fall into the hands of terrorists has added to the need to confront this danger by preventing proliferation and promoting disarmament.

As I said on 26 September, in line with resolution 68/32, which was introduced in this Committee, I convened the first commemorative meeting of the General Assembly marking the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. The day was significant because it reminded us all of the grave dangers associated with these weapons and the need to respond to the threats they pose to international peace and security. The same resolution called for an international conference on nuclear disarmament to be held no later than 2018. In this regard, I offer my good offices to work with Member States so we can lay a solid foundation for convening that conference.

I look forward to the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which will be held in December in Vienna. As a follow-up to the Second Conference held in Mexico, the Vienna meeting will be an opportunity to place the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons at the forefront of the discussions on nuclear disarmament. I am convinced that by focusing on the humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons, we can provide greater impetus to achieving nuclear disarmament.

It is essential that we work collectively to advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) represents an important, binding commitment to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and advancing the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament. The NPT Review Conference in May will present an opportunity to take stock of our efforts across the three pillars of the Treaty and to consider the next steps with a view to further strengthening the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The revitalization of the disarmament machinery remains an area where we need to see more progress. While the Open Working Group is engaged in discussions in a collaborative and interactive manner, further work will be needed to bring the entire United Nations membership into this process and advance multilateral negotiations.

Throughout the world, conventional weapons continue to pose a significant threat to peace and security. We must pay due attention to the scourge of small arms and light weapons and vigorously pursue our common endeavours to reduce armed violence, increase human security and promote sustainable development.

Small arms destabilize communities, destroy countless lives and hamper development efforts. The human, social and economic costs demand that we all strengthen our commitment to curbing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In this regard, I welcome the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty this coming December, which will provide a framework for improving the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms and preventing and eradicating their illicit trade. The implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects represents another important element in our collective efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Each requires the active participation of all peoples, men and women alike.

The Charter of the United Nations elaborates the important role of regional arrangements or agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security. In the area of regional disarmament and security, confidence-building measures have proved their utility and efficacy. The role of such organizations is indispensable in this regard. The international framework should take into account regional efforts to enhance disarmament initiatives in support of the broader global security agenda.

Moving forward, I encourage all representatives to pursue their deliberations in a spirit of dialogue and compromise. In this endeavour, they can count on my support and cooperation.

The Chair: On behalf of the Committee, I thank the President of the General Assembly once again for his presence among us today and for his insightful statement.

The Committee will now hear from the remaining speakers on the list for the general debate.

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): First I should like to thank the President of the General Assembly for his presence and for the inspiring statement he made to this meeting. I should also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I am confident that your able leadership and diplomatic experience will lead the Committee towards a successful conclusion. I assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation and wish you success.

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

Threats and challenges are an integral part of our world. Among them, the threat posed by the continued existence of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons is paramount. These inhumane weapons are the means of mass and indiscriminate killing and destruction. Tens of thousands of nuclear weapons are not just in storage; they are associated with the strategies and war plans that contemplate their use under certain circumstances. As long as the idea of achieving security with nuclear weapons forms the foundation of the military doctrines of a few States, such weapons remain an ever-present threat to the whole of humankind.

The spread of the nuclear-weapon threat is contained by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That is an achievement that must be protected, but the NPT is not premised upon only one pillar. Commitment to the elimination of the source of threat is another pillar of the Treaty. It was promised at the time of the conclusion of the NPT that the threat of nuclear weapons, particularly against non-nuclear nations, would be removed in all its aspects, including through the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Not only has this threat persisted until now, but we are also witnessing a lack of progress, even at a slow pace, in delivering on that promise as a result of the continued non-compliance of nuclear-weapon States with their legal obligations under article VI of the NPT.

It is a matter of serious concern that there is no indication that nuclear-weapon States are advancing on the path towards fulfilment of their obligations on nuclear disarmament. For the sake of humankind, it is imperative to move beyond rhetoric and adopt a responsible policy. Saying one thing and doing another is not a responsible policy for honouring the legal obligations on nuclear disarmament. It is duplicity. That is why an overwhelming majority of States that have already spoken during the general debate in this room rightly question the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to nuclear disarmament. The international community has the right to be assured that the nightmare that was visited upon the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will never befall any other community.

Non-compliance with nuclear disarmament obligations, if not stopped, will gradually erode trust in the NPT.

Compliance with treaties and commitments in the field of disarmament should not be subject to self-defined conditions. Otherwise, a truly global consensus on the issue of compliance will not be forged. It is not acceptable to be a champion of compliance in words but at the same time to defy compliance in action. The issue of compliance with the nuclear disarmament obligation under article VI of the NPT needs to be addressed as a priority in the agenda of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

Next spring, the 2015 NPT Review Conference will provide a good opportunity to test whether nuclear-weapon States take their responsibilities seriously in addressing the concerns of the international community with respect to the threat arising from their nuclear arsenals. A piecemeal approach to nuclear disarmament has already been tested, with no result. We believe that the most effective and practical way to achieve and sustain the abolition of nuclear weapons is to negotiate a comprehensive, binding, irreversible and verifiable nuclear-weapons convention. To date, all achievements in eliminating whole categories of biological and chemical weapons have been made possible through such a treaty approach. At the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament held in 2013, the Non-Aligned Movement's proposal to commence negotiation on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon convention in the Conference on Disarmament gained wide support.

The lack of resolve by nuclear-weapon States systematically and progressively to move towards the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons has impeded meaningful activity within the disarmament machinery with regard to nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament has not been able to conduct its negotiating mandate for the past 18 years because some nuclear-weapon States block the adoption of a balanced programme of work involving the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

The establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East has been an important objective and priority for the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as for all other peace-loving nations of our region. Given the fact that the existence of nuclear weapons in the hands of the Israeli regime continues to pose a serious threat to the peace and security of the NPT States parties in the Middle East, the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is all the more important.

Everybody in the region is aware of the dangerous and violent nature of the Israeli regime and the pattern of conduct of its leaders. Aggression, occupation and the perpetration of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity are integral characteristics of a regime that is armed with nuclear weapons. During the recent aggression against the Palestinian people in Gaza, the leaders of Israel clearly demonstrated that they can easily abandon their sense of humanity and violate norms and commitments of international law and international humanitarian law.

Israel continues to be the only impediment in the way of realizing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Due to Israel's refusal, the 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons did not convene. The prospect for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East can be enhanced when certain nuclear-weapon States abandon their long-standing policy of exempting that regime from adhering to the NPT. One of the main areas of focus at the 2015 NPT Review Conference will be the review of the status of implementation of the 1995 resolution and related measures contained in the follow-up actions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

While fully adhering to its legal obligations under international law, Iran is committed to exercising its full nuclear rights, including enrichment, for peaceful purposes within the framework of the NPT. This policy is based on long-term planning to meet the growing energy needs of the country. Some have tried to cast doubt on the commitment of the Islamic Republic of Iran to nuclear non-proliferation. To prove them wrong, over the past 12 months we have engaged in earnest and serious negotiations to build confidence regarding Iran's peaceful nuclear programme. We believe that the differences over Iran's peaceful nuclear programme can be resolved only through negotiations. Those who may think of any other way out are either making a serious mistake or have a vested interest in furthering the schemes of the warmongers who seek to create further difficulties for our region and beyond.

We are determined to continue negotiations with our interlocutors in the P5+1 in earnest and good faith, based on mutual respect and the removal of concerns of both sides. It is a common view that a durable comprehensive agreement would be beneficial to all sides. A mutually agreed solution could be attainable if the other sides, like Iran, were to negotiate in good

faith, take into account the realities on the ground and avoid looking for impracticalities. A comprehensive deal would provide the other side with what they look for, namely, assurances through sustained transparency that Iran's nuclear programme remains exclusively peaceful. A comprehensive and fair agreement would undoubtedly enhance the credibility and integrity of the NPT, which would amount to a major boost for the international non-proliferation regime.

Where there is a will there is a way to overcome the challenges and move towards the established goals and priorities of the international community in the field of disarmament. We hope that our deliberations in this Committee will contribute to upholding internationally agreed norms and principles and to the advancement of our common objectives.

Mr. Phansourivong (Lao People's Democratic Republic): On behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee, and the other members of the Bureau. I wish to assure you of our full support and cooperation in the discharge of your duties.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representative of the Republic of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of the Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). However, I should like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

With today's unpredictable world security environment, the international community needs to see improvement in the field of disarmament and international security. Obligations that were agreed in the past remain unfulfilled. The lack of political will and collective effort continues to be the main challenge to progress in the field of disarmament. The tasks that we must undertake to ensure a safe future for the next generations are therefore daunting.

The continued existence of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and their possible use or threat of use by terrorists and non-State actors remain a matter of concern. The Lao People's Democratic Republic reiterates its view that only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons can the international community absolutely guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons. Therefore, the Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the

first General Assembly informal ministerial meeting to observe the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, held on 26 September. Following the successful convening of the first ever High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament in 2013, we believe that maintaining this momentum will move us forward to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The destructive power of nuclear weapons and the threat they pose to the environment and human survival are unique, as any use of such weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. The Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo and Nayarit, Mexico, and will participate constructively in the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons.

Universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) would certainly contribute to the promotion of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. However, 18 years after it was adopted, the CTBT remains ineffective. It is therefore the duty of the international community to ensure the entry into force of that Treaty, and we have to be optimistic. In this context, we hope that those who have not yet done so will sign and ratify the CTBT at the earliest date.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones has significantly contributed to the strengthening of global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, as well as to enhancing regional and global peace and security. The Lao People's Democratic Republic wishes to reiterate that it is essential that nuclear-weapon States recognize these zones and provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zones. We also wish to re-emphasize the importance of the full operation of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and to encourage the nuclear-weapon States to accede to its Protocol at the earliest date possible. Furthermore, I am pleased to state that the Lao People's Democratic Republic has completed its internal process and will sign the International Atomic Energy Agency Additional Protocol in early November, on the occasion of the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in Vienna.

While focusing on the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation, we cannot afford to ignore the challenge posed by conventional

weapons, in particular cluster munitions, which also pose a threat to peace, human security and development because of their devastating impact on civilians, both at the time of use and long afterwards. As one of the countries most affected by the explosive remnants of war, especially cluster munitions, the Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the progress made thus far in the universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We encourage further efforts in this regard, and call upon those States that have not acceded to this Convention to consider doing so. We welcome the successful outcome of the Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, held from 2 to 5 September in San José, and look forward to the Convention's First Review Conference, in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in September 2015, where States parties will review the progress made in the implementation of the 2010-2015 Vientiane Action Plan and consider the way forward.

To date, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation have progressed at a very slow pace. Expenditures on armaments have skyrocketed, while the human race is struggling in extreme poverty. The Lao People's Democratic Republic stresses the need for a strong political will and collective efforts to overcome this difficult impasse and to re-emphasize the multilateral approach to realizing the ultimate goal of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Although a small country with limited resources, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is party to a number of international instruments on disarmament and is fully committed to the fulfilment of its international obligations under these treaties.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic strongly believes that the political will and flexibility of Member States are imperative for progressive development in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as for overcoming the challenges faced by the international community. Much more effort is required on the part of every country to work closely together to achieve the common goals so that the world can be free from fear from the threats posed by all kinds of weapons. My delegation will therefore continue to contribute constructively to the work of this Committee.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to convey to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau the most heartfelt congratulations of the Kingdom of Morocco upon your election to lead the work of the First Committee, and to assure you of the full cooperation of my country.

Our deliberations are taking place in an international context that is marked by the tragic and serious turn taken by the terrorist threat, requiring the strengthening of international cooperation to find responses that are adequate and adapted to that universal challenge. Collective security also requires a renunciation of proliferation and a commitment to disarmament, failing which the risk of terrorist groups or non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction will no longer be merely hypothetical.

It is no longer sufficient to make annual assessments before this Committee of the lethargy of nuclear disarmament mechanisms and the absence of genuine progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. We remain convinced that nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction do not guarantee security or effective stability at the regional and international levels. The security of all lies in dialogue, mutual respect and the elaboration of economic partnerships conducive to effective and sustainable human development.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction poses an ongoing, high-risk threat that continues to cloud the future of the world. The irreversible consequences of the use of nuclear weapons on the environment and human life call on us to make serious progress towards the prohibition of the only weapons of mass destruction that do not have a universal prohibiting norm. In that context, the Kingdom of Morocco welcomes the process of Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons and will continue to participate in them. We hope that the Vienna Conference in 2015 will provide new momentum to this process so as to ensure that it yields genuine added value to efforts aimed at achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

All countries wedded to the promotion of multilateralism and to the defence of international legality agree on the importance of the effective implementation of all the provisions of international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties so as to build a world of peace and security for all. To this end, it is our shared duty to spare no effort for the achievement of the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains the cornerstone of the global disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime, and of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference adopted a plan of 22 actions to achieve general and verifiable nuclear disarmament. The implementation of the action plan and all the commitments undertaken is of capital importance. However, we regret the absence of substantial progress in the implementation of these measures, and we believe that despite the efforts made we remain far from the launch of a genuine process of disarmament that would lead to a world free of nuclear weapons.

The measures advocated by the decisions of the review conferences are contracts, the full respect for which will enable us to make progress collectively towards the achievement of the objectives of the NPT. It is in this spirit that efforts will need to be stepped up to ensure the success of the current NPT review process. The simple reaffirmation of principles and commitments already undertaken would not constitute real success. The Conference of May 2015 should serve as an opportunity to achieve a breakthrough by advocating effective measures, including in the field of disarmament.

There is no doubt that the universality of a treaty as important as the NPT serves the common objective of collective security. Morocco underscores the importance of accession to the NPT and the conclusion of broad safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by all the States of the region of the Middle East, including Israel. We believe it crucial to convene without further delay an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, in implementation of the plan of action for the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. Such a conference would offer an historic opportunity to launch a process that would rid the region of weapons of mass destruction and strengthen peace and regional security.

Morocco is firmly convinced that the establishment of a world free of nuclear weapons will require the effective operationalization of the United Nations mechanisms responsible for disarmament, especially the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The strengthened effectiveness of these mechanisms hinges on the political will of States and respect for obligations and commitments undertaken.

We share the conclusion that the problems of the CD are political in nature. We call for flexibility to enable the Conference to reach agreement on a balanced

programme of work that would enable it to play its full role as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum whose mandate was established by the 1978 special session devoted to disarmament. My delegation remains ready to consider in a constructive spirit any proposal or initiative aimed at breathing new life into the disarmament mechanisms, including by breaking the deadlock in the CD. Morocco remains attached to the integrity of the CD mandate.

Along the same lines, the First Committee is called upon to continue discussions on ways to reinforce and strengthen the effectiveness of its work. Our delegation, which has submitted a number of proposals on this issue, will contribute actively to the informal consultations that we have proposed that you, Sir, should lead at this session.

The conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 and the declaration of moratoriums on nuclear tests reflect the awareness of the international community regarding the need to put an end to these tests and to prepare the ground for general and complete disarmament. However, the achievement of that objective continues to hinge on the entry into force of the Treaty and the conclusion of its universality so as to make the ban on nuclear testing irreversible, transparent and verifiable. In this respect, the ratification of the Treaty by the nuclear Powers is critical to the achievement of this objective. Its universality would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and lead to the building of a world free of nuclear weapons. Morocco is encouraged by the new ratifications and expresses the hope that this momentum can have the necessary impact among the other annex 2 States.

It is crucial that the non-proliferation obligations, safety norms and measures in terms of nuclear security established by international institutions be scrupulously and universally respected. All States must honour the commitments to which they have subscribed in full sovereignty. Morocco endorses the central role of the IAEA in these fields and calls for support for its efforts and for strengthening its financial and human capacities.

As we adapt to new global challenges, the strengthening of nuclear security and safety norms should not, however, be used as obstacles to the development and peaceful use of nuclear energy for economic and social development. The Kingdom of Morocco accords particular importance to the exchange

of information and experience, as well as to the strengthening of international and regional cooperation in the field of nuclear security and in the fight against the illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials. To that end, the Kingdom of Morocco participates in a number of international initiatives, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Summit process.

The uncontrolled circulation and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, above and beyond the suffering and human tragedy they unleash, represent a genuine challenge to the stability, security and development of States, especially in Africa. Morocco believes that regional and subregional cooperation represents an essential lever in the fight against the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons. The current alarming situation in the Sahelo-Saharan region as a result of the development and illicit trafficking of weapons of all types, including small arms and light weapons, and existing links between arms-trafficking networks and terrorist groups prompt us more than ever before to step up our efforts to strengthen cooperation among States of the region on the basis of an inclusive approach.

In this context, Morocco hosted the second regional ministerial conference on border security, with the participation of States of northern Africa and the Sahelo-Saharan area, as well as regional and international partners. The conference re-energized the ongoing commitment of the Kingdom to security and stability in Africa, which has been impacted by a rise in the activities of terrorist groups and transnational criminal networks. Morocco is convinced that the security of border areas hinges on the redynamization of relations among neighbouring States and international partners in the framework of a regular and positive dialogue.

It is also in this spirit that the Kingdom firmly supports the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument. Morocco welcomes the success of the Fifth Biennial Meeting States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in June, and pays tribute to the efforts of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan as Chairman of the Meeting.

Finally, Morocco reiterates its appreciation of the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2117 (2013) on small arms and light weapons, through

which it has reaffirmed its support for instruments and international processes that will contribute to the prevention of and the fight against the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. Morocco welcomes the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty. Morocco remains convinced that in order to ensure that this instrument achieves its objective, it is essential to ensure its transparent and fair implementation in full respect of legitimate States to acquire the means to defend their independence, unity and territorial integrity.

We believe that disarmament, non-proliferation and security remain at the very core of the concerns of the international community. The many and varied challenges ahead require us all to show the necessary political will and to pool our efforts, thereby demonstrating our firm attachment to multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation. Peace through disarmament is a common good of humankind, and we should spare no effort for the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons and less inclined to engage in an arms race, to the detriment of the fight against poverty, pandemics and the deterioration of our environment.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At the outset, on behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I congratulate Ambassador Rattray on his election as Chair of this very important First Committee. My delegation is fully confident that under his able leadership and with his very rich experience, this session will have a successful result.

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

In building a peaceful and prosperous world, the nuclear disarmament issue remains the first, foremost and very important issue. It is true that until today the policies of hegemonism and strength of the Cold War, together with the demonstration of a strong arm, a continuation of blackmail and the use of the means of war, are continuing to be repeated in an undisguised manner and translated into real action.

It is also true that the largest nuclear-weapon State in particular is continuing to blackmail with nuclear weapons one dignified United Nations Member State on the grounds of opening so-called annual nuclear war exercises targeted against that country, despite the unanimous demands of the international community.

To make things worse, a policy based on nuclear weapons and double standards is making the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and other disarmament-related conventions and treaties meaningless and is driving the entire world towards a nuclear arms race.

The approach of this largest nuclear-weapon State cannot be justified, whatever its case is. It ignores its own nuclear disarmament obligations while continuing to consistently blackmail others with nuclear weapons and to question peaceful nuclear activities and the right to the peaceful use of outer space for purposes, just because the policies of these countries are not in line with its own policies, Unfair international relations whereby one country behaves as an offender using nuclear blackmail and one country is subjected to that nuclear blackmail as a victim should no longer be tolerated.

We all recognize that the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and other United Nations disarmament-related bodies remain paralysed due to the rejection of nuclear disarmament by 13 countries, which present only one side of the non-proliferation issues. The First Committee, in line with the desire of the international community for a nuclear-weapon-free world, should attach priority first and foremost to moving nuclear disarmament forward. The most important thing in this direction is for the nuclear Powers with the largest nuclear-weapon stockpiles to stand at the forefront. The passive approach of the nuclear Powers, which leave their own very aggressive nuclear doctrines as they are today with only a passive reduction of nuclear warheads on a little-by-little basis, can be interpreted as a mockery of the international community.

As immediate steps towards nuclear disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States should first take real actions and measures such as the elimination of nuclear threats, the withdrawal of nuclear weapons deployed overseas, the withdrawal of the nuclear umbrella extended over other countries, and the immediate suspension of nuclear war exercises targeted against other countries. At the same time, the nuclear Powers should abandon their nuclear doctrine based on a pre-emptive nuclear strike and should make an unconditional political and legal commitment not to use nuclear weapons first.

Along with this, the nuclear Powers should also respond to the appeal of the non-aligned countries and developing countries for the early opening of the fourth

special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. President Kim Il Sung, the great leader of the entire Korean people, a long time ago advanced the idea and initiative of turning the entire world into a nuclear-weapon-free world and zone of peace. He dedicated all his efforts and devotion to its realization. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea welcomes actively the initiatives of the international community towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and we strongly support all efforts to that end.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is the product of the hostile policy and nuclear blackmail of the United States. The nuclear weapons of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are defensive and are a more than justifiable means of response to the nuclear blackmail and hostile policies that are consistently being conducted against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They cannot be regarded as a threat to other countries that are on friendly terms with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We are witnessing the consistent continuation of aggravated tension on the Korean peninsula in a vicious cycle. That is totally because of the hostile policy of the United States and the aggressive nature of the joint military and nuclear exercises targeted at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. As long as the hostile policy of the United States continues against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, nobody can expect peace and security on the Korean peninsula or in the region, nor can anybody expect a settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

This consistent policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will make the issue of reopening dialogue more and more difficult. For as long as the United States continues to pose a consistent nuclear-weapon blackmail threat against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has no other option but to move towards strengthening its nuclear deterrence. That is the sovereign right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for defensive purposes that nobody can block.

The Chair returned to the Chair.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has never recognized the so-called resolution of the Security Council targeted at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Once again, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea clarifies

its position very clearly. Once again it totally rejects that resolution.

As far as the missile defence system is concerned, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea rejects any attempt to militarize outer space, including the establishment of a missile defence system targeted at certain countries. The peaceful use of nuclear energy and outer space development are the sovereign right of a sovereign State. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea attaches great importance to the building of a self-reliant nuclear energy industry of its own, regarding that element as an important part of the energy settlement in the country. It is making a great effort for the construction of a nuclear light reactor industry of its own and the production of nuclear fuel in the country.

The peaceful use of outer space is the sovereign right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. At the same time it is a legitimate right exercised in line with international law and regulations as a State party to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. Under the national outer space development programme, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in future will continue to launch satellites that are badly needed for national economic development, and to provide maximum transparency, as we have done in the past, in line with international regulations and established practices.

As a responsible nuclear-weapon State, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will fully honour its own duty and will make an active contribution towards international global efforts in favour of the peace and security of the Korean peninsula and the world, and the common prosperity of humankind.

Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal): Allow me first, Sir, to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Committee at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, and through you to congratulate the other members of the Committee's Bureau on their respective elections. I am confident that with your substantive acumen and distinguished diplomatic career, you will steer the Committee's work to a fruitful conclusion. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the discharge of your important responsibilities to that end.

Nepal associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

International peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation have always been at the top of the United Nations agenda, and Nepal attaches great significance to the work of this Committee on these and related important items. Nepal strongly supports the general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical weapons, in a time-bound manner. Nepal has been consistently advocating the promotion of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, in order to contribute significantly towards, first, maintaining international peace, security and stability, and secondly, freeing up the precious resources for much-needed social and economic development, particularly for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

The effects and impact of weapons of mass destruction know no national or regional boundaries, and the consequences of large-scale nuclear disasters pervade all sectors, economies and territories. Any detonation of a nuclear arsenal comes with catastrophic and long-term consequences for human life and the environment. No Power is immune to the menace of such disasters. The world community should therefore continue to question, with greater vigour, the persisting existence of the stockpile of nuclear warheads and the systems for their delivery, as well as attempts at continued proliferation. The international community should rise to its responsibility of forging a solid global commitment to the cause of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their time-bound elimination.

Nepal is convinced that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons can provide an absolute guarantee against their use. Pending that, effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable negative security assurances should be guaranteed by nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Nepal supports the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and underscores the importance of strong and reliable measures for nuclear safety and security. While emphasizing the importance of the peaceful uses of outer space, we firmly stand for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Nepal condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere in the world. As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), Nepal urges the elimination of all stockpiles of nuclear and chemical weapons as soon as possible.

Nepal supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the various regions as critical steps forward to give disarmament a genuine meaning, and welcomes any effort to establish zones free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Nepal attaches high importance to the multilateral negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to promoting collective ownership, deliberations and responsibility for collective global action. The Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, must be revitalized without delay, in both its structure and working methods, and must be utilized to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations, including on the early conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty, which Nepal firmly stands for.

The proliferation of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has taken the lives of millions and become a source of sustaining conflicts and exacerbating armed violence in various parts of the world. Its deep nexus with transnational organized crime cannot be overemphasized. In this connection, we welcome the recent adoption in New York of a consensus outcome document highlighting the international community's renewed commitment to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Nepal also hopes that the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty by 53 States last month and its subsequent coming into effect from December this year will go a long way to ensuring international regulatory control in the trade of conventional arms through a legally binding instrument.

Terrorism has become a curse to the maintenance of international peace and security. In particular, it gives rise to the risk of dangerous weapons falling into the wrong hands. On this, the position of Nepal was clearly outlined by the Right Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Sushil Koirala in his statement in the General Assembly general debate last month when he said:

“Terrorism is anathema to humankind. It is a serious threat to peace, security and development. Nepal unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We share the concern about the growing scourges of terrorism, extremism and religious fundamentalism.” (*A/69/PV.14, p. 1*)

Accordingly, we urge the effective implementation of the provisions of the United Nations global counter-terrorism measures and the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We continue to believe that terrorism can be better tackled with a coordinated global response under the aegis of the United Nations.

As the host to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, Nepal believes that much more could be accomplished by revitalizing the Kathmandu process of facilitating dialogue and deliberations to foster understanding, cooperation and confidence-building in the region and beyond, thus enabling the Centre to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. The Centre continues to promote dialogue and confidence-building by organizing conferences and seminars on thematic issues, undertaking projects for capacity-building, strengthening its outreach and enhancing the advocacy role to create a conducive environment in which to deal with the challenges in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

While the Centre is making a good effort to promote regional discourses on the important agenda of peace and disarmament, it relies heavily on voluntary contributions for its programmes. Nepal is committed to strengthening the Centre as an effective United Nations entity, dedicated to international peace and security, and calls for an enhanced level of support for the Centre from the international community, especially on the part of the Member States from the Asia-Pacific region.

As in previous years, along with other sponsoring countries, Nepal will soon introduce to this Committee a draft resolution entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”. My delegation looks forward to the continued support of all delegations for the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, as has always been the case.

My delegation engages constructively regarding the issues of the free flow of information and the right to privacy, including on matters of governance and cyber security.

This Committee, being a true multilateral and inclusive deliberative forum, has an important responsibility to guide the course of disarmament, non-proliferation and international peace and security. My delegation is confident that under your able leadership, Sir, the Committee will continue to devote its time and energy to broadening understanding, creating consensus and building confidence among Member States, with a view to making the world a safe, stable, peaceful and prosperous place for all to live in.

Ms. Peña (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, may I say how pleased my delegation is to see you, Sir, chairing this session of the First Committee. I also welcome other members of the Bureau and representatives of the Secretariat. I assure you of the support of my delegation and its commitment to achieving a successful outcome of the deliberations of the Committee.

Peru associates itself with statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.2) and of Costa Rica earlier today on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Peru is a peace-loving country and a party to international instruments on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. We look forward to the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in December. That instrument is very important to my country, as it will allow the regulation of the international trade in small arms and light weapons, munitions and explosives. Peru signed the Treaty in September; we are currently engaged in domestic consultations with a view to ratifying it as soon as possible. We welcome the leadership role of Mexico in preparing for the First Conference of States Parties to the ATT, and welcome Germany's offer to host the second round of consultations in Berlin in late November.

Given the concern of the international community over the manufacture, transfer and illicit distribution of small arms and light weapons, as well as for the excessive accumulation and uncontrolled proliferation in many regions of the world, my delegation welcomed the holding in June 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, held at here at Headquarters from 16 to 20 June. Peru reiterates its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

Peru reiterates its call for a better exchange of information at the national, regional and international levels, particularly on tracking issues and other kinds of information that will help to prevent, combat and eliminate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to prevent their diversion to illegal armed groups, terrorists or other non-authorized recipients.

Peru is party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and has submitted its first transparency report, covering the period from March to August 2013. The report identified all cluster weapons in the country, which are to be destroyed by 2021, when Peru will have completed the initial eight-year period prescribed in article 3 of the Convention. To that end, the possibility of providing Peru with technical assistance in destroying its existing cluster munitions is being coordinated with international assistance from Norway.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are of great interest to my country because our primary goal is to establish and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. We therefore reiterate our appeal to all States that have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to do so immediately and without limitations. We also call on the nuclear Powers to move towards the effective and verifiable elimination of their nuclear weapons. In that regard, Peru trusts that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will reach positive achievements and make substantial progress in implementing the NPT.

Peru stresses the need to support the process concerning the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapon that was launched by Norway in March 2013, and which Mexico has pursued by organizing the second conference in Nayarit in February this year. We thank Austria for its offer to host the third conference in Vienna in December. For my country, the ultimate goal for which we must all strive is the full and complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Peru advocates the universalization of the regimes prohibiting weapons of mass destruction. In that respect, we are grateful for the great work undertaken by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in recent years.

With regard to disarmament machinery, my delegation believes that the reactivation of the Conference on Disarmament is a priority, because it is the negotiating body par excellence on issues of disarmament and international security. To that end,

my country trusts that every necessary effort will be made to provide the Conference on Disarmament with a substantive agenda.

Peru is convinced that effective confidence-building can assist States in advancing towards the integration and strengthening of mechanisms and cooperative measures that can help us to address the issues of extreme poverty, inequity and social exclusion as a matter of urgency. We therefore believe we must continue to promote at all levels an environment that is propitious to arms control, the limitation of conventional weapons and the non-proliferation of weapons mass destruction. In that way, every State will be able to allocate more resources to its own economic and social development, taking into account the fulfilment of international commitments and their own legitimate defence and security needs. In that regard, we emphasize the need for mutual defence assistance and cooperation.

This year, my country will be the facilitator of the draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, whose headquarters is in Lima, the capital of Peru. I wish to highlight the important support provided and role played by the Regional Centre, contributing with the States of the region to promoting initiatives on disarmament, confidence-building measures, and the fight against the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, munitions and explosives, which pose a serious threat to regional citizen security.

Moreover, as recognized in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/136), which Peru appreciates, the Centre has launched a new programme for the Caribbean region on the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and activities to promote the participation of women and enhance their contribution to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. This programme include a training course exclusively for civil servants in the security sector in Latin America.

Peru thanks the countries that have contributed to the Centre in support of its activities and programmes throughout the region. We appeal to all those countries to maintain their generous support and invite them to attend the meeting to be convened by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on 21 October, when the portfolio of projects for 2015-2016 will be introduced.

As Chair of The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation for 2014-2015, Peru will also introduce the draft resolution on this item that was adopted at the thirteenth Regular Meeting of the Suscribing States to the Code of Conduct, held in Vienna in May. My country is deeply committed to the task of ensuring the full implementation of the Code in all its aspects and enhancing the dissemination activities to advance the universalization of the Code. We welcome the three brotherly countries of our region that have just become parties to the Code: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis, as well as the holding at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Lima of a regional seminar organized by the European Union, with the cooperation with my country, at which we sought to heighten awareness of the Code on the part of non-subscriber States, and discussed current and future trends and the challenges we face with respect to ballistic missiles and space-launch technologies.

Peru attaches particular importance to and fully supports the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention—the Ottawa Convention — which came into force in my country on 1 March 1999. Peru, in fulfilment of its obligations under the Convention, destroyed 338,422 anti-personnel mines in 2001, pursuant to article 4 of the Ottawa Convention. We did so in order to meet the four-year deadline, which fell in 2003 for my country.

I wish to conclude by reaffirming Peru's unwavering commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. We are committed to making our best efforts in this work of the First Committee because we are convinced that our achievements in this field will contribute to strengthening international peace and security.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

The total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, biological or chemical, must remain our absolute priority. The complete elimination of nuclear weapons being our main guarantee for survival, San Marino is firmly convinced that we must pursue all efforts to fulfil our obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Unfortunately, as pointed out by Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs,

we have to translate our intent on how to proceed to what she called “a results-based disarmament” (see A/C.1/69/PV.2). We strongly support Ms. Kane’s view. We should not limit ourselves to reaffirming our long-term commitments but should focus on our intentions and ensure their fulfilment with actions. The main priority of the United Nations is to maintain peace and security.

All of us are witnesses to what is happening throughout the world. Even non-State actors can wage wars with heavy artillery, tanks and sophisticated weapons. We are reaching the point of no return. Arms-manufacturing countries and those that have access to them must maintain strict control of their deadly arsenals. In fact, without tight surveillance not only could conventional arms be available to non-State actors, but weapons of mass destruction could also be at their disposal.

The fact that thousands of nuclear weapons are ready to be deployed throughout the world is a frightening reality and thought. One day, somewhere in the world, one or more nuclear weapons could be deployed by non-State actors, creating global atomic pandemonium. For these reasons, we look forward to the next NPT Review Conference and to the International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. We are quite keen for Member States to dismantle their arsenals, as has been done already with the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons. That success was the result of effective cooperation by several countries and international organizations.

The Republic of San Marino welcomes the Arms Trade Treaty and hopes that it will be embraced by all Member States.

San Marino hopes that all Member States will adopt in a short span of time — quoting Ms. Kane again — “new metrics of disarmament consisting of specific indicators for measuring progress in implementing commitments” (*ibid.*, p. 3).

The Chair: In keeping with our programme of work, the Committee will now have its traditional exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on the follow-up of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its past sessions and the presentation of reports. I will suspend this meeting to enable us to consider this topic in an informal setting in accordance with the established practice of the Committee.

The meeting was suspended at 5.05 p.m. and resumed at 5.25 p.m.

Mr. Ruiz Blanco (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Colombian delegation associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

Since the main responsibility of the First Committee is to work for international peace and security, I appeal to all delegations to meet their commitments to disarmament and non-proliferation so that we can make progress at this session. I should also like to stress that Colombia, traditionally a peace-loving country and respecter of international law, believes in multilateralism, in the framework of which the main international legal disarmament instruments have been adopted. My country has therefore been actively involved in seeking commitments that safeguard the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

For Colombia, which is currently involved in peace dialogues, matters relating to conventional disarmament and small arms and light weapons, munitions and explosives are of particular relevance. For more than 50 years, we have suffered the negative consequences of the illicit trade in weapons, which fuels innumerable criminal acts and situations of violence that not only cause serious humanitarian problems but also interfere with our potential for development.

It is because of the damaging impact of the illicit trade in weapons that Colombia looks forward to the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 24 December and to the full and effective implementation of that important instrument. Given the great importance that my country attaches to the Arms Trade Treaty, I wish to declare that Colombia will host the regional seminar on its implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean on 18 and 19 November in Bogota. The event will welcome some 70 participants representing the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The purpose of this event is to exchange experiences among countries and with experts from the European Union who will attend.

Colombia believes that the States of Latin America and the Caribbean should try to ensure that the international community focuses not only on weapons of mass destruction but also that it gives the issue of

conventional weapons all the importance it deserves, given the scope of the problems they can create.

I believe it is important also to reiterate the need to continue working to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument.

Colombia is committed to the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law that underlie the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. We therefore work actively to promote and implement the conventions regulating weapons with humanitarian impact. My country has struggled for years against the scourge of anti-personnel mines, which in Colombia is linked exclusively to the use of that kind of weapons by illegal armed groups. Colombia condemns those groups for using improvised explosive devices, such as anti-personnel mines, which mainly affect rural populations. We call on the international community to join in the appeal for a Colombia free from anti-personnel mines.

With its long-standing struggle with this problem, my country has considerable experience in the various components of the Comprehensive Action against Anti-personnel Mines, which is connected with many national policies ranging from the strengthening of institutions to assisting the victims of anti-personnel mines, unexploded ordinance and other improvised explosive devices. We reiterate Colombia's readiness to continue to share with the international community our experience and expertise developed in the implementation of all elements of the Comprehensive Action against Anti-personnel Mines.

Colombia is firmly committed to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as established in article 81 of our Constitution, which prohibits the manufacture, import, possession and use of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Colombia takes this opportunity to strongly condemn the use of such weapons in any circumstances and by any actor, whether State or non-State.

I should like to refer specifically to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The call should continue for its universalization and for the effective implementation of its four pillars: chemical disarmament, non-proliferation, assistance and protection against the use of such weapons, and the promotion of international

cooperation for the use of chemicals for peaceful purposes.

We also call for universal accession to the Biological Weapons Convention, the first multilateral disarmament treaty that prohibits a complete category of weapons of mass destruction. That is the only way to eliminate the threat of the malicious use of pathogens.

We also note the tenth anniversary of the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), an instrument for preventing armed non-State entities from having access to weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivery. We are pleased to say that we will be launching our national plan of action to implement resolution 1540 (2004) in Bogota on 6 November.

Colombia also recognizes the importance of breathing new life into the Conference on Disarmament so that it can begin substantive work on negotiating at least three instruments: a treaty on fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons, a convention on negative security assurances, and an agreement on prohibiting the arms race in outer space. It is also of crucial importance to achieve the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

It is important to reiterate that the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is the only way to prevent proliferation. That is why we welcome recent ratifications of that Treaty and call on States that have not yet done so, particularly those listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, to become parties to it.

Colombia recognizes the catastrophic humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons and has been working on this issue. We participated actively in the two meetings of the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo in 2013 and in Nayarit, Mexico, this year. We are committed to this issue and will be attending the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held on 8 and 9 December in Vienna.

My delegation stands ready to work constructively in the First Committee at this sixty-ninth session and wishes the Committee every success. I hope that Member States will work together to take up the challenges facing us in the area of disarmament and international security.

Mr. Benítez Rodríguez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in the general debate of the First Committee, may I, on behalf of the Republic of Paraguay, wish you, Sir, every success in chairing this session.

We associate ourselves with the statement made earlier by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

In June we held 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. In about six months, in early 2015, we will convene the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In that connection, we recall the Republic of Paraguay's indisputable commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control in its various aspects as critical elements in the maintenance of international peace and security. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), to which our country is a party, will be a first step towards ensuring that future generations can achieve the dream of living in a world that is completely free of nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapon testing. We also recall that Paraguay endorsed the declaration issued at the recent seventh ministerial meeting of the CTBT, held on 26 September here at Headquarters.

Paraguay recognizes the dire scourge that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons represents to the societies of our region and the world at large, as well as related crimes such as terrorism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and so forth. We therefore again urge the international community to step up its efforts to ensure that tangible and productive results are achieved so that we can eliminate the illicit traffic trade in small arms and light weapons. We also stress once again the importance of the International Tracing Instrument to complement and effectively coordinate all efforts to that end.

We look forward very happily to the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, given the achievement of the fiftieth ratification necessary for its entry into force. In that context, we are in well advanced in the ratification process in the National Congress of Paraguay. We hope that we can complete the ratification before the end of the year so that Paraguay can be listed among the State parties.

With regard to international cooperation and assistance, we would highlight our significant national achievements this year. In March in our capital, Asunción, we held a regional training course, organized jointly by the Government of Paraguay and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, on management and technical guidelines for handling munitions and explosives. In that regard, we stress the extremely important role of international cooperation, particularly in the case of Paraguay, in respect of training in the use of new technologies for tracing, marking and identifying weapons and creating databases, to name but the most important elements.

Mrs. Rajaonarivelo (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time that I have spoken at this session, it would be remiss of me not to extend the heartfelt congratulations of my delegation to you, Sir, upon your accession to the chairmanship of the First Committee at its sixty-ninth session. I am convinced that, backed by your experience, we will enjoy success in our work. My congratulations are also extended to the other members of the Bureau. I take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Mr. Ibrahim Dabbashi of Libya, for his praiseworthy efforts. You may rest assured, Sir, of the full support and full cooperation of my delegation.

Even though everything that needed to be said has already been said by delegations that have spoken before me, my delegation believes that an additional voice is never too much. I should like to associate myself with those who would like to see disarmament become general and complete and security be achieved for succeeding generations.

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

My delegation regrets the fact that the United Nations disarmament system, including the Conference on Disarmament, continues to suffer from a 10-year impasse as a result of lack of agreement and especially of a lack of political will. The system needs to be revitalized, and we back calls of the Non-Aligned Movement in favour of retaining this unique body, which has an exclusive role to play in multilateral disarmament negotiation with a view to the conclusion of an international legal instrument on nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, my delegation deplores the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission

has not been in a position to achieve consensus regarding the recommendations of the General Assembly since 1999. However, we reaffirm the important role of the Commission as the only specialized body for the strengthening of multilateral diplomacy. These bodies must be revitalized and reformed.

We note that, on the one hand, the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly made some progress on issues related to disarmament through the series of regional and multilateral events, high-level meetings and workshops to strengthen negotiating capacities disarmament issues. On the other hand, the number of crises and challenges has increased, creating tensions, especially in Africa and the Middle East, and international security is under growing threat. Faced with all this, we need to step up our efforts for disarmament in general and for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in particular, which remain at the very core of our concerns.

It is highly regrettable that during the session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was held in May in New York, States were not able to achieve consensus, and that differences persist concerning the direction to be given to the NPT.

The serious threat posed to humankind by the existence of nuclear weapons is undeniable. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the conferences held in Oslo in 2013 and Nayarit, Mexico, in February 2014, and welcomes the upcoming convening of another such conference in Austria in December. The series of Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons must continue so as to ensure global consensus on the fact only the total elimination of nuclear weapons will guarantee the survival of humankind. In this respect, my delegation associates itself with the many calls on the nuclear-weapon States to honour their obligations pursuant to the provisions of resolution 68/32 on the follow-up to the 2013 High-level Meeting of the General Assembly of 26 September 2013.

Similarly, Madagascar welcomes the first observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September and cherishes the hope for a full implementation of the recommendations of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and that the conference on the establishment of a

Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons, planned for 2012, will be convened as rapidly as possible.

Like a number of countries, Madagascar favours the use of nuclear energy for economic development and to cover energy needs, pursuant to article IV of the NPT, and encourages research, production and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. My delegation calls on countries that have not yet signed the NPT or the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so in order to ensure universal adherence to the latter with a view to its entry into force. My delegation joins others in calling on all States parties to the NPT to show greater will in renewing their commitment to the review meeting in 2015.

Regarding other weapons of mass destruction, my delegation welcomes the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria. It takes this opportunity to convey its gratitude to the experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for their mission to my country, upon invitation from my Government, demonstrating our desire to discharge all our commitments to disarmament and to preventing the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction in all aspects. Madagascar reiterates the importance of regional and international cooperation in preventing the possession of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists.

Furthermore, Madagascar welcomes the upcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty in December. However, its implementation requires respect for the sovereignty of every country and should not serve as an excuse for interference in the internal affairs of countries. We also welcome the strengthening of cooperation and assistance among States through the adoption by consensus of the final document of the 2012 United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Similarly, my delegation welcomes the adoption of the outcome document of last June's meeting, containing recommendations for the implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels, as well as stockpile management and measures to secure firearms.

Before I conclude my statement, I wish to stress the importance of multilateralism to discussions related to disarmament and to achieving results satisfactory to all. We should give pride of place to a spirit of open dialogue.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Indonesia on a point of order.

Mr. Isnomo (Indonesia): I should like to make a point of order on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement with regard to the issue of precedence concerning the list of speakers in the general debate and thematic debate sessions of the First Committee.

The member States of the Non-Aligned Movement would like to draw attention to paragraph 1 of the annex to resolution 65/276 on the participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations, which states that:

“the representatives of the European Union, in order to present positions of the European Union and its member States as agreed by them, shall be ... [i]nvited to participate in the general debate of the General Assembly, in accordance with the order of precedence as established in the practice for participating observers and the level of participation”.

On that basis, the Movement would like to place on record a request that in future sessions of the First Committee all regional and political groupings that are represented by Member States be afforded the right to speak before the European Union unless the European Union is also represented by a Member State. The Movement acknowledges that there have been instances in the past where the European Union has spoken before Member States representing regional or political groups. The Movement affirms that now is the time to alter and establish a common practice whereby regional and political groupings that are represented by a Member State be given priority on the list of speakers.

The Chair: I give the floor to the representative of the Philippines on a point of order.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): On behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), we have requested the floor to put on record our position as regards the issue of the list of speakers for the general debate of the First Committee. We intervene exclusively within the confines of a principled position.

ASEAN wishes to refer to paragraph 1 (b) of the annex to resolution 65/276, on the participation of the European Union (EU) in the work of the United Nations. I do not wish to repeat the paragraph already cited by the representative of Indonesia speaking on

behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I only wish to point out that, in keeping with the letter and spirit of the resolution, ASEAN asserts the position that the EU observer delegation in its capacity as observer should speak after all regional and major groupings that are represented by States unless the EU is represented also by a Member State. In this vein, the ASEAN delegation, when speaking on behalf of the Group, must speak before the EU if the latter is represented by an EU observer delegation. Moreover, any Member State, when speaking on behalf of any regional group, should have precedence in speaking before the EU observer delegation.

ASEAN member States note that the past two sessions and this session have not adhered to the proper order of speakers related to the issue at hand. Let us not obfuscate the required legal personality or representation of speakers and the order of precedence of speakers in this body. ASEAN trusts that a rectification will be effected in subsequent meetings of this Committee.

The Chair: I give the floor to the representative of Nigeria on a point of order.

Mr. Adejola (Nigeria): I speak on behalf of the Group of African States. In exercising the right to raise this point of order, the African Group aligns itself with the statement just made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement regarding the question of precedence on the list of speakers in the general debate and thematic debate of the First Committee at this sixty-ninth session. We would like to state that the speaking order for the general debate in this session should not be regarded as a precedent for future meetings.

The African Group wishes to stress that, notwithstanding what could have taken place in the past, paragraph 1 of the annex to resolution 65/276 on the participation of the European Union (EU) in the work of the United Nations states expressly that

“the representatives of the European Union, in order to present positions of the European Union and its member States as agreed by them, shall be ... [i]nvited to participate in the general debate of the General Assembly, in accordance with the order of precedence as established in the practice for participating observers and the level of participation”.

In this regard, the African Group wishes to state that a member of the African Group, when speaking on behalf of the Group, shall speak before the EU if the latter is represented by an observer delegation. The group hereby submits that in future sessions of the First Committee, all regional and political groups that are represented by States be afforded the right to speak before the European Union unless, as stressed, the EU is represented by a member State.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Italy, who has asked to speak in right of reply.

Mr. Mati (Italy): I take the floor on behalf of the European Union. We take note of the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States. In our view, resolution 65/276 of 3 May 2011 on the participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations is clear. At the same time, as always we are ready to take this question in a constructive way and to facilitate the process with a view to ensuring the smooth functioning of the First Committee.

We are confident that you, Sir, with the Secretariat will find practical solutions for this Committee in order to allow us to concentrate on the substantive discussions.

The Chair: I should like to clarify in relation to the order of speakers that the first day of the general debate proceeded along the line of what had occurred in past sessions of this Committee. Since the adoption of resolution 65/276 of 3 May 2011, the observer delegation of the European Union has delivered a statement in the

general debate on two occasions, at the sixty-seventh and at the sixty-eighth sessions.

At the sixty-seventh session, statements in the general debate were delivered in the following order: the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the European Union (EU), the Group of African States, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Group of Arab States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. At the sixty-eighth session the order was: NAM, CARICOM, EU, the Arab Group, the African Group, ASEAN and NAC. That was consistent with the note by the Secretary-General contained in A/65/856, paragraph 5 of which states:

“In order to make interventions, the representatives of the European Union will be allowed to be inscribed on the list of speakers to present positions of the European Union and its member States as agreed by them and shall be inscribed among the representatives of major groups in the order in which the European Union signifies its desire to speak.”

That said, however, I recognize that there are different interpretations of resolution 65/276, and the statements just made will be fully reflected in the official records of the Committee. I will also share them with the President of the General Assembly as well as with my successor as the Chair of this Committee, once known.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.