



General Assembly

Seventieth session

First Committee

23rd meeting

Tuesday, 3 November 2015, 10 a.m.
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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda items 88 to 105 (continued)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chair: This morning the Committee will continue to take action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 88 to 105. We will be guided by the same procedure I explained yesterday, and I trust that Committee members all have a copy of the circulated ground rules for reference.

At the end of this morning's meeting, the Secretary will update the Committee on the status of the documents related to programme budget implications, including for the draft resolutions on which action was postponed at the last minute yesterday.

We will begin by listening to the remaining delegations that requested the floor for an explanation of vote or position after the voting on documents under cluster 1, entitled "Nuclear weapons", and that did not have an opportunity to speak by the time we adjourned yesterday. Altogether, 18 delegations are waiting to take the floor in that regard and, as was announced by the Secretary at the end of the meeting yesterday, they include France, India, the Russian Federation, Japan, the United Kingdom, Israel, Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, Brazil, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Switzerland, China and Sweden. Thereafter, the Committee will take up the draft resolutions and decisions listed in

informal paper 2, which has been circulated among delegations and which lists the remaining drafts from informal paper 1, as well as new draft proposals that are ready for action today.

Ms. Guitton (France) (*spoke in French*): I have asked for the floor with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.26, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

Broadly speaking, this draft resolution places nuclear disarmament within the framework established by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the framework of the documents adopted by consensus during the NPT Review Conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010. The text of the draft resolution also recalls that efforts leading to nuclear disarmament can be carried out only on the basis of the principle of undiminished security for all, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1887 (2009).

Moreover, the next two logical and priority steps as far as nuclear disarmament is concerned — namely, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the rapid launch of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) — are also referred to in the draft resolution. France notes with satisfaction the introduction of a reference in the draft document to the work carried out in the framework of the Group of Governmental Experts on the FMCT that enabled the adoption of a final report (see A/70/81) by consensus.

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Nonetheless, France notes with concern the evolution of this draft resolution in recent years, a process that has been further accentuated in 2015. My country is fully aware of the grave consequences that could result from the use of nuclear weapons. All of us have been fully aware of such grave consequences for a long time now. Nothing has changed in that regard. Moreover, there is no consensus on the fact that this approach underpins efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

It is of the utmost importance to the international community that we all work towards the promotion of the requisite conditions for the achievement of our collective goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons as soon as the strategic context allows for that to take place. I should like to recall that, as far as France is concerned, nuclear weapons are a deterrent aimed solely at the protection of our vital interests. France's strictly defensive deterrent doctrine severely limits the circumstances in which nuclear weapons could be used to extreme circumstances of self-defence consistent with the requirements of the Charter of the United Nations.

In any case, nuclear disarmament can move forward only through concrete, gradual measures that are fully in line with the security context. France is today concerned about the development of an emotional and divisive approach — an approach that is splitting the international community, and splitting the international community will not help generate the conditions required for nuclear disarmament.

Similarly, the development of an approach divorced from the realities of strategic developments and aimed at discrediting the nuclear deterrent without taking into account their strategic realities can only weaken support for the NPT. Let it be said that the NPT remains the core basis for international security, non-proliferation and continued nuclear disarmament in accordance with its article VI. In that regard, I should like to emphasize that my country is continuing to work on the implementation of the NPT Action Plan adopted by consensus in 2010, which is the most recent valid reference document.

France has for many years now attached the highest importance to the issue of nuclear security. Nuclear security and disarmament are nevertheless two clearly distinct topics. Seeking to create a link between the two is an artificial exercise given the nature and objectives of the two topics and how distinct they are. Above all, making such a link would present the risk of undermining

the effectiveness of international efforts towards guaranteeing nuclear security, and would do so at the expense of the whole of the international community.

Given the changes that the draft resolution has seen this year, including in the form of references to the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, my country chose to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

Mr. Varma (India): India wishes to explain its votes last evening. I should like to refer to a number of draft resolutions, and shall go through them one by one.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.2, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", India abstained in the voting on the document as a whole and voted against the fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs, as we believe that the focus of the draft resolution should be limited to the region that it intends to address. India's position on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known. The 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which codified the prevailing customary international law, provides that States are bound by a treaty based on the principle of free consent. The call to those States remaining outside the NPT to accede to it and to accept International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on all their nuclear activities is at variance with that principle and does not reflect current realities. India is not a party to the NPT and is not bound by its outcome documents. That applies also to certain paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.2.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.23. India abstained in the voting on the draft resolution as a whole. With reference to the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, India's position with regard to the NPT is well known. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

On draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.26, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", India remains committed to the goal of global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament in a time-bound framework. We have stressed the need for a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework for achieving global and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament. In substantive terms, the draft resolution falls short of that objective.

India voted against paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, as we cannot accept the call to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State. India's position on the NPT is well known. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of India's national security and will remain so pending non-discriminatory and global nuclear disarmament.

As India supports the commencement of negotiations of a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament, the question of a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons does not arise. We therefore abstained in the voting on paragraph 15. India also abstained in the voting on paragraph 19. The concept of a comprehensive safeguards agreement is applicable only to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT. India has concluded an India-specific safeguards agreement with the IAEA and has signed and ratified a protocol additional to that agreement.

As we mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we acknowledge the leading role that Japan, the lead sponsor of the draft resolution, has played in promoting nuclear-disarmament efforts.

Turning to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled "Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons", India voted in favour of this draft resolution, consistent with its participation in the three meetings held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Our participation in those meetings was premised on the shared concern about the serious threat to the survival of humankind that could be posed by the use of nuclear weapons, and in the hope of gaining international support for increased restraints on the use of such weapons, and thereby correct an imbalance in the international legal discourse that has focused almost exclusively on restraints on possession.

Paragraph 1 of this draft resolution stresses that it is in the interest of the very survival of humankind that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances. Paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.21 calls on the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.21 is one of the long-standing draft resolutions in the First Committee anchored

firmly in the humanitarian tradition of nuclear disarmament. However, for reasons that are difficult to understand, some of the very States that are at the forefront of the humanitarian discourse, and are the lead sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, last evening voted against draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.21, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". We appeal to those States to reconsider their position and narrow the credibility gap between precept and practice, which is difficult to ignore.

I turn now to an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons". India abstained in the voting on this draft resolution. Although India participated in the three Conferences in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna, we do not see the humanitarian pledge as an agreed outcome of those meetings. India shares the concerns of the serious threat to the survival of humankind caused by the use of nuclear weapons. India has been unwavering in its commitment to universal, non-discriminatory, verifiable nuclear disarmament. As such, we are in agreement with the objective of the draft resolution for the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

India has also supported some of the interim measures mentioned in the draft resolution, namely, to reduce nuclear risks pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which in fact are reflected in a separate draft resolution sponsored by India, that is, draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.20, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger". However, we have not joined the humanitarian pledge and abstained in the voting on this draft resolution. There are inherent dangers in proposals that further fragment the disarmament agenda or splinter the established disarmament machinery.

As has been the case with biological and chemical weapons, increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons could contribute to the progressive de-legitimization of nuclear weapons — an essential step for their eventual elimination. The draft resolution is silent on that aspect.

Furthermore, the pledge falls short of the requirements of a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention, which, in addition to prohibition and elimination, also includes verification. International verification will be essential to the global elimination of nuclear weapons, just as it has been in the case of

the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. When nuclear weapons are so deeply entrenched in security policies, seeking a short cut through the stigmatization of nuclear weapons without reducing their role and addressing the important aspects of verification, provides, in our view, an illusion of progress rather than a realistic contribution to nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Finally, there appears to be a credibility gap in the voting pattern of some key sponsors of this draft resolution with regard to some of their other draft resolutions in the Committee, in particular draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.20 and A/C.1/70/L.21. That credibility gap has to be eliminated.

Let me now explain India's position on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, entitled "Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world". India attaches particular importance to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, a draft resolution introduced for the first time by South Africa, which highlights the ethical dimension of nuclear disarmament. We recall our support for a number of the previous proposals and resolutions mentioned in this draft resolution, including the first resolution of the General Assembly in 1946 (resolution 1 (I)) and the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly (SSOD-I) devoted to disarmament. In fact, this draft resolution is a reminder of the long struggle for nuclear disarmament that has been waged in the Assembly and outside, in which India has played a leading role, along with other States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

India agrees with several provisions of this draft resolution, in particular its acknowledgement that nuclear disarmament is a global public good of the highest order. We support the International Court of Justice advisory opinion (A/51/218, annex) that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. In that regard, India has once again co-sponsored the relevant draft resolution introduced by Malaysia — draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.51 — and has supported the NAM proposal for the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament.

Since the dawn of the nuclear age, the use of nuclear weapons has posed a serious threat to the survival of humankind and the continuation of civilization. As such, they pose ethical and moral dilemmas of a fundamental nature, which must inform the consideration by the international community of all matters relating to nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear weapons have been entrenched in the security policies of a number of States, whose total population now exceeds those that do not. The global elimination of nuclear weapons will require progressive steps of reduction of their military utility, a reduction of their role in security policies and a universal commitment with a global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework for nuclear disarmament. Until that stage is accomplished by common agreement and reflected in specific international legal instruments, questions relating to the morality of nuclear weapons have to be balanced by the sovereign responsibility of States to protect their people in a nuclearized global order put together on the pillars of nuclear deterrence. India's nuclear doctrine of credible minimum deterrence with a no-first-use posture seeks to strike that very balance.

The illegality of nuclear weapons cannot just be a matter of *opinio juris*; it is necessary for the international community to negotiate and conclude specific legal instruments for that purpose. India has proposed a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and has supported a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention. We remain prepared to take those proposals forward in the Conference on Disarmament.

The moral and ethical argument complements the legal order, but cannot substitute for it. Since the draft resolution is not clear as to the correlation between means and ends, and hence its ability to take forward the nuclear-disarmament discourse in an inclusive and purposeful manner, India decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution. India remains open to further discussions with its sponsors in the future.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.44, entitled "Nuclear disarmament". India attaches the highest priority to nuclear disarmament and shares the main objective of the draft resolution, which is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time framework. We were constrained to abstain in the voting because of certain references to the NPT, on which India's position is well known.

However, our abstention should not be seen as opposition to other provisions of the draft resolution that we believe are consistent with the NAM position as well as India's national positions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Those provisions include the reference to the SSOD-I Final Document, NAM summit statements; the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice; the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame; the role and work of the Conference on Disarmament, including the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament as the highest priority; reference to document CD/1999, which consists of the proposal of the group of 21 for a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention; the negotiation of an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of the Shannon mandate; as well as the call for convening an international conference on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects at an early date to identify and deal with concrete measures of nuclear disarmament.

We compliment Myanmar, the main sponsor of this draft resolution, for retaining vital principled positions in this draft resolution, which are supported by a vast majority of the Member States represented in the Committee.

Let me turn to the last explanation of vote under this cluster, namely, on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.55, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty". India respects the sovereign choice of non-nuclear-weapon States to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. That principle is consistent with the provisions of SSOD-I and the 1999 United Nations Disarmament Commission guidelines. India enjoys friendly and mutually beneficial relations with countries of the African continent and has just hosted a summit meeting with all countries of Africa. India shares and supports African aspirations for the region's well-being and security. We respect the sovereign choice of States parties to the Pelindaba Treaty and welcome the successful entry into force of that Treaty. As a nuclear-weapon State, India conveys its unambiguous assurance that it will respect the status of the African nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Mr. Sano (Japan): I should like to explain Japan's position on draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.37, A/C.1/70/L.38, A/C.1/70/L.40, A/C.1/70/L.32, A/C.1/70/L.44 and A/C.1/70/L.51.

First, on draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.37, A/C.1/70/L.38 and A/C.1/70/L.40, with regard to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, as the only country ever to have suffered atomic bombings in war, Japan deeply understands the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. We have made various efforts in spreading our recognition and raising awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. While Japan continues to pursue the total elimination of nuclear weapons in a way that is compatible with our security policy, including extended deterrence, the recognition of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has always been the basis of our practical and concrete approach towards nuclear disarmament.

On the other hand, for advancing nuclear disarmament, cooperation and mutual trust between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States is indispensable, namely, the recognition of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons should serve as a catalyst or bridge-builder for unifying the international community, and not as a dividing factor.

Japan made its voting decisions on each of the three humanitarian draft resolutions according to its basic position and consistent with its past policy. In particular, we voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled "Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons" since the language, in paragraph 4, "awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons must underpin all approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament", in our view, makes the draft resolution consistent with our national policy that advances nuclear disarmament in a way that is compatible with our security policy.

Secondly, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.32, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", Japan voted in favour because it is important to deepen substantive discussions on ways to increase the effectiveness of negative security assurances and to seek a common approach which is acceptable by all. However, the draft resolution should not prejudge the discussion in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Japan strongly hopes that each CD member State will demonstrate its flexibility and that the CD will break its long-standing stalemate and advance its substantive work on negotiations on a fissile material cut-off

treaty (FMCT), as well as its discussions on other important issues.

Thirdly, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.44, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”, Japan abstained in the voting on the draft resolution. We share the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which is the focus of the draft resolution. However, in order steadily to implement concrete measures for nuclear disarmament, Japan attaches the greatest importance to united actions by the international community, including the nuclear-weapon States. In that regard, there remains a difference between my country’s view and the approach of the draft resolution.

Lastly, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.51, entitled “Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons”, Japan abstained in the voting. Due to the immense destructive power and lethal force of nuclear weapons, Japan believes that their use clearly does not comply with the spirit of humanitarianism, which has its philosophical foundation in international law. Nevertheless, the advisory opinion, as set out in the draft resolution, demonstrates the complexity of the issue.

Japan supports the unanimous conclusion of the judges of the Court that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, we are convinced that realistic measures are required in order to make steady progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is from that point of view that we consider that conditions are not yet ripe to call upon all States immediately to fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to the early conclusion of a nuclear-weapons convention. Japan nevertheless will continue to exert maximum efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Rowland (United Kingdom): I should like to deliver two explanations of vote on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The first is on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”. The United States, the United Kingdom and France took part in the 2013 high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament in good faith. Our three countries delivered both national and joint statements. Unfortunately, as was the case last year, this draft resolution again does not reflect

views we expressed at that time nor, in our opinion, the views of many other States that participated.

We believe that nuclear proliferation and non-compliance by a few States with their respective obligations constitute the most serious threat to international peace and security, and therefore regret that the high-level meeting did not deal with both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced manner. Success in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons is among the international conditions that will support step-by-step progress towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament.

The only reference to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in this draft resolution is insufficient, incidental and unbalanced. In addition, we remain puzzled that there is no reference to the 2010 Action Plan. The NPT is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and the basis for nuclear-disarmament efforts. Planning another conference to discuss nuclear disarmament in 2018 is not consistent with the NPT.

The 2010 NPT Action Plan provides the best route for making progress on multilateral nuclear disarmament. We remain concerned that some States appear to be moving away from the consensus reached in 2010. Furthermore, the draft resolution calls for negotiation of an instrument that is not mentioned as such in the 2010 Action Plan. We remain convinced that a practical step-by-step process is the only way to make real progress in our disarmament efforts while upholding global security and stability. There are no shortcuts. There is no other way to achieve a world without nuclear weapons outside of methodological and steady progress.

Following this process, we are seeking an early commencement and conclusion of the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) at the Conference on Disarmament and the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). In the NPT Action Plan, all NPT States concurred that the next priority step towards nuclear disarmament in the multilateral context was an FMCT.

I should now like to deliver an explanation of vote on behalf of France, the United States and the United Kingdom on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41, entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”.

Our reasons for voting against that draft resolution are founded on the same concerns that we had with last year's text. While we agree with the elements of the draft resolution that reflect language from the final document of the 2010 NPT Action Plan, we regret that the draft resolution does not achieve an equitable balance among the NPT's three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses. Moreover, new elements and language in this year's text continue to take us further away from our common understandings and to introduce new concepts that were never part of the NPT Action Plan.

We would also like to see a greater emphasis on the need for all States that possess nuclear weapons, not just NPT nuclear-weapon States, to undertake activities that are consistent with a shared objective of making the world safer and more secure. That in no way confers any particular status on such countries, but rather reflects the fact that a comprehensive and global approach to disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is required.

In reviewing the text, we note with regret that the notion of a step-by-step approach to disarmament has almost disappeared. We are more than ever concerned by the increased focus on parallel processes. We remain convinced that our focus must be on proven measures that promote rather than detract from security and strategic stability as we continue to build upon the major achievements in disarmament to date. We believe that the increased energy around the nuclear disarmament debate would be better employed if channelled towards existing processes, thereby helping to tackle blockages and making progress in the practical step-by-step approach, beginning with the FMCT.

Ms. Rahaminoff-Honig (Israel): I will be referring in my statement this morning to draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.1 and A/C.1/70/L.46.

Israel once again joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.1, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", despite Israel's remaining substantive reservations regarding the modalities outlined in the draft resolution. This position stems from and reflects Israel's positive attitude towards a meaningful regional process aimed at the establishment of direct engagement and dialogue towards a more secure, peaceful Middle East free from conflicts, wars and all weapons of mass destruction. That is in line with Israel's participation

at a senior and authoritative level in five rounds of consultations under Finnish Under-Secretary Laajava during 2013-2014 and the willingness conveyed to Mr. Laajava publicly to participate in the sixth round of consultations, should it be convened, and which led us to participate as an observer in the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.1 is a consensual resolution. In the past, the practice of the authors of the draft resolution had been to share the draft with Israel prior to its submission to the Committee in order to facilitate agreement among regional parties. Unfortunately, that practice ceased many years ago.

The text of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.1 recognizes the importance of a credible, regional security process as an imperative in the attainment of a Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We fully agree that a credible regional security process is necessary in order to take into account the security concerns of all regional States and to address them within the context of regional realities and challenges. It is a sine qua non in the establishment of confidence, mutual understanding and cooperation among regional partners.

Seen from a pragmatic and realistic perspective, only once such measures are in place, have taken root and have shown to be durable and conducive, can more ambitious undertakings be considered. A credible process is also closely connected to the widely agreed principles that the establishment of any nuclear-weapon-free zone or zone free of weapons of mass destruction, as is the case in the Middle East, must be based on arrangements freely arrived at and emanate from the region. That requires that regional States fully commit themselves to opening direct communication channels towards genuine engagement and the acknowledgement of the threat and challenges facing other regional partners. They must recognize every regional State's right to exist and the need to build a spirit of conciliation, rather than confrontation. In the final analysis, this is an incremental process where each building block has to be placed one on top of the other in a stable and sustainable manner.

Unfortunately the Middle East is sorely lacking in mechanisms that could foster dialogue and enhance greater understanding between regional players. Currently there are no processes in the region that

could contribute to the building of confidence, the de-escalation of tensions and conflict resolution as a whole. There is no forum in which direct communication between regional States can address core security issues and encourage the attainment of solutions in a cooperative and forthcoming manner. It is a harsh reality, given the instability and turmoil in the region as well as the tension within and among States. Israel believes that only through direct discussions among regional partners, based on consensus, can progress be achieved and the vision of a Middle East free from war, conflict and all weapons of mass destruction be attained.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.46. Israel voted in favour of this draft resolution, entitled “Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty”, in the light of its long-standing support for the Treaty, which we signed in 1996. Since the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organization (CTBTO), Israel has actively participated in the development of all the elements of the Treaty’s verification regime. Israel transmits data from its certified seismic stations to the International Data Centre and actively participates in various relevant activities. Israel’s significant support and involvement in the substantive work of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission is consonant with the importance it attributes to the Treaty and the recognition of its contribution to the enhancement of international peace and security.

Notwithstanding Israel’s favourable attitude towards the Treaty, as outlined earlier, we are unable to support the language in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.46 in its entirety, in particular the sixth preambular paragraph and paragraph 1. The sixth preambular paragraph inserts into the draft resolution dealing with the CTBT references from the NPT and its Review Conference. While both treaties are in the nuclear domain, they are different in their subject matter, scope, obligations and membership. In accordance with international law, decisions and resolutions taken in the context of one forum cannot be injected into the work of another without the latter’s explicit consent. Therefore, in our view, that reference has no place in the draft resolution.

With regard to paragraph 1, the completion of the verification regime is not only a prerequisite for the entry into force of the Treaty in accordance with the stipulation of article IV, it also constitutes a

major consideration for ratification for Israel. While significant progress has been made in the development of the CTBT verification regime, further efforts are still required, specifically additional steps for the continued build-up and testing of the International Monitoring System stations, the completion of the on-site inspection operation manual as well as equipment purchase and training. In that regard, Israel was pleased to host part 1 of the twenty-second on-site inspection workshop, in April 2015, at which lessons learned from Integrated Field Exercise 14 and the way forward were discussed.

The regional security situation in the Middle East, including adherence to, and compliance with, the Treaty by States in the region is another major consideration for Israel with regard to ratification. The Treaty’s verification regime needs to be robust in order to detect non-compliance with its obligations, has to be immune to abuse and, at the same time, has to allow each State signatory to protect its national security interests. While the adequate coverage of the Middle East by an International Monitoring System is vital, regrettably, three Middle Eastern countries have yet to build or operate national seismic stations, as required by the Treaty, or to transfer data to the International Data Centre.

Another significant consideration for ratification is Israel’s equal status in the policymaking organs of the Treaty’s Organization. The fact that the Middle East and South Asia regional group defined in annex 1 to the Treaty has been paralysed for nearly 20 years is inexcusable and a situation that must be resolved. All States must be allowed to participate in the work of the Treaty on an equal footing, in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality. Israel therefore calls upon States in the region to rectify the situation and convene the regional group without delay, with the aim of enabling its functioning.

Mr. Herraiz España (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain would like to provide an explanation of vote after the voting with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.55, entitled “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty”.

The entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba, in 2009, made a major contribution to strengthening international peace and security — one of particular importance for African countries. Spain has therefore always unequivocally supported the objectives of the Treaty of Pelindaba, and we very much welcomed its entry into force. Spain maintains very close relations

with the countries of Africa and has been making considerable efforts, via our Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, with a view to promoting sustainable development in all African countries. Spain is also prepared to make the necessary efforts so that the States parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba have the necessary capacity to effectively comply with the provisions of the Treaty in their respective territories.

After having very carefully considered the invitation extended to Spain to join Protocol III to the Treaty of Pelindaba, my Government — in consultation with Parliament and taking into account the guidelines adopted by consensus at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) at its 1999 substantive session on the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the countries of the region concerned — decided not to sign the Protocol, a fact communicated to the Treaty's depositary. In that regard, I should like simply to highlight two issues.

First, the Treaty of Pelindaba does not include any provision, obligation, guarantee or safeguard with regard to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament that Spain has not already adopted for the whole of its national territory. In line with our participation in various international bodies, Spain already has a range of safeguards in place — including via the European Atomic Energy Community and our International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol — that go beyond what is set out in the Treaty of Pelindaba, which we abide by.

Secondly, since 1976 all of Spain's territory is militarily denuclearized. That prohibition on the production, installation and stockpiling of nuclear weapons throughout our territory was reiterated by our Parliament when Spain joined NATO, in 1981, and was confirmed by popular referendum in March 1986. Consequently, Spain has already taken all the necessary measures in order to ensure that the provisions of the Treaty of Pelindaba are applicable throughout our national territory.

Spain has joined the consensus on this First Committee draft resolution since it was first submitted, in 1997. Nonetheless, the Spanish delegation does not join the consensus on paragraph 5. Therefore, we have been working with other delegations to find better wording that would be more acceptable to all the parties. We hope that the conversations on this draft resolution will provide a satisfactory outcome at the next session.

Mr. Biontino (Germany): I take the floor to deliver an explanation of vote on behalf of the following countries: Australia, the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, Bulgaria, Latvia, Iceland, Luxembourg, Greece, Hungary, Spain, Poland, Turkey, Slovenia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Albania, the Republic of Korea, Croatia, Georgia, Romania, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Portugal, which have all been unable to support the three draft resolutions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons — namely, draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”; draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled “Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons”; and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40., entitled “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”.

The States joining this explanation of vote are a diverse group. We have variously abstained or opposed the three draft resolutions, but we are united in a common purpose: to make concrete progress towards the goal of the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons in a determined but inclusive and pragmatic way. Let us be clear: we outlined in an earlier joint statement, supported by 27 countries and issued prior to the voting, that we wished to register unequivocally that the grave humanitarian consequences of a nuclear-weapon detonation were clear and not in dispute. Moreover, we all engaged actively and constructively in this important dialogue on humanitarian consequences over recent years, in the firm belief that this agenda should be a force that unites us and reinforces our common and unshakeable commitment to the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, security and humanitarian principles coexist. Realistic progress can be achieved only if both are given due consideration. That is clearly not the case with the present draft resolutions, as they do not take into consideration the distinct security situations of various States. In our collective view, it is now all the more important for the international community to engage in a constructive, open, inclusive and genuine dialogue about nuclear disarmament where all points of view are given due respect and acknowledgement. The slow pace of nuclear disarmament has been disappointing. However, focusing prematurely on legal measures or perceived legal gaps is not a substitute for our steadfast efforts to proceed with a pragmatic approach to nuclear disarmament.

All delegations must be able to engage in this important discourse on nuclear disarmament while respecting their distinctive national security situations and other circumstances. In this vein, we stand ready to work with others to build constructively on the momentum created by the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, be it in the format of an inclusive, open-ended working group or through other appropriate processes to address the next steps.

We need to be realistic as we undertake that task, including maintaining an open mind and avoiding prior assumptions about outcomes. Above all, we should aim to promote areas of agreement and convergence in relation to the humanitarian consequences discourse, rather than accentuating the differences. Humanitarian consequences considerations should be a positive strand in our dialogue about finding a common way forward to reach our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Piperkov (Bulgaria): I speak on behalf of Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Moldova, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and my own country, Bulgaria.

Last year our delegation abstained on resolution 69/58. Unfortunately, this year we are not in a position to support draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15 either. The concerns we expressed remain valid. We believe in a world free of nuclear weapons and consider that disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing goals that should be pursued through successive individual steps involving all nuclear-weapon States in the process.

We would like to stress the fundamental role we attach to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, as well as to its complete implementation. We deeply regret that the 2015 Review Conference was unable to achieve consensus on an outcome document.

We continue to look forward to implementing relevant measures that garnered general support during the latest Review Conference, as well as the commitments agreed upon in previous Conferences. In that context, we continue to see the convening of another review conference by 2018, as set out in the draft resolution, as parallel and possibly distracting our focus from the NPT.

We appreciate the reference to the NPT in the preambular part of the draft resolution, but the emphasis is on only one of the pillars. In our view, nuclear disarmament is directly linked to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, and therefore NPT obligations should not be approached selectively. Achieving progress in those commonly shared goals requires the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

We agree that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) should start substantive work as soon as possible. However, we would not see a nuclear-weapons convention as the first priority in the CD; rather, we should aim at a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that includes the CD's four core issues. As agreed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the CD should be the sole negotiating forum for disarmament affairs. It is unclear to us whether holding a conference in 2018 would be in contradiction of that consensual decision. We believe in a cooperative and inclusive approach to making real progress on nuclear disarmament.

Finally, we share the concern about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Yet banning nuclear weapons will not guarantee their elimination. Only by recognizing both the security and humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons will we be able to achieve our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Duarte (Brazil): I shall make explanations of vote after the voting on draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.26 and A/C.1/70/L.46.

Brazil voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.26, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", because we share with the sponsors the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and acknowledge what we consider were improvements to the text, including references to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It is our view, however, that the text could have been more ambitious and should have included the following: first, an explicit mention of the fact that the nuclear-weapon States have not yet fully implemented their obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); secondly, a reference to the

need that a treaty on fissile material should serve both disarmament and non-proliferation objectives by also dealing with existing stocks; and, thirdly, a reference of support for the commencement of negotiations on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, not excluding an international legally binding agreement.

Brazil abstained in the separate vote on paragraph 19 since, in our view, the language therein should fully reflect the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, particularly action 30 from its Action Plan, which states that additional protocols should be universally applied once the complete elimination of nuclear weapons has been achieved.

On draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.46, entitled “Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty”, Brazil voted in favour because of its shared understanding that the Treaty is an important nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measure, and in the light of our continuous support for the Treaty and its early entry into force. However, we must point out our frustration at the inability of the draft resolution to reflect the hard-won consensus on the topic of the modernization of nuclear weapons in the final declarations of the Article XIV Conferences held in 2013 and 2015. Those declarations called on all countries to refrain from the development and use of new nuclear-weapon technologies or any action that would undermine the object and purpose of the Treaty. The significance of those declarations cannot be overstated, as they were endorsed by all signatory States taking part in the Conferences.

That specific passage touches upon what is perhaps the main challenge to the Treaty’s effectiveness, even before its entry into force. A qualitative nuclear arms race and vertical proliferation undermine the core objectives of the Treaty and its role as a nuclear disarmament instrument. The reliance of States possessing nuclear weapons on subcritical tests to further modernize their nuclear arsenals contradicts the spirit and letter of the Treaty and must be addressed clearly and emphatically by all those who support the Treaty. Brazil expects that this issue will be adequately addressed in next year’s draft resolution, particularly considering that 2016 marks the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty. That should result in renewed determination and efforts not only to ensure the Treaty’s early entry into force but also

its continued relevance in the pursuit of the common objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. We call on all States to continue working to that end.

Ms. Maja (Finland): Finland voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”. We share the main idea of the draft resolution, which reflects the genuine concern of citizens that as long as nuclear weapons exist there is a risk of a catastrophe with human and humanitarian costs.

We need a stronger sense of urgency to achieve progress on nuclear disarmament. The pivotal role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains in place, and it must be protected. What is important is to see further progress and concrete steps on nuclear disarmament, including further reductions. For that we need the involvement of the nuclear-weapon States.

Another important step is to commence negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament without further delay. A broad common understanding is necessary in order to decrease nuclear threats and to promote nuclear disarmament. We therefore regret that the draft resolution seems to be of a divisive nature.

Finland was not able to support the related draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled “Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons”. Sufficient political agreement on nuclear disarmament is needed before the creation of the legal instruments referred to in the draft resolution. We already have at this session many draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament topics that are largely overlapping. We suggest better coordination among sponsors in future in order to make the work of the Committee more efficient, and try to lay the ground for a broader understanding and spirit of compromise on the issue itself.

Mr. Sætre (Norway): I should like to explain of our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”.

Our common vision is a world free of nuclear weapons, and the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in March 2013, and the two following conferences, in Nayarit and Vienna, were successful in establishing the facts-based approach to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear-

weapon detonations. The summary of the Chair of the Oslo Conference identified three main findings.

First, it is unlikely that any State or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear-weapon detonation. Moreover, it might not be possible to establish such capacities.

Secondly, the historical experience from the use and testing of nuclear weapons has demonstrated their devastating immediate and long-term effects.

Thirdly, the effects of a nuclear-weapon detonation, irrespective of cause, will not be constrained by national borders.

We believe that reflects the key message and purpose of the initiative on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. More research is needed, and we will continue to pursue this facts-based approach, together with interested partners, and would very much appreciate the engagement of the States possessing nuclear weapons in this work. Unfortunately, the emerging common understanding of a facts-based humanitarian initiative has now been undermined, and the initiative is associated by many with efforts to achieve a legal instrument banning nuclear weapons. Under the current political circumstances, those efforts will not bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Norway remains convinced that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) must continue to be the cornerstone for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As NPT article VI stipulates, we would need a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. However, to reach that long-term goal we must first seek effective measures based on a balanced disarmament and reciprocity. Only through constructive engagement by all will we be able to attain our common goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. That remains an important foreign policy objective for Norway.

Norway is not able to support draft resolutions that we, and our NATO allies, see as parts of a package resulting in further polarization of the international community and aimed at the process leading to a legal ban on nuclear weapons.

Compared to the joint statement on the humanitarian impact that Norway previously supported, the present draft resolution contains stronger language and is differently structured. Hence the text is no longer

as balanced in its approach to disarmament as the joint statement.

For those reasons, and despite concurring with many elements of the draft resolution on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, Norway abstained in the voting.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): I wish to deliver a joint statement on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15, and a national explanation of vote on five other draft resolutions.

First, with respect to the group statement, I take the floor on behalf of Austria, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Malta, San Marino, Sweden and my own country, New Zealand, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”, on which our countries have again, as in the two previous years, voted in favour.

We remain pleased that the draft resolution includes an explicit reference to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and specifically to the solemn obligation of States parties undertaken in article VI of that Treaty. Our countries strongly support the disarmament objectives behind the draft resolution. We see it as entirely consistent with, and supportive of, the NPT and the requirement in article VI that States parties pursue effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament.

We note that, at present, the NPT remains the only global treaty-based commitment to nuclear disarmament, and that it was reinforced in 2000 and 2010 by explicit, unequivocal undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. We expect efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons, including legally effective measures to reinforce those obligations, and we support their full implementation.

We recall the fact that, at the NPT Review Conference held earlier this year, 159 States — an overwhelming majority of the United Nations membership — associated themselves with the humanitarian consequences statement delivered by the Foreign Minister of Austria. We believe that any initiative aimed at advancing nuclear disarmament must give due prominence to the humanitarian consequences of any nuclear-weapon detonation, and are therefore pleased that draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15 acknowledges the deep

concern of States at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, whether by accident, miscalculation or design.

Finally, our countries wish to make it clear once again that our support for draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15 does not mean that we consider a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to be the sole option for achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons. We remain favourably disposed towards any set of legally effective measures to achieve the objective of complete nuclear disarmament, regardless of how such measures might be elaborated. We would particularly like to emphasize that, consistent with our obligations assumed under article VI of the NPT, we remain willing to engage with and to pursue negotiations in good faith towards the elaboration of any such measures.

Next, I would like to explain New Zealand's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.20, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", on which we voted against. New Zealand retains its deep and enduring commitment to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world and, in the immediate term, one in which the risks of the use of nuclear-weapons are much reduced.

While draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.20 refers to a number of useful and practical measures, such as those in the seventh, eighth and ninth preambular paragraphs, and which indeed we and our colleagues in the New Agenda Coalition and the de-alerting group continue to call for, we fail to understand why paragraph 2 singles out only the five nuclear-weapon States in its call for a reduction in the risks of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons. That is of course the responsibility of all States that possess nuclear weapons, and that omission lies at the heart of the credibility gap on this text. We note, too, that the draft resolution continues to fail to acknowledge the NPT as an important step towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Next, I wish to explain New Zealand's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.21, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". As in previous years, New Zealand voted against this draft resolution. New Zealand remains unconvinced by the assertion in the third and eighth preambular paragraphs that a multilateral agreement focused simply on prohibiting only the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be an effective or useful contribution to a nuclear-free world. In particular, we do not believe in its utility as a legal measure to move us forward beyond

the current nuclear status quo. We do not, therefore, agree with the call in paragraph 1 for the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on the issue.

Furthermore, we believe that a draft resolution directed at the issue of a prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons is seriously deficient if it omits to recall the need for States to comply at all times with international humanitarian law. I note in that regard recent observations by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross with regard to how difficult it is to conceive of any use of nuclear weapons consistent with international humanitarian law.

We also note the omission, from a text purporting to promote nuclear disarmament, of any reference to either of the existing treaties designed to underpin the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. I refer, of course, to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

I now wish to explain New Zealand's vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.26, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons". New Zealand voted in support of the draft resolution in recognition of our agreement with its overall intention and with its stronger emphasis on the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. We note, however, our disappointment at the low level of ambition in the text, which we consider to be weaker than that in previous years, including, inter alia, because of the removal of references to the need for States that possess nuclear weapons to remove them from high-alert status. We are disappointed, too, that there is no reference to the need for legally effective measures in the context of article VI.

Notwithstanding the expanded title of this year's draft resolution, which refers to a renewed determination to totally eliminate nuclear weapons, there seems little clear direction in the text that would help get us there. Certainly, we do not believe that the discussions held at this year's failed NPT Review Conference — and which are referenced in the twelfth preambular paragraph as if they could provide guidance for the way forward — can do so.

I should now like to explain New Zealand's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons", on which New Zealand voted in favour.

While New Zealand has not itself endorsed the pledge, we have no doubt that those who have done so are deeply concerned about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and motivated by the need to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. While supporters of the pledge have not made clear the particular course they intend to pursue in doing that, New Zealand welcomes all efforts intended to advance the implementation of article VI of the NPT and make progress on legally effective measures towards nuclear disarmament. We would not wish by our vote on the draft resolution to have suggested otherwise.

Finally, I would like to explain New Zealand's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, entitled "Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world". We are grateful for the changes that were made to earlier drafts by the lead sponsor of the text, South Africa, and which enabled New Zealand to vote in favour of the draft resolution. We voted in favour in recognition of our agreement with its overall intention, its strong focus on the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and its emphasis on the need for effective measures, including legally binding measures, to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons.

New Zealand will continue to call for the full implementation of the legal obligation in article VI of the NPT and the need to advance the rules of international humanitarian law by moving explicitly to prohibit the one remaining weapon of mass destruction not yet the subject of a comprehensive treaty prohibition.

Ms. Del Sol Dominguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Yesterday afternoon (see A/C.1/70/PV.22), the First Committee adopted for the first time three new draft resolutions that are directly linked to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, namely, draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled "Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons"; draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons"; and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, entitled "Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world".

My delegation welcomes those draft resolutions and supported all three initiatives. The region of Latin America and the Caribbean endorses the humanitarian pledge. The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which brings together the 33 States in our region, is firmly convinced that there is a pressing need to completely eliminate nuclear

weapons as a result of the catastrophic consequences of their use. Given that reality, we need, without any further delay, to make headway in our multilateral negotiations to create a legally binding instrument that would prohibit nuclear weapons and establish a verification regime for the destruction of the same. There can be no justification for the existence today of more than 16,300 nuclear weapons, nor can there be any justification for the billions that are spent on such weapons. There certainly can be no justification in a world that needs those resources to promote peace, sustainable development and dignity for its inhabitants.

We support draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40 because we believe that it is timely and pertinent that the General Assembly declare that nuclear weapons are inherently immoral, given the indiscriminate impact of their use and the fact that they could annihilate the whole of humankind. It is also time to recognize the fact that all States bear an ethical responsibility to act urgently to adopt effective measures to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons completely and comprehensively. As established in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, nuclear weapons undermine collective security. They increase the risk of a nuclear catastrophe, exacerbate international tensions and make conflicts more dangerous.

No justification can be put forward to threaten the lives of human beings and the very future and well-being of our planet through the continued use of nuclear weapons. The risk that we face as nuclear weapons continue to exist is evident and has been scientifically proved. Ethics and logic are on the side of those of us who defend the need for a nuclear-weapon-free world. For that reason, we support each and every effort that contributes to bringing about the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world — such as these three draft resolutions.

Mr. Kang Myong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to explain its votes on a number of draft resolutions adopted yesterday under the "Nuclear weapons" cluster.

First, on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.44, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", my delegation voted in favour, as the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains unchanged in support of the principled position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament should take precedence over non-proliferation, as the total

elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute solution to the threats they pose. In that regard, the nuclear-weapon States with the largest nuclear arsenals should take the lead in the nuclear disarmament process. However, my delegation expresses reservations about the continued requests for adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and we do not subscribe to the decisions of the NPT Review Conferences. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a non-party, but as we share and support the main objective of the draft resolution that calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, my delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole.

Secondly, on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.2, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", my delegation voted in favour, as we express strong support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and we would like to underline the importance of taking confidence-building measures in order to enhance peace and security in that region. While we support the main objective of the draft resolution, however, my delegation dissociates itself from references to a general call for universal adherence to the NPT, as that does not conform to our position.

With regard to draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.37, A/C.1/70/L.38 and A/C.1/70/L.40, my delegation shares deep concerns about the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. The only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination.

Although the Democratic People's Republic of Korea extends its principled support for the primary purpose of these draft resolutions, it abstained in the voting due to the unique security environment on the Korean peninsula. As is well known, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was compelled to possess a nuclear deterrent to cope with the ever-increasing nuclear threats from outside forces and to safeguard its sovereignty and security. For a country that is fully exposed to the hostility of the largest nuclear-weapon State there is no other option but to strengthen its nuclear deterrent for self-defence. The nuclear deterrent of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea does not constitute any threat to non-nuclear-weapon States, or to nuclear-weapon-free zones established in several regions of the world.

Lastly, on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.46, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty", as in previous years, my delegation voted against draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.46 because the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains firm in its decision to reject Security Council resolutions 1874 (2009) and 2094 (2013), referred to in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. Those Security Council resolutions are the product of arbitrariness, coerciveness and double standards.

In contrast to its response to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear tests, the Security Council remains silent with regard to the annual nuclear war exercises conducted by the United States in South Korea against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are a self-defensive measure to cope with the ever-increasing nuclear threats of the United States. Genuine peace can be ensured only when a country is strong enough to deter any attempts at foreign aggression.

I should like to remind the Committee that the five permanent members of the Security Council have conducted 99 per cent of all nuclear tests to date — 2,052 — while for my country has done so only three times. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot accept the call to accede to the CTBT due to the unique security environment on the Korean peninsula. More attention should be paid to taking practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, which remains the highest priority, rather than non-proliferation.

Mr. Masmejean (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I shall deliver a joint explanation of vote on four draft resolutions, and three explanations of vote in our national capacity.

(*spoke in English*)

In this joint explanation of vote I speak on behalf of the delegations of Sweden and Switzerland with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons". While our countries have not signed the humanitarian pledge in a national capacity, we voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38. Our delegations share the overall intention of the draft resolution. We share the need to present fact-based discussions, findings and compelling evidence associated with the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons in all the relevant United Nations forums. We also fully

share the conclusions drawn from those discussions and findings that we need to move forward on nuclear disarmament. In that context, we welcome the call addressed to nuclear-possessor States to take concrete interim measures to reduce the risk of nuclear-weapon detonations pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, including reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons. We also share the view that we need to identify legal measures to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world. On that specific issue we would like to underline the following points.

Our Governments do not believe that there is a legal gap in existing law, such as international humanitarian law, or specific treaties, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. However, if we look at the body of disarmament law as a whole, it becomes clear that, whereas other weapons of mass destruction, such as biological and chemical weapons, are banned, nuclear weapons are not. In addition, to implement article VI of the NPT, further legal instruments are needed, be they bilateral, plurilateral or multilateral, to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Our Governments therefore endorsed the call in the draft resolution to pursue legal effective measures. In doing so our delegations do not see a nuclear ban treaty as the only available legal option for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. We emphasize that we would be favourably disposed towards any set of effective legal measures, and underline that any process towards the elaboration of a new legal instrument would need to be undertaken with the participation and engagement, not the stigmatization of, countries that possess nuclear weapons and their allies.

Finally, our Governments welcomed the opportunity provided by the draft resolution to articulate their position with regard to both the legal gap and the humanitarian pledge.

(spoke in French)

I shall now provide three explanations of vote in my national capacity.

Switzerland once again this year voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.2, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". The draft resolution promotes the universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the Middle East region.

Switzerland fully endorses that goal. Switzerland regrets that specific measures adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference regarding the establishment in the Middle East of a nuclear-weapon-free zone free from all other weapons of mass destruction were not implemented as planned. The establishment of such a zone is still a crucial goal. Switzerland actively supported efforts pertaining to the provisions in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and is prepared to continue to support any process focusing on the creation of the zone. Regarding the elements in the draft resolution, Switzerland notes that in the operative paragraphs only one of the dimensions linked to the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East is mentioned, and they highlight just one State in the region. By voting in favour of the draft resolution Switzerland seeks to show the importance it also attaches to the full implementation of commitments stemming from the NPT by all States in the Middle East and by the parties to that instrument.

I should now like to move to an explanation of vote regarding draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.21, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". Switzerland did not support this draft resolution, thus maintaining its position of previous years regarding the text. Switzerland still believes that a draft resolution that seeks to aim at the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should have an appropriate reference to the pertinence and importance of the international non-proliferation regime. The Conferences held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons underscored that the likelihood of an intentional, accidental or voluntary nuclear explosion were underestimated. The consequence of any nuclear explosion would be catastrophic and would go beyond any ability to respond. In that context, taking additional measures to prevent all use of nuclear weapons, including by strengthening the norm of the non-use of nuclear weapons, is important and still important for the international community. Given the absence of a legally binding instrument dealing with this matter, all nuclear-weapon States are encouraged to take practical steps so that the use of nuclear weapons becomes increasingly unthinkable. Such measures in particular should renounce modernizing nuclear weapons. There must be a reduction of their role in national doctrines. Switzerland is prepared to continue dialogue with the sponsors of the draft resolution in order to see the text develop so that it can enjoy broader support.

A large number of comments pertaining to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.21 also pertain to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.20, entitled “Reducing nuclear danger”. We also hope that that draft resolution will see developments in order to meet our concerns regarding it.

(spoke in English)

Finally, I should like to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.15, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”. The meeting, held on 26 September 2013, proved to be an event of particular significance. Attended at the senior political level, it marked strong support for renewed efforts towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Deeming it important to build upon the momentum created at the meeting, Switzerland voted in favour of the draft resolution on the follow-up to the high-level meeting when submitted in 2013 and in 2014. While confirming its positive vote this year, my delegation would like to underline the following points.

Switzerland remains convinced that in taking the high-level meeting process forward we should act in a collective and inclusive way and aim at uniting the United Nations membership in pursuit of the shared goal of nuclear disarmament. In that context, we would see value in deeper actions among the authors of the draft resolution and other States during the drafting process with a view to overcoming outstanding differences.

The high-level meeting follow-up draft resolution welcomes the convening of the high-level meeting and underlines the strong support expressed on that occasion for taking urgent and effective measures to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In doing so we see the draft resolution as fully consistent with the broad support expressed at the high-level meeting that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, with all its three pillars, constitutes the cornerstone of efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

In that context, we would see value in explicit references also to the NPT Review Conference’s outcome documents and other developments linked to the Treaty review cycle. Referring to article VI of the NPT, the draft resolution calls for urgent compliance with the legal obligations and the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken on nuclear disarmament. We firmly believe that nuclear disarmament will become a reality only if all States possessing nuclear weapons

move resolutely in that direction and fully commit to the objective of nuclear disarmament.

As nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing and inherently linked, any new case of proliferation of nuclear weapons would put at risk further progress on nuclear disarmament. Hence the draft resolution’s call for urgent compliance with the legal obligations and the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken on nuclear disarmament extends also to the need for compliance with non-proliferation obligations.

Furthermore, my delegation does not see a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons as the only option for achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. The exchanges at the high-level meeting indicated that different approaches were possible when seeking to achieve that goal. That is also underscored by the report of the open-ended working group on nuclear disarmament that met in 2013.

We share the view that additional legal instruments are needed to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world, and we would be positively disposed towards the elaboration of any set of effective legal measures. That should be done in an inclusive manner, and we hope for constructive engagement by all States.

Finally, we see the United Nations high-level international conference to be convened in 2018 as a General Assembly meeting that will provide an opportunity to take stock of, and give new impetus to, efforts towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons. We also welcome the call in the draft resolution for negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, reaffirming thereby the central role of the Conference as the single permanent multilateral negotiating body.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) *(spoke in Chinese)*: The Chinese delegation would like to avail itself of the opportunity briefly to explain China’s positions on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, entitled “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”; draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled “Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons”; and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, entitled “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”.

China attaches importance to the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. From the very first day when it came into the possession of nuclear weapons, China has actively advocated

the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China faithfully abides by its undertaking and commitments not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or in any circumstances, and clearly undertakes not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones unconditionally.

China believes that the objective of nuclear disarmament cannot be realized in a single step, nor can it be promoted in disregard of the global security environment. We are of the view that nuclear disarmament should be pursued through an incremental approach on the basis of upholding the cornerstone role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, maintaining a global strategic balance and stability, and adhering to the principle of consensus.

Due to those considerations, China abstained in the voting on the three draft resolutions.

Ms. Thunborg (Sweden): I will make two statements, one on behalf of two countries and one in a national capacity.

First, I take the floor on behalf of the delegations of Switzerland and Sweden to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.40, entitled "Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world". We abstained in the voting on the draft resolution. We acknowledge that ethical principles and moral considerations play an important role for the development of international law and that they are often reflected therein, especially in international humanitarian law. The Martens Clause, or the dictates of public conscience that protects civilians and belligerents under principles of international law, is one such example that is also relevant when we discuss the legality of nuclear weapons.

We therefore welcome the debate on ethical aspects related to nuclear weapons as they have been presented — for example, at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. However, our delegations believe that it is unfortunate that the draft resolution mixes international law and ethical principles in the way it does. It is important to protect international law as a system of legally binding rules, and not merely as imperatives of morality, otherwise the system risks being undermined. While ethical and moral obligations play their important role, the strength of international law is that it is a rules-based system that obliges States to act in accordance with its rules and ensures that States are responsible

for violations. Countries' actions need to be taken in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and with international law, and not be based merely on a moral or ethical obligation. We look forward to continuing discussion on this and other related issues with the sponsors of the draft resolution and with other delegations, as well as to the increased involvement of research institutions and civil society on this matter.

Now please allow me to continue with a national statement to explain Sweden's position on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.51, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons".

Based on the principles explained in our general statement under cluster I, delivered yesterday afternoon (see A/C.1/70/PV.22), Sweden voted in favour of the draft resolution, even if we do not believe that the immediate commencement of negotiations on a nuclear-weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the only possible way forward.

The Swedish positions on draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.15, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", and on A/C.1/70/L.38, entitled "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons", have already been explained by the representatives of New Zealand and by Switzerland, respectively.

Mr. Robotjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like to explain the position of my delegation with regard to draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.1, A/C.1/70/L.26 and A/C.1/70/L.46.

In connection with draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.1, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", we believe that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East has been an important objective and priority for Iran since 1974, when Iran first proposed the establishment of such a zone. However, in spite of the endorsement of that proposal by the General Assembly through its consensual resolutions, no progress has been made so far in the establishment of such a zone.

The Israeli regime continues to be the only impediment in the way of realizing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It continues to block all international and regional efforts to achieve goal. In its latest obstructive act, it foiled the convening

of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, which was mandated by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be held under United Nations auspices.

It goes without saying that the possession of nuclear weapons by the Israeli regime, coupled with its dark track record in committing aggression, occupation and other international crimes, continues to pose the most serious threat to the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT in the region. To establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, the international community has no choice but to exert all efforts to compel the Israeli regime to verifiably eliminate all its nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon party without preconditions and place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) comprehensive safeguards. The sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East have a special responsibility and commitment in that regard. Neglecting their commitment has emboldened Israel to continue its traditional policy of flouting international agreements.

On draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.26, entitled “United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”, we share the main objective of the draft resolution in calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, the assertion in the eighth preambular paragraph that the fulfilment of nuclear-disarmament obligations is conditional upon the enhancement of international peace and security is not acceptable. Full compliance with legal obligations on nuclear disarmament under any circumstances is essential to achieve the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution specifically addresses certain regional issues related to the East Asia region, but ignores equally addressing the proliferation risk posed by the unsafeguarded nuclear facilities of the Israeli regime as the only non-party to the NPT in the Middle East region. We believe the non-proliferation norm should be applied globally and without exception. Nuclear proliferation is as dangerous in the Middle East as it is in other parts of the world.

With regard to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, while the draft resolution calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations on

a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), it remains completely silent with respect to the need for the urgent commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament.

For those reasons, my delegation decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution as a whole.

Turning to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.46, entitled “Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty” (CTBT) the Islamic Republic of Iran is a signatory State of the CTBT. Therefore, my delegation voted in favour to the draft resolution as a whole. However, my delegation dissociates itself from the references in the draft resolution to Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I should first like to express my gratitude for the words of condolence that have been conveyed to Russia, and all of the Russian people, on the occasion of the crash of the A-321 jetliner that was flying to St. Petersburg from Sharm el-Sheikh on Saturday 31 October. All 224 people on board died. This was the largest crash in the entire history of Russian and Soviet aviation. The ability to sympathize is one of the most important traits of humankind. The demonstration of that ability to sympathize and empathize gives us hope that in no way all positive human qualities are lost and we together can indeed build our home here in the world not through confrontation but by building stability and equal and indivisible security for every single State without exception.

I should like now to provide an explanation of the Russian position on the vote on the draft resolutions on nuclear weapons.

In contrast to previous years, the Russian Federation voted against draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.26, the Japanese draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons. Since this renewed draft resolution appeared, we convincingly explained to the sponsors that it was not acceptable to change the previous relatively balanced contents of the document. Unfortunately, our arguments were not heeded. As a result, the draft resolution was deemed unacceptable to us. First, that was because of the dangerous trend to distort historical facts, primarily events linked to the outcome of the Second World War. In that connection, we had the honour yesterday of hearing a strong statement made by the representative of the People’s Republic of China, a statement that the Russian Federation supports.

Together we are sympathetic to the victims of the Nagasaki bombing. That tragedy should never happen again. To ensure that it does not, there is always a need to recall all of the horrors of that war, including the death of millions — 27 million citizens of the Soviet Union and 35 million Chinese. The nuclear bombing by the United States still affects Japan. That was a cynical attempt to initially use plutonium, and then to use a uranium nuclear bomb on civilians of another State. That bombing essentially was not the conclusion of the Second World War but the first step towards the Cold War. All the events that took place after that were a clear confirmation of that statement.

On another topic, we cannot agree with what is being done in the area of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The consequences obviously are clear — the full destruction of our civilization. No additional discussions are needed on the matter. Focusing on the humanitarian aspects just creates the illusion that we are moving forward and making progress and creates unfounded expectations in people. In fact, the international community is just putting to one side a solution and creating conditions that are already clear to all to move towards full nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, there has been a humanitarian discussion that really has no substance and on which many resources have been wasted, resources that could well have been used for much better aims. There is a need to recognize an absolute truth: that any cut to nuclear arsenals should be carried out in such a way as to strengthen international security and our strategic stability, and not the contrary. Think about this. Is a nuclear-free world possible if somebody tries to build it on a less predictable and more dangerous basis than the basis that we together are focusing on today? There is a need to recognize the obvious. Without strict compliance with the fundamental principles of the equal, indivisible security of all States without exception, progress towards disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, is just not possible.

There is a need to comprehensively take into consideration every single factor that has an impact on our strategic stability in the context of nuclear disarmament. There needs to be a clear interlinkage between nuclear and general and complete disarmament, as clearly stipulated in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). There needs to be a link between strategic, offensive and defensive weapons, as is clearly stipulated in our

agreement on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with the United States. Guided by those principles, the Russian Federation is fully upholding its commitments under article VI of the NPT and is making its commitment to nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, Russia urges all those who, not just in words but in deeds, are striving to achieve nuclear disarmament and to develop a comprehensive declaration on strengthening strategic stability and preparing real, practical steps to ensure equal and indivisible security and safety for all States. The sooner we all recognize that there is no other faster path towards nuclear disarmament, the sooner all together we can start to move towards our overall goal, a world free from nuclear weapons.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting on draft resolutions under cluster 1, “Nuclear weapons”, carried over from yesterday.

The Committee will now turn to informal paper 2, distributed this morning, beginning with cluster 2, “Other weapons of mass destruction”. We will again follow the established four-step process. Step 1 is general statements or the introduction of new or revised draft resolutions. As there are no delegations that wish to make general statements or to introduce draft resolutions under this cluster, as well as none that wish to make a statement in explanation of vote or position before we take action on the draft resolutions, we shall proceed to the voting and to take action on the draft resolutions.

The Committee will first take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.12, entitled “Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Nakano (Secretary of the Committee): This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Hungary at the Committee’s 14th meeting, held on 22 October. The sponsor of the draft resolution is listed in document A/C.1/70/L.12.

In addition, the following oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.12, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention, to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Review Conferences and to render the necessary assistance and to provide such services as may be required for the remaining meetings of States parties during the current intersessional process, and for the preparation and conduct of the eighth Review Conference.

The Secretary-General wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that the States parties to the Convention, at the seventh Review Conference, in December 2011, approved the cost estimates prepared by the Secretariat for servicing the meetings of experts and the meetings of States parties of the 2012-2015 intersessional programme. Furthermore, the meeting of States parties, to be held from 14 to 18 December 2015, will approve arrangements for the eighth Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee in 2016, including cost estimates prepared by the Secretariat.

It is recalled that all activities related to international conventions or treaties that, under their respective legal arrangements, are to be financed by the States parties to the Convention may be undertaken by the Secretariat only when sufficient funding is received in advance. Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.12 would not give rise to any financial implications under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

The Chair: The sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.12 has expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.12 was adopted.

The Chair: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.19, entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Nakano (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.19 was introduced by the representative of India at the Committee's 10th meeting, on 20 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.19

and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.4. In addition, Kazakhstan and the Netherlands have become sponsors of the draft resolution.

The Chair: The sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.19 has expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.19 was adopted.

The Chair: I now call on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to make a statement in explanation of position.

Mr. Ammar (Pakistan): I have requested the floor to explain our position on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.19, entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction".

My delegation shares the concern that terrorists and non-State actors may potentially acquire and use weapons and materials that could cause mass destruction. We therefore continue to support the objectives of the draft resolution, although we believe that there is room to improve it by conveying a more objective reflection of reality.

The fear of the acquisition and use of weapons and materials of mass destruction by terrorists and non-State actors needs to be evaluated and viewed in perspective. Terrorist organizations and non-State actors are more likely to acquire and use chemical weapons and biological-weapon materials and capabilities. The acquisition and use of nuclear weapons by terrorists and non-State actors is much less likely. However, the international community must not lower its guard in preventing the possibility of the development and use of dirty bombs. Increased international cooperation, including the initiation of negotiations on a radiological weapons convention, should be given serious consideration.

While the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Nuclear Security Summit process and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism play a useful role in that regard, this objective cannot justify practices and cartels that hinder legitimate trade in materials, equipment and technology for demonstrably peaceful purposes.

With regard the denial of means for terrorists to acquire, possess and use weapons of mass destruction, States have enacted and enforced export-control

measures, national physical protection and other related actions to prevent weapons-of-mass-destruction technology from falling into the hands of terrorists. It is essential to scale up international assistance in capacity-building areas. To lend greater legitimacy to international efforts in that area, interim measures such as the adoption of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1977 (2011), which were designed to fill the gap in international law, need to be taken up by a more inclusive and representative United Nations forum.

We agree with the widely held view that the best guarantee against the threat of the possible use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons lies in their elimination. The faithful implementation of existing treaty regimes such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction can effectively address most of those threats. Early disarmament of chemical stocks would enhance the confidence level against the likelihood of their acquisition and use by terrorists. However, as long as the process of chemical-weapons disarmament proceeds at a slow pace and huge quantities of chemical weapons exist, the possibility of their falling into terrorist hands will remain as well.

Controlling biological weapons should be of more concern, particularly to industrially advanced States due to the extensive use of biological agents by them. Threats posed by the dual nature of biotechnology are real. Recent advances in synthetic biology raise immediate concerns related to ethics, safety and security. States should therefore employ the utmost transparency and confidence-building measures during all their activities related to this form of biology.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction should therefore be strengthened, including through the conclusion of a verification protocol that had been negotiated for more than eight years. Reviving that process would fully serve the goal of promoting international peace and security as well as address the concerns expressed, for example, in this draft resolution.

In our view, a comprehensive strategy must be evolved to prevent the possibility of terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. It must include, inter alia, depriving terrorist organizations of their

operational and organizational capability; strengthening the relevant existing multilateral regimes; negotiating a universal treaty to fill the gaps in current international instruments; augmenting States' capacity to implement global treaty obligations; and addressing the root causes of terrorism. A distinction must be maintained between counter-terrorism and non-proliferation.

This draft resolution quite appropriately mentions the final document of the sixteenth Summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as having expressed itself on the issue of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. We would like to remind the Committee that, in the context of the issue of terrorism, the same document also stresses the need to identify and address the causes that sometimes lead to terrorism, causes that lie in suppression, injustice and deprivation.

The Chair: We turn now to cluster 3, "Outer space (disarmament aspects)". Again, we will base ourselves on informal paper 2 based on the four-step process. I shall first give the floor to delegations that wish to make general statements or to introduce new or revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation has consistently supported international efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space. We are in favour of maintaining outer space as a place free for peaceful use in the interests of every State and all humankind. Traditionally, we have been co-sponsors of General Assembly resolutions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This year, draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.3 was put forward by Sri Lanka.

In the draft resolution, the general thrust on which we all need to focus has been highlighted in order to solve the challenge of preventing the placement of weapons in outer space. The Russian Federation considers that achieving predictability and security in space work and, at the same time, strengthening equal security for all and global stability overall can happen only through practical measures. It is for that reason that, in 2004, the Russian Federation made a political commitment not to place weapons in outer space. Known as the Bangkok initiative, our initiative has already officially been acceded to by 11 States, namely, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Cuba, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka. On 26 October, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela also took a responsible step.

The constant and growing support for our initiative has been confirmed by the results of the voting on a draft resolution that was presented for the first time last year — adopted by an overwhelming majority of votes. We note with satisfaction that this year the number of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”, has already increased to 39. We trust that the number of sponsors will further increase. We count on overall support from the United Nations for this extremely important document. Once again we would like to specially underscore that our draft resolution is a call for dialogue, to all States Members of the United Nations, to consider the possibility of globalizing this important initiative and political commitment on not placing weapons in outer space. If all States take upon themselves the political commitment not to place weapons in outer space, it would be a joint political guarantee that nobody would ever be bold enough to place weapons in outer space or threaten to do so.

I should particularly like to draw attention to the fact that we have come together here in order to solve issues pertaining to international security and disarmament, and not to create them. We are all well aware that just one State is against our joint efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, and the position of that State is well known and clear. Its national doctrinal documents specifically stipulate a desire to dominate outer space. Provision is allowed for the use of weapons against other States, therefore that is an attempt to undermine the global format for this initiative of non-placement of weapons in outer space.

Our European partners are another matter completely, and also other States that deem themselves to be part of the Western democratic world. We are all aware that officially the prevention of an arms race in outer space is part of the domestic priorities of all European Union States, as well as Canada, Japan, Australia and the Republic of Korea, and we can continue that list. I should just like to give one stark example.

At the 2005 Moscow Summit, Russia and the European Union agreed upon a road map on the general thrust for joint efforts to ensure international security. That road map specifically calls for action to prevent an arms race in outer space. For that reason, frankly, we do not understand. Is it possible that European Union countries are being subjected to such external pressure and were not able to hold on to their national

sovereignty that suddenly they have to refrain even from dialogue on the issue of the non-placement of weapons in outer space? Is that really the case? The arguments given here saying that the non-placement of weapons in outer space is hard to verify, that there is no definition of weapons in outer space, or the initiative on the non-placement of weapons in outer space does not deal with the issue of anti-satellite weapons are just not serious. Those arguments are not serious.

The globalization of this initiative to prevent the first placement of weapons in outer space is specifically intended to target all of these highlighted issues. The process of non-placement of weapons in outer space and also the development of treaties to prevent weapons being placed in outer space and their use or threat of use of force against space objects are also crucial, as are efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space. They are all different components of one whole, and that whole is our general effort to ensure that there is no arms race in outer space, that it will never occur and that outer space will never become an arena for an armed confrontation.

Once again, I should like to draw the attention of our partners who consider themselves part of the Western democratized world to this issue. I should like to urge them to demonstrate their sovereign resolve and responsibility not just in words but also in deeds. I urge them to be in favour of initiatives to prevent an arms race in outer space, and therefore support draft resolution A/C.1/70 L.47. In that way, they can take a real step forward in supporting overall efforts to ensure that there are no arms in outer space and preventing any hostilities in outer space. We all still have an opportunity to prevent the spread in outer space of all those problems that, quite frankly speaking, we are not doing very well at dealing with here on Earth. Think about it.

We very much hope that the draft resolution on the no first placement of weapons in outer space will indeed be supported by all responsible States of the United Nations.

Ms. Ramos (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba supports and co-sponsors the two draft resolutions that are set to be adopted this afternoon, namely, draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.3, entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”, and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”. We also support and co-sponsor draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48, entitled “Transparency and

confidence-building measures in outer space activities". Action on the latter is to be taken later. All three texts are consistent with Cuba's position.

All States have the legitimate right to the use and exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes to the benefit of the scientific and economic development of humankind as a whole. An arms race in outer space would entail serious threats to international peace and security. Our country believes that the militarization of outer space is unacceptable. Cuba has formally committed to not being the first country to place weapons of any kind in outer space. In addition, our country supports the urgent adoption of a treaty for the prevention and prohibition of the placement of arms in outer space, as well as on the use or threat of use of force against satellites or any other space-based equipment. We believe that a draft treaty on this particular issue as presented in the Conference on Disarmament by the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China constitutes a good starting point for negotiations.

The adoption of international transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities is timely and necessary as a complement to any treaty on prevention and prohibition. We would like to reiterate the point that any code of conduct or similar measure for confidence-building that might be proposed needs to be absolutely unequivocal with regard to the prohibition of the placement of arms in space. Any ambiguity with regard to such a prohibition would not only be counter-productive, it would also be dangerous.

Echoing a point that we have made in previous years, it is our hope that draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.3 and A/C.1/70/L.47 will be adopted with the support of all Member States.

Ms. Bila (Ukraine): First, I should like to join those who have expressed condolences to the families of victims of the crash of the Russian A-321 civilian airliner in Egypt.

Ukraine is committed to all aspects of disarmament, including the issue of no placement of any kind of weapons in outer space. At the same time, I should like to inform the Committee that my delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space". The draft resolution, submitted by the Russian Federation, does not look credible.

Unfortunately, since 2014 the situation with Russia's aggressive policy has not changed. The year 2015 brought to the international stage attacks in Syria and continued war in the east of Ukraine. By advertising no first placement of nuclear weapons in outer space, the Russian Federation and those who support it draw attention away from the crime being committed by the State in the east of Ukraine. The Russian draft resolution draws attention away from the nuclear infrastructure placed by the Russian Federation in the occupied territory of Ukraine in the autonomous Republic of Crimea and from their military actions against Ukraine in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of my country.

The draft resolution submitted by the aggressor has no right to exist.

Mr. Garrido Melo (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile would like to explain its vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space", introduced under sub-item (b) of agenda item 95.

The delegation of Chile will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47 because my country attaches the greatest importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and we would like to reiterate our commitment to preserving space for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Chile would like to emphasize that the fact that a State or group of States declare that they would not be the first to place weapons in outer space cannot be interpreted in any circumstances as tacit acceptance of a right to place weapons in outer space in response to another State or group of States that are identified as having done so. Chile will continue to work to prevent the placement of arms in outer space by any actor at any time and under any circumstances.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Outer space is the common heritage of humankind. Safeguarding the security of outer space is the common responsibility of the members of the international community. The Chinese Government is consistently against the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space and supports the early conclusion of a treaty on arms control in outer space through negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

The draft convention on outer space jointly proposed at the CD by China and the Russian

Federation is the most consensual and mature basis for formulating the norms governing outer space security. China also believes that appropriate and workable transparency and confidence-building measures can enhance mutual confidence, reduce miscalculations and regulate activities in outer space. That is conducive to the maintenance of security in outer space and positively complements the process of preventing the weaponization of, and arms race in, outer space. Accordingly, China is a sponsor of the three relevant draft resolutions — draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.3, entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”; draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”; and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48, entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”.

We are pleased to note that, after 30 years of adopting the General Assembly’s annual resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space by an overwhelming majority, last year China, Russia and other countries jointly introduced the draft resolution entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”, in the First Committee, which was later adopted by a huge majority. That fully reflects the common call of the international community for the prevention of the weaponization of outer space. Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47 is very significant in advancing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space, as well as in promoting, and ultimately concluding through negotiations, a multilateral arms control treaty thereon. We hope that even more countries will support the draft resolution.

China is consistently using outer space for peaceful purposes and is always resolutely against the weaponization of, and arms race in, outer space. China has made unremitting efforts in that regard. We look forward to working with all parties in a joint effort to advance the multilateral process of arms control in outer space.

The Chair: I shall now give the floor to delegations that wish to explain their votes before the voting on the draft resolutions listed under cluster 3.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): My delegation has, to use the words of the representative of the Russian Federation, thought about it. In fact, we have had a very good think about draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”, and we will vote against it.

In considering the Russian Federation’s no-first-placement initiative, the United States took very seriously the criteria for evaluating space-related transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs). They were established in the 2013 consensus report (see A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts’ study of outer space TCBMs. That study was later endorsed by the full General Assembly in resolutions 68/50 and 69/38, both of which the United States co-sponsored with Russia and China, as well as in a draft resolution (A/C.1/70/L.48) that is being considered this year in the First Committee.

As the report of the Group of Governmental Experts states, non-legally binding TCBMs for outer space activities should, first, be clear, practical and proven, meaning that both the application and the efficacy of the proposed measure must be demonstrated by one or more actors; secondly, be able to be effectively confirmed by other parties in their application either independently or collectively; and, finally, reduce or eliminate the causes of mistrust, misunderstanding and miscalculation with regard to the activities and intentions of States.

In applying the Group of Governmental Experts’ consensus criteria, the United States finds that Russia’s no-first-placement initiative has a number of significant problems. First, the initiative does not adequately define what constitutes a “weapon in outer space”. As a result, States will not have any mutual understanding of the operative terminology. Secondly, it would not be possible to effectively confirm a State’s political commitment “not to be the first to place weapons in outer space”. Therefore, the application and efficacy of the proposed measure could not be demonstrated. And, thirdly, the no-first-placement initiative focuses exclusively on space-based weapons; it is silent with regard to terrestrially based anti-satellite weapons, and therefore could contribute to increasing, not reducing, mistrust and miscalculations.

To date, the proponents of the no-first-placement initiative — most notably the Russian Federation — have not explained, and did not explain during the First Committee’s thematic discussion, how the initiative is consistent with the Group of Governmental Experts TCBM criteria, or how such an initiative enhances stability in outer space when it is silent with regard to terrestrially based anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons.

Given those problems, in the absence of a satisfactory explanation by the initiative's proponents, the United States has determined that the initiative fails to satisfy the Group of Governmental Experts consensus criteria for a valid TCBM. The initiative is therefore problematic and unlikely to be timely, equitable or effective in addressing the challenges we face in sustaining the outer space environment for future generations. Therefore, as we did last year, the United States will again vote against this Committee draft resolution, and intends again to vote against it in the plenary of the General Assembly.

The United States believes it is not in the international community's interest to engage in a space-weapons arms race. Such a race would not bode well for the long-term sustainability of the space environment. Indeed, United States efforts, bilaterally as well as multilaterally, seek to prevent conflict from extending into space. To that end, the United States continues to engage in sustained dialogue to identify, develop and implement tangible TCBMs that are consistent with the recommendations of the 2013 report of the Group of Governmental Experts.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg): I should first like to express our heartfelt condolences to the Russian Federation for the tragic plane crash on 31 October, in which so many lives were lost.

I take the floor in order to explain our vote on the proposal contained in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space". I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 28 States members of the European Union, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Iceland and Norway. We will abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

We have a long-standing position in favour of the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and of the peaceful uses of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis. Strengthening the safety, security and long-term sustainability of activities in outer space is of common interest and a key priority for us. It contributes to the development and security of States.

We believe it is important to develop initiatives to ensure confidence and mutual trust among current and future space actors. We are convinced that transparency and confidence-building measures can make a contribution to the security, safety and sustainability of activities in outer space, and we encourage States

to support initiatives to that end, such as the European Union proposal for an international code of conduct for outer space activities.

We remain committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Therefore, the European Union member States voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 69/31, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. However, we are concerned that "no first placement of weapons in outer space" does not adequately respond to the objective of strengthening trust and confidence among States. We are concerned by the ambiguity of the very idea of not to be the first to place, which may entice States to prepare to be second or third. We therefore assess that it could be interpreted as implicitly encouraging States to pre-emptively develop offensive space capabilities in order to be able to react to the placement by another State of a weapon in space by in turn placing a weapon in space.

Moreover, the initiative does not address the difficult issue of defining what a weapon in outer space is, which could easily lead a State to mistakenly assess that another State has placed weapons in outer space. Without a common understanding of what constitutes a weapon in space, a State could inadvertently put an object in space that another State considered to be a weapon. For example, a number of existing satellites are capable of performing orbital manoeuvres, and could be construed as being space weapons because they could also have the capability of being manoeuvred into other satellites.

We remain concerned about the continued development of all anti-satellite weapons and capabilities, including terrestrially based, and underline the importance of addressing such developments promptly and as part of international efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space. We therefore assess that introducing a no-first-placement pledge in this environment could lead to misperceptions and misunderstandings. It could potentially have the opposite effect of the declared intention, namely, to contribute to strengthening international peace and security and prevent an arms race in outer space. We believe it is more useful to address the behaviour in, and use of, outer space to further discussions and initiatives on how to prevent space from becoming an arena for conflict and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the space environment.

We would like to stress that, for us, for the reasons we have just outlined, the updated draft resolution on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and on the threat or use of force against outer space objects, as submitted by China and the Russian Federation, does not represent a basis for substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Finally, we would like to recall that we set out our priorities for work at the Conference on Disarmament in our statement during the thematic discussion on the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiola (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico will support draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, for it is in line with the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space, our continued commitment to preserving outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes and our pursuit of general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

Mexico will continue to fight to ensure that no actor under any circumstances will be in a position to place weapons in outer space. Mexico would also like to reiterate that, in particular, nuclear weapons must be prohibited and eliminated irrespective of type or location. Finally, Mexico wishes to make it clear that a declaration by a single country or group of countries that they will not be the first to place weapons in outer space should not be understood in any way as a tacit endorsement or acceptance of a supposed right to place weapons in outer space or to launch weapons into outer space from Earth should they not be the first to do so or in response to an attack. Such a situation could serve to initiate an arms race in outer space, as it could be used as an excuse to justify the potential placement of weapons in space — something Mexico is adamantly opposed to.

Ms. Chan (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”, which was introduced under sub-item (b) of agenda item 95. We will do so because we believe that there is a need to prevent an arms race in outer space. Our decision is rooted in our determination to preserve outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes and to seek general and complete disarmament. Moreover, Costa Rica would like to emphasize that the fact that one State or a group of States declares that they will not be the first to place weapons in outer

space does not mean that there is not a need for a clear and categorical prohibition of the placement of nuclear weapons in outer space — something that Costa Rica would have hoped for. For our country, the goal should be the comprehensive prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective controls and, above all, ensuring that such weapons are never placed in outer space.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of the vote before the vote on cluster 3, “Outer space (Disarmament Aspects)”.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolutions under cluster 3, entitled “Outer space (Disarmament Aspects)”. We will first take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.3, entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Nakano (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.3 was submitted by the representative of Sri Lanka. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.3 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.4. In addition, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Nicaragua, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela have become sponsors of the draft resolution.

The Chair: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan,

Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Israel, Palau, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.3 was adopted by 173 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of South Africa informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chair: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Nakano (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47 was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 23 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.47 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.4. In addition, Angola, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Honduras

and Kazakhstan have become sponsors of the draft resolution.

The Chair: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Georgia, Israel, Ukraine, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino,

Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47 was adopted by 122 votes to 4, with 47 abstentions.

The Chair: We have thus concluded the voting on draft resolutions under cluster 3. I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote following the voting. In view of the lateness of the hour, I will give the floor to just one representative; the remaining delegations will have an opportunity to take the floor at the start of our meeting tomorrow morning.

I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. McConville (Australia): At the outset, may I extend our condolences in connection with the 224 victims of the recent tragic crash, on 31 October, of the Russian charter plane over the Sinai Peninsula.

Australia abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.47. The draft resolution calls on States not to be the first to place weapons in outer space. Australia notes the explanations of vote made on behalf of the European Union and by the representative of the United States, and wishes to outline our three concerns with regard to the draft resolution.

First, the draft resolution does not adequately deal with the question of what constitutes a weapon in outer space. The space environment is one where dual-use technologies abound. Any satellite capable of manoeuvre can be considered a space-based weapon. As such, it is particularly difficult to draw a line between a space object and a space weapon.

Secondly, we do not believe that a no-first-placement pledge would be effectively verifiable. That obligation is of limited value without a means to verify compliance. We do not believe such a pledge is consistent with the evaluation criteria for space-related transparency and confidence-building measures established by consensus in the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts study (see A/68/189) on transparency and confidence-building measures.

Thirdly, the draft resolution is solely focused on space-based weapons and does not address the threat of terrestrially based weapons. The most serious threat to space-based systems currently being developed are not

those placed into space but those that are terrestrially based, such as anti-satellite missiles and high-energy lasers. The draft resolution is silent on those threats.

Given those concerns, we are unable to support this draft resolution and we abstained in the voting.

The Chair: I shall now give the floor to those delegations who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to use the right of reply to reply to some of the comments that were made by the delegation of Ukraine. First I should like to thank the delegation of Ukraine for the words of condolence that were expressed about the crash of the Russian airliner. I express our thanks as well to all of the Ukrainian people, as well as people in Moscow and other capitals throughout the world, who expressed condolences.

I, too, would like to take this opportunity to express my condolences to the brotherly Ukrainian people — in connection with the numerous victims of the armed coup d'état against the State in February 2014, supported by the European Union and the United States of America, which led to a transfer of power to ultra-nationalist forces in Kyiv and to a bloody civil war.

Crimes against humanity have been committed in Ukraine over the past year, with heavy weapons and air strikes constantly being used against civilians. As we all know, it was only thanks to the joint efforts of the leaders of France, Germany and Russia that we managed to stop those barbaric actions by the Kyiv regime in the south-east of Ukraine.

I ask colleagues from Ukraine to stop using such terms as “aggression” with regard to Russia; it simply does not look serious. Russia has a great deal of love for its brotherly Ukrainian people. Russia has never fought, and will never fight against, Ukraine. Everybody is extremely well aware of that.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I will be very brief in exercising my right of reply.

I should like to say very clearly, as I think the record shows, that the United States has supported the democratic forces in Ukraine, the democratically elected Government in Ukraine. Russia needs to stop undermining democracy in Ukraine and respect the territorial integrity of the country.

Ms. Bila (Ukraine): I thank those who support Ukrainian democratic changes. Everybody in this Conference Room understands all the lies that have been said by the Russian Federation. I should like to draw the attention of the Russian delegation to the fact that the best way to show their real love and brotherhood to Ukraine is just to stop killing us. Do not tell me what is going on in Ukraine, because I know who is killing me and who is looking in my eyes and holding the gun.

The Chair: We have exhausted the time available to us today.

I call on the Secretary to update the Committee on the stages of the issuance of the documents related to programme budget implications.

Mr. Nakano (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee secretariat has been informed by the budget office that the following six draft resolutions will have programme budget implications. Under cluster 1: draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”; draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.25, entitled “Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”; and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.28/Rev.1, entitled “Effective measures on nuclear disarmament”. Under cluster 3: draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48, entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”. Under cluster 4: draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36, entitled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”. And under cluster 5: draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”.

Programme budget implication documents are being prepared for issuance as individual documents. They will be available on the Official Documents System by 9 a.m. as follows: draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.25, A/C.1/70/L.36 and A/C.1/70/L.48 on Wednesday; and draft resolutions A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1 and A/C.1/70/L.28/Rev.1 on Thursday. We do not yet have any indication as to the availability of the document for draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45. The Committee secretariat will keep delegations informed as much as possible.

The Chair: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Rowland (United Kingdom): On the issue of programme budget implications, the document for draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.25 has already been published. The implications in that regard are in respect of the report that is called for in the draft resolution.

We have already agreed draft resolutions that also call for reports without programme budget implications being introduced. It would be very helpful to know why this draft resolution — or draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36, on improvised explosive devices — which also calls for a report, generates programme budget implications, but the draft resolutions that we have already agreed that also call for reports do not generate such implications. It would be helpful if there were some consistency.

Mr. Nakano (Secretary of the Committee): Through you, Mr. Chair, I would like to inform the delegation of the United Kingdom that we will report what was said to the officers in charge of the issue in the Secretariat.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.