



General Assembly

Seventieth session

First Committee

3rd meeting

Friday, 9 October 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands)

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

Agenda items 88 to 105 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chair: In accordance with our programme of work, we will begin with the traditional exchange with the Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on follow-up of draft resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous sessions and the presentation of reports.

I shall now suspend the meeting to enable us to consider this topic in an informal setting, in keeping with the established practice of the Committee.

The meeting was suspended at 10.05 a.m. and resumed at 10.15 a.m.

The Chair: Before opening the floor, I should like to remind all delegations once more that the rolling list for speakers for this segment of our work will close today at 6 p.m. All delegations intending to take the floor should inscribe their names on the list before that deadline.

I would furthermore like to remind delegations of the time limit of 10 minutes when speaking in their national capacity, and of 15 minutes when speaking on behalf of several delegations.

Mr. Sano (Japan): On behalf of the member States of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), namely, Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines,

Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to you, Ambassador Van Oosterom, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at the seventieth session. I assure you of the utmost support of the NPDI as you successfully lead the Committee.

We, the members of the NPDI, renew our determination to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. To that end, we will continue to work together on concrete and practical measures to advance both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as mutually reinforcing processes.

We reaffirm our shared commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the global nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The universalization of the Treaty remains a goal of the utmost importance. The NPDI is determined to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty across all three of its pillars, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The NPDI regrets that the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was unable to produce a consensus outcome; however, that does not mean we should resign ourselves to five years of minimal ambition and progress.

The previous consensus outcomes related to the NPT remain relevant and valid, including the decisions and the resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, the final documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences and, most important, the 2010 Action Plan. Much work remains to be done, especially

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by the nuclear-weapon States. The NPDI remains committed to strengthening their implementation and to taking forward new initiatives where progress is possible.

The NPDI therefore calls for States parties to continue their efforts to fully implement their commitments. In this spirit, the NPDI will continue to contribute constructively to advancing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation based on the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency during the 2020 NPT review process.

The NPDI remains open to dialogue and cooperation with individual States parties, regional groups and civil society to help achieve our common goal of a renewed and strengthened consensus in 2020.

Mr. Roth-Snir (Israel): At the outset, Sir, let me congratulate you on chairing our deliberations. I assure you of the cooperation and support of my delegation, as well as our confidence in your steering the discussions to a successful outcome.

Israel supports a vision of a Middle East free from wars, hostility and weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. This is a vision that all of the region's inhabitants should aspire to, based on the hope for peace, mutual recognition, reconciliation and the cessation of all acts of terrorism, aggression and hostility. At the same time, Israel believes that arms-control and disarmament processes are inseparable from the context in which they exist. They need to be formulated in a way that addresses the relevant circumstances, challenges and threats prevailing in the region. Those processes cannot be disassociated from the problematic surrounding environment, which is their *raison d'être*.

For arms-control and disarmament processes to be meaningful and relevant, one must begin by defining the essence of the problems that need to be addressed, the most effective way to tackle them, who has to participate in the process, and the broader security architecture in which the process or agreement would be set. The Middle East is no different. Initiatives for the initiation of a regional dialogue on arms control and disarmament have to be firmly planted in reality. In order to work, they should address all the relevant aspects of regional security and enhance the individual and collective security of all regional partners.

Since the convening of the previous session of First Committee, the Middle East has been further destabilized and radicalized. The erosion of State sovereignty has never been so apparent. Territories that in the past had been under the control of central regimes are now contested or overrun by terrorist groups to which those territories have been ceded or abandoned. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) now controls over 100,000 square kilometres of Syrian and Iraqi territory and is running the daily lives of approximately 6 million people. Other organizations have control over additional areas. That raises questions as to the extent to which some States in the region can exercise fundamental functions and control territory and about the implications on any regional process. Under such circumstances, the answer to those questions may play a determining factor in the sustainability of any regional endeavour.

In today's Middle East, unfortunately, chemical weapons are in continuous, regular use. While we recognize that the removal and destruction of the Syrian regime's declared chemical weapons was indeed an important and significant achievement, we are concerned by the erosion of the absolute prohibition against the use of chemical weapons and about the evolution of a new, more lenient norm on our borders — one that includes the maintenance of residual capabilities, an increase in the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, which should have stopped immediately after Syria's accession to the Convention on Chemical Weapons (CWC), and the expansion of the use of chemical weapons to additional non-State actors and areas. It is all the more troubling that, owing to the frequent use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, the use of such agents is emulated by terror organizations and has become almost commonplace during fighting. Taken together with the erosion of regional borders, that constitutes a very negative development, especially in the light of ambitions by other terrorist organizations, such as Hizbullah and jihadist groups, to acquire and apply such capabilities in the future. That cannot become the new normal, either in the Middle East or in the world at large. Lasting arms-control and disarmament agreements cannot be based on a record of non-compliance with international obligations. Moral and legal obligations cannot be carelessly flouted.

Iran remains the most significant threat to the security of the Middle East and beyond. The agreement

reached between Iran and the P5+1 is unlikely to stop Iran's relentless pursuit of a nuclear-weapon capability. The agreement provides Iran with continuous economic relief, which will enable the Iranian regime to further increase its support to terror organizations by providing additional advanced weapons, financial and political support and training, and will allow Tehran to advance its subversive activities in the region. Such activities, which contravene basic Security Council resolutions, take place while Iran continues its vehement anti-Semitic rhetoric and its threats against Israel and the security of its citizens. Even after the agreement between Iran and the P5+1, Iran's Supreme Leader declared that he remained committed to seeking Israel's destruction and avowed no moment of serenity for Israel until its destruction. Iran's clandestine activities in the nuclear domain in the past, as well as its continued acts of concealment and duplicity, taken together with its policy of aggression and hostility, raise fundamental questions as to whether regional players understand fully the duty to comply with international legal obligations.

Against that troubling backdrop, it is clear that any arms-control and disarmament process cannot be detached from reality. Israel believes that a more secure and peaceful Middle East requires all regional States to engage in a process of direct and sustained dialogue to address the broad range of regional security challenges in the region, which include all the challenges and threats that the Middle East faces individually as well as collectively. Such a dialogue, based on the widely accepted principle of consensus, can emanate only from within the region and address in an inclusive manner the threat perceptions of all regional parties in order to enhance and improve their security. Direct engagement, combined with trust and confidence-building, is an essential basis for the creation of a new security paradigm in a region fraught with wars, conflicts, the disintegration of national territories, and human suffering. Accordingly, Israel agreed in 2011 to enter into a process of consultations facilitated by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Security Policy of Finland, Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, with regard to the security challenges in the Middle East. Between October 2013 and June 2014, five rounds of multilateral consultations were held in Switzerland between Israel and several of its Arab neighbours. The central purpose of those meetings was to seek regional consensus on all the essential aspects of a conference to be held in Helsinki. Israel attended all of those meetings and engaged in good faith with the other participants, and

had agreed to a sixth meeting, which did not take place due to the other side's reluctance to continue the talks.

Israel continues to believe that a direct dialogue that addresses the broad range of security challenges between the regional parties is fundamental for any meaningful consensual discussion on this matter. Israel, for its part, will continue to seek such a meaningful regional discussion, which could lead to a more peaceful and secure Middle East. In the meantime, Israel will continue its policy of adopting, wherever possible, arms and export control agreements and arrangements. Among other steps, Israel signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is actively engaged in the fleshing out of its verification system. This year Israel also hosted a workshop following the Integrated Field Exercise in Jordan. Israel signed the CWC and is actively engaged and maintains a close dialogue with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Israel adopted a policy of adherence to all suppliers' regimes and incorporates throughout its legislation their control lists. In that respect, Israel's signature of the Arms Trade Treaty last year reflects its ongoing commitment to a robust and responsible export control system.

We hope that at the next session of the First Committee the Middle East will be more stable and peaceful, with fewer wars and less terror, and that there will be greater willingness to talk and engage in direct and peaceful discussion.

Mr. Ulyanov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election to your important position. My delegation wishes you every success in the forthcoming work.

By the time of the opening of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, the international community had achieved mixed results in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament. Quite often we hear that the efforts in this area are, if not in a state of crisis, in one of deep stagnation. We believe that such assessments are exaggerated. In fact, recent years have been marked not only by increasing problems, but also by a number of remarkable achievements.

I should first cite the agreement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action for the Iranian nuclear programme. We succeeded in getting through an extremely complicated negotiating process and have begun with a fair degree of certainty to move towards implementing the accords, a convincing demonstration

of the effectiveness of political and diplomatic means in addressing even highly complex issues.

Another breakthrough result has been the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria. Thanks to close cooperation among a number of Governments, the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as well as constructive input from Damascus, in spite of the ongoing hostilities, we succeeded in eliminating the country's chemical warfare potential in an extraordinarily short period.

Another noteworthy event was the conclusion of the international Arms Trade Treaty. Despite a number of serious flaws that prevented Russia from becoming party to it, we believe that, with proper implementation, the Treaty can play a positive role in combating black and grey arms markets, and thus help to strengthen security both regionally and globally.

Lastly, despite widespread opinion, the nuclear-disarmament process is making rapid — in fact, very rapid — progress. To cite just two numbers, in 2010, at the eighth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we stated that the Russian nuclear deterrent force numbered 3,900 deployed nuclear warheads. By the ninth Review Conference, held in May, the number had fallen to 1,582 units. In other words, in just five years the number of warheads had been reduced two and a half times. I urge those colleagues who claim that the nuclear-disarmament process has ground to a halt to take a look at those numbers and adjust their estimates accordingly.

At the same time, we have to recognize that there are certainly grounds for arriving at pessimistic and even alarming conclusions. The deployment of the Mark 41 Vertical Launching System, planned for the United States missile defence facility in Romania by the end of this year — in the next few weeks — could constitute a serious challenge to international security. Along with the use of targeted missiles and attack unmanned aerial vehicles, this move represents yet another gross violation by the United States of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. I should point out that, while the deployment of such systems, capable of launching intermediate-range cruise missiles, is not prohibited on naval warships, moving them to the ground is inconsistent with the obligations outlined in the Treaty. We urge the Governments of the United States and Romania to acknowledge their full

responsibility for such developments and abandon their plans before it is too late.

Despite the agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme, serious challenges in the area of non-proliferation remain. In that context, apart from the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula, we should single out the continuing practice by NATO member States of conducting joint nuclear missions, in violation of their obligations under articles I and II of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Moreover, there is every sign that both the nuclear and non-nuclear member States of the Alliance are increasing their cooperation. The United States intends soon to modernize its nuclear warheads stationed in Europe, while the European countries where those nuclear weapons are located are planning to renovate their air delivery vehicles for them. In this way such violations of non-proliferation obligations will continue indefinitely.

In spite of official statements by the United States to the effect that once the so-called Iranian threat is removed the main motive for deploying a missile defence system in Europe will disappear, the European missile defence project is continuing on its previously planned scale. The argument is that certain missile threats remain that apparently make it impossible to deviate from the previously established plans. We are compelled to conclude that if that, is what the United States calls its adaptive approach to creating a missile defence system, the only thing it adapts is the arguments for justifying the project per se, not its parameters.

In recent years, we have witnessed a number of other factors that are having a damaging effect on the disarmament situation. Apart from unilateral plans for developing a global missile defence system to the detriment of the security of other States, there are also the obstructionist policies pursued by a number of countries around the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space, as well as the continued efforts by the United States to develop its concept of the Prompt Global Strike, using precision-guided long-range conventional weapons for strategic purposes. Such an approach could become an insurmountable obstacle to further steps aimed at reducing nuclear arsenals.

We believe that in circumstances under which the entire complex of arms-control and disarmament agreements could be in jeopardy, it is vital to focus our attention on strengthening global strategic stability as

a fundamental principle of international security and an essential prerequisite for arms reduction. We believe firmly that it is time that the General Assembly adopted a special declaration on the subject. The Russian Federation has prepared a draft document to that end, and we intend to hold intensive consultations with all States concerned about the issue, including on the margins of the current session of the First Committee. We encourage all delegations to take an active part in drafting that document in the interests of reaching an agreement and adopting a strong declaration capable of acting as a barrier to the development of destructive trends in international relations, including in the area of disarmament.

Let me also touch on a few other specific topics. A key priority not only for Russia but for the overwhelming majority of States is keeping outer space free of weapons and preventing armed confrontations in space. For the time being we still have the chance to erect a barrier, as a preventive measure, to an arms race in outer space, the possibility of which is becoming increasingly real. The majority of countries consider that the draft treaty, which would be legally binding, proposed by Russia and China and submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in an updated version last year, would be a starting point and a basis for further joint effort. We believe that document is currently fully ready for discussion in the Conference on Disarmament. We once again urge Conference participants to put aside their differences on the programme of work so as to enable them to start substantive work on the issue. For our part, we intend to once again to voice our support to the Conference on Disarmament along with like-minded nations, and we invite all delegations sharing that goal to join the statement.

However, in the continuing absence of a negotiation process in Geneva, we believe it is important to take a provisional step by promoting the universalization of a multilateral initiative whereby the responsible States involved agree to a voluntary political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space. I am pleased to announce that, on 26 September, Venezuela made that commitment in a bilateral foreign-minister-level declaration with Russia. The number of participants in that initiative has increased to 11, while the number of its supporters, as was seen at last year's vote in the General Assembly, is now nearly 130. We hope that number will increase even further at this session.

We cannot forget to mention the outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, held last May. We do not consider it to have been a failure because, as planned, at the end of lengthy discussions we succeeded in reaching the intended goal, that is, to examine in a comprehensive manner the aspects related to the implementation of the Treaty along its three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

At the same time, we are disappointed that we could not adopt a final document due to the objections of three States to the draft document's section on the Middle East. That is deplorable, given that two of those countries joined us in sponsoring the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. We believe that their decision to block consensus on a compromise in the form of a well-balanced draft was a serious mistake. Nevertheless, the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction remains, and will continue to remain, on the international agenda until the full implementation of the 1995 resolution. Russia is ready, both in its national capacity and together with the two other sponsors, to continue to provide all possible assistance to the countries of the region in achieving this goal. The first step to that end remains the convening of the conference on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

I would also like to draw the Committee's attention to the situation with regard to Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC). Since its entry into force 40 years ago, no serious measure has been taken to strengthen the BWC regime, except for some confidence-building measures. However, given the accelerated technological progress, biological threats are increasingly growing. In that regard, Russia put forward an initiative to hold negotiations with a view to elaborating specific measures aimed at strengthening the BWC regime. We call on everyone to support this proposal so that the appropriate mandate to start negotiations can be adopted at the next Review Conference, to be held in November 2016. Negotiations could begin as early as 2017.

In conclusion, I would like to reassure you, Mr. Chair, and colleagues from other delegations, that we stand ready for close cooperation in the interests of undertaking results-oriented work in the First Committee.

The Chair: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I wish to respectfully remind delegations to kindly limit their statements to 10 minutes when speaking in their national capacity, and to 15 minutes when speaking on behalf of groups.

Mr. Sadykov (Kazakhstan): We congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee, and we assure you of our full support and cooperation.

This year the international community celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is also the seventieth anniversary of the first and only time in history that nuclear weapons were used, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The first resolution (resolution 1 (I)) of the General Assembly, adopted in 1946, made nuclear disarmament a priority issue for the States Members of the United Nations. Nevertheless, the threat of the use of these most dangerous weapons still exists, and it is the primary obligation of all Member States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to take concrete measures to rid themselves of such weapons.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are the main priorities of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. We consistently stand for nuclear disarmament and strict adherence to the principle of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, alongside the inalienable right of States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We express our deep concern about the fact that, while in general the non-nuclear-weapon States fulfil their commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the nuclear-weapon States are not taking decisive actions to rid themselves of nuclear weapons. In particular, we regret the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document, as well as the failure to convene a conference on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

As a country that voluntarily renounced the world's fourth-largest nuclear arsenal, the Republic of Kazakhstan believes that the nuclear-weapon States must further reduce their nuclear arsenals until they are fully eliminated. The indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 should not be considered to be a basis for the indefinite extension of the existence of nuclear weapons.

We note the particular importance of implementing the provisions of resolution 68/32, which declared 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and we fully

support the proposal to start negotiations to draft a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention. As an important step in that direction, Kazakhstan supports the adoption of the universal declaration on the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world, by which all States Members of the United Nations would reaffirm their political commitment to that goal. Our delegation will propose a draft resolution on the declaration during the current session and seeks support for it. The central purpose of the declaration is to bring together in a statement the common ground shared by all States on the issue of global nuclear disarmament. The declaration addresses what has united our nations in the field of disarmament, not what has divided us. The universal declaration will be presented with the goal of achieving global consensus. By setting forth a synthesis of the basic principles that unite all nations on the goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, the declaration has the potential to revitalize the global process of nuclear disarmament and break the vicious circle of divisions in the disarmament community.

The chronic deadlock in disarmament has given rise to a loss of confidence in the whole disarmament process. Reaching consensus on the basic goal would be a welcome step forward in restoring some of that lost confidence and building new trust, which will help in reassuring the international community that nuclear disarmament is not only supported as a goal, but is actually happening.

We recognize the great importance of the process that began with the holding — in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna — of the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. As a nation that has experienced the disastrous consequences of nuclear explosions, Kazakhstan fully supports this initiative and hopes that it will lead to a new and powerful impetus for our common efforts to achieve the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons and the eventual removal of these deadly weapons from our planet once and for all. We believe that the use of nuclear weapons cannot be justified on moral, ethical or legal grounds, and their use must be banned.

We also believe that there is an urgent need to start negotiations on a legally binding document granting security assurances by the nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States. Only such assurances can effectively check certain non-nuclear-weapon States' aspirations to acquire nuclear weapons, which they view as a guarantee of their own security. Having

established, together with our neighbours, a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, Kazakhstan firmly believes in the need to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones all over the world and hopes that in the future the entire planet will become such a zone.

We would like to thank the Governments of France, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and China for ensuring the completion of internal procedures for the ratification of the protocol on negative security assurances to the States parties to the Semipalatinsk Treaty. We call on the Government of the United States to complete this work at the earliest possible date.

The delegation of Kazakhstan joins others in voicing the necessity of holding, as early as possible, a conference on establishing in the Middle East a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, despite the aggravating factor of the outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference and the current political developments and tensions.

The early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is in the basic security interests of all nations. Kazakhstan, as a co-President of the Article XIV Conference, together with Japan, will make every effort to achieve the prompt entry into force of the CTBT. Due to our shared history, Kazakhstan and Japan have a moral right to demand progress on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. We are determined to work together during our presidency to push for the ratification of the Treaty. In the next two years, we are going to work specifically with each of annex 2 States in order to convince them to take decisive action for the earliest possible entry into force of the Treaty. We will also work towards the Treaty's consistent universalization.

We are planning a series of major events during our presidency. In August 2016, we plan to convene an international conference dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT and to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the closing of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, on 29 August 1991. In December 2009, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/35, put forward by Kazakhstan, to declare 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. We intend to work actively in that direction at all levels, including with the civil society. In that regard, I would like to note Kazakhstan's August 2012 initiative aimed at launching the international effort entitled "The ATOM Project: Abolish Testing — Our Mission",

which was designed to strengthen global support for a complete and irrevocable ban of nuclear-weapon testing.

We believe it is time to exercise collective political goodwill to reactivate the Conference on Disarmament after its 20-year stalemate, with a view to starting work on drafting a treaty banning the production of fissile material for military purposes, on efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, and on negative security assurances to States that do not possess nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan also believes it is time to take action on the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) as soon as possible. The signing of the FMCT will help minimize the possibility of illegitimate military nuclear programmes being developed. It will also significantly improve the conditions for controlling existing materials and reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism.

We believe that it is vital to have further discussions on the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space by involving other international bodies that are engaged in the issue. To facilitate the start of such negotiations, we support the draft treaty prepared by China and the Russian Federation on preventing weapons from being placed in outer space.

Kazakhstan is the home to Baikonur Cosmodrome, the world's largest space-launch site, which is making a major contribution to the peaceful use of outer space. We are proud to say that the third Kazakhstani cosmonaut made a space flight as part of the international programme launched from Baikonur in September 2015.

We welcome the adoption, on 14 July, of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear programme between six international mediators and Iran. We believe that the effective implementation of the Plan will strengthen non-proliferation and regional security. Kazakhstan contributed to the negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme by hosting two rounds of talks in Almaty, which strengthened the atmosphere of confidence.

With a growing number of new nuclear-energy-producing countries and increasing nuclear-energy consumption, as well as deteriorating plants, ensuring nuclear security is critical to preventing the risks of the proliferation of nuclear materials. We have already implemented the recommendations of the Washington, D.C., Seoul and The Hague Nuclear Security Summits.

Kazakhstan supports the legal right of all NPT States parties to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with article IV of the NPT, including the right to develop and produce nuclear technology for peaceful purposes as long as it complies with international standards and takes place under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

In our view, one of the most important events of this year was the signing of the Agreement between the Government of Kazakhstan and the IAEA to establish the IAEA low-enriched-uranium bank in Kazakhstan. We believe that the establishment of the bank is a reliable mechanism for ensuring a guaranteed supply of nuclear fuel and is in no way prejudicial to the right of States members of the IAEA to develop their own technological capacity in the nuclear-fuel cycle. We reiterate that any projects or initiatives in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy should not be politicized or discriminatory. Peaceful nuclear technology and knowledge should be available to all States committed to the principles of nuclear non-proliferation.

Kazakhstan fully implements the requirements of the Biological Weapons Convention and has unique experience and immense potential in ensuring biological security. Noting the growing threats posed by the spread of extremely dangerous infections, we emphasize and give great importance to international cooperation in this area. This is one of the reasons for establishing a central reference laboratory in Kazakhstan, which will serve as a main centre for research and developing technology to counter the spread of highly dangerous human and animal diseases.

We welcome the steady increase of support for the Arms Trade Treaty and are pleased to inform the Committee that Kazakhstan is ready to sign the Treaty in the short term. We see it as a major step forward in preventing irresponsible arms transfers, which fuel conflict, poverty and serious human rights abuses. We hope that the international community will consider setting up a strong monitoring mechanism for the so-called grey areas that remain outside the regime of conventional arms control, namely, past and recent conflict zones, and adopt strong monitoring procedures with a view to implementing penalties and sanctions against countries that violate their obligations.

In conclusion, we hope that the work of the First Committee this year, reinforced by strong multilateral

political commitment, cooperation and action, will make strides towards global peace, security and stability.

The Chair: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I wish to respectfully remind delegations to kindly limit their statements to 10 minutes when speaking in their national capacity, and 15 minutes when speaking on behalf of groups.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee and to wish you every success in this year's work. We also want to extend our congratulations to the members of the Bureau and to express our firm commitment to contribute actively and positively to the results of the deliberations.

We wish to align ourselves with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.2) and the statement made earlier by the representative of Japan on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative. We also align ourselves with the statement to be made by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

I would now like to make some specific comments and observations from the perspective of the delegation of Chile.

It is truly overwhelming and shameful that on the seventieth anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) ended without a final consensus document. Also, 19 years have passed and we are still awaiting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Along with that, we are witnesses to a disarmament machinery that is paralysed as it operates under the most extreme version of the consensus rule, twisting the long-established meaning and scope of that forum as a place for dialogue and as a tool to promote far-reaching agreements.

To this gloomy picture we add the fact that today we live with approximately 17,000 nuclear weapons, of which some 2,000 are on high alert, that is, ready to be launched within minutes, thus threatening the very existence of humankind. Even further, certain Powers are expending billions of dollars on nuclear-weapon modernization programmes.

It is against that sombre backdrop that we are starting the work of the First Committee. But somehow the obvious cooling perceived in the global security landscape fails to demoralize; instead, it serves to encourage those of us who truly believe in nuclear disarmament. We thus rescued from the ninth NPT Review Conference broad support for the humanitarian pledge, as well as the commitment of 117 countries to fill the unacceptable legal vacuum that allows the most destructive weapons not to be explicitly prohibited under international law. The pledge stands as a powerful guide in a complicated disarmament landscape.

Chile adheres to the humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament, but the humanitarian approach lies not just in finding disastrous the effects of the use of nuclear weapons. It also entails acknowledging the gross incompatibility between the existence of nuclear weapons and international humanitarian law. Nuclear weapons violate the principles of distinction, humanity and proportionality, which are at the root of international humanitarian law. And if they are incompatible, then they are also illegal. That is what we have to emphasize.

In addition, in the context of the Special Declaration 16 of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, adopted in Belén, Costa Rica, last January, Chile supports the resumption of the work by the open-ended working group of the General Assembly tasked with identifying negotiating mechanisms to commence multilateral processes that at the very least prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. It is important to open up new pathways to shake up the disarmament machinery, or at least shake ourselves free from the stagnant disarmament machinery, so as to pave the way for multilateralism that produces results, which is what we all need.

Until then, we urge the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments and obligations under article VI of the NPT and to move towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the full and immediate implementation of the 13 practical steps on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agreed at the NPT Review Conference in 2000 and of the Plan of Action adopted at the 2010 Review Conference. We also call on the nuclear-weapon States to reduce the nuclear-weapon state of alert and the operational readiness of those systems, in order to prevent the inadvertent or accidental use of such weapons.

Chile reaffirms its commitment to support multilateral efforts to promote disarmament, non-proliferation, the prohibition of the use and possession of all weapons of mass destruction. Along with condemning the military use of biological and chemical weapons, in all circumstances, we urge universal adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention in pursuit of achieving a world free of chemical weapons.

I would like to make special mention of the Arms Trade Treaty, which came into effect on December 2014, and to the holding of the first Conference of States Parties, in Cancún, Mexico, in August. The Treaty meets the expectation of the international community to establish a legally binding instrument that contributes to transparency in the trade in conventional weapons and helps to prevent and combat the negative effects resulting in human suffering, the diversion of those weapons and their illicit trade in many areas of the world.

We recognize in the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition — and, I emphasize, their ammunition — a scourge whose destructive effects are immeasurable, surpassing the sphere of international security, having a direct impact on socioeconomic development and human rights and exacerbating sexual and gender-based violence against millions of people, and the urgent need for the international community to address this serious problem.

In the past few years, we have been successful in strengthening and advancing instruments to regulate the field of conventional weapons, an example of which is the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, in August 2010. We note in particular the holding of the Convention's first Review Conference, last September in Dubrovnik. The recent use of cluster munitions around the world reaffirms the need to universalize the Convention. We reiterate that there is no rationale whatsoever for the use of cluster munitions, nor any military necessity to justify it.

In that context, we reaffirm our support and commitment to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the need to move towards their total elimination. Proof of our commitment can be seen in the fact that Chile will chair the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and

Santiago de Chile will host the fifteenth Conference of the States Parties in 2016.

Our commitment to the implementation of the Ottawa Convention is broad and known. In our capacity as Chair of the Convention, we will focus on victim assistance. Based on the rights-of-persons approach, the concept of human security is the pillar that supports our actions in disarmament. Similarly, we would like to stress the urgent need for the democratization of international organizations and the democratization of multilateral practice, incorporating voices effectively absent too long in this debate, those of women and civil society.

I would like to conclude by stressing the need for the international community to make a strong commitment and show the necessary political will to create a needed climate of mutual trust to make progress in matters of disarmament. Of course, Mr. Chair, you can count on our commitment to contribute positively to the work of the First Committee.

Ms. Yparraguirre (Philippines): I would like to extend the Philippines' warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chair, on chairing the First Committee at its seventieth session. We have full confidence, Sir, in your and the Bureau's able stewardship of the Committee. We thank the Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs for his briefing.

As the United Nations marks seven decades of serving the world through the maintenance of peace and security, this is an auspicious time. The Philippines' long history in support of global zero is almost as old as the United Nations itself. Four years after the United Nations was born, then President of the General Assembly Carlos P. Romulo worked for a nuclear truce between the United States and the former Soviet Union to temporarily suspend the production of the atomic bomb and prohibit the use of nuclear weapons, albeit unsuccessfully. However, he insisted that a complete agreement on nuclear disarmament could and should be reached through the United Nations. Throughout the years, the Philippines has upheld this firm belief and remained confident that the world body could rid the world of nuclear weapons. It is highly regrettable that, throughout the decades and after all our efforts to get closer to zero, the international nuclear-disarmament agenda is at a standstill.

It is more vital now than ever that relations among the owners of the world's nuclear arsenals stay strong and

stand firm in the area of arms control and disarmament. For it is when their relations are weak, when they dither and waver, that they cling to their obsolete deterrence policies and hold fast to their nuclear arsenals. It is precisely during these challenging times that we need to bolster our efforts to ensure that nuclear weapons will not be used for any reason and take concrete steps to eventually rid the world of such weapons.

The Philippines fully supports and aligns itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (see A/C.1/70/PV.2), as well as with the statement made earlier by the representative of Japan on behalf of the States members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative. Those statements are consistent with our long-standing and principled positions on disarmament in general — be they on conventional weapons, nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction.

The Philippines will continue to support measures for disarmament, including new principles and approaches that would lead to the enhancement of international peace and security. The Philippines will work with like-minded countries to pursue these priorities. On nuclear disarmament, the Philippines will support efforts, first, to strengthen the ongoing discourse on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and ensure that it eventually leads to concrete actions, with specific timelines, for the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons; secondly, call for the start of negotiations for a nuclear-weapons convention that will ban nuclear weapons; thirdly, restart talks on the convening of a conference on the Middle East with a view to establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction; and, fourthly, achieve the balanced and immediate implementation of the 64-point Action Plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons across all of the Treaty's pillars. The Philippines believes that all four issues are central to maintaining the credibility of the Treaty.

On conventional weapons, the Philippines will help sustain the positive momentum created by the successful negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and continue to engage in discussions on small arms and light weapons. The Philippines will strive to

ratify the ATT before the second Conference of States Parties to the Treaty, to be held in the second half of 2016.

On nuclear non-proliferation, the Philippines welcomes the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or the Iran nuclear deal. We believe that the agreement is an important measure in promoting security and stability, both regional and global. We call on the countries involved and on the international community to help maintain the positive momentum for long-term peace that the Agreement aims to create.

In the South-East Asian region, the Philippines, together with our nine ASEAN neighbours, are resolute in our commitment to preserve our region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction. We are determined to step up efforts with the nuclear-weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues with respect to their signing and ratifying of the Protocol to the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty. We also encourage the full support of all Member States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, for the ASEAN-sponsored draft resolution (A/C.1/70/L.58) on the SEANWFZ Treaty at this session. We look forward to its adoption by consensus.

On nuclear security, we believe that the twin issues of nuclear safety and security will inevitably be brought to the United Nations with the conclusion of the United States-led Nuclear Security Summit in 2016. The Philippines intends to actively engage in discussions at the United Nations on those issues, consistent with its position on non-proliferation. Together with Georgia and Morocco, the Philippines has formed a Group of Friends of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation and Security Governance, which will take the lead in promoting States' compliance with obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), adopted very recently by our leaders, aims to ensure that no one is left behind. Similarly, a nuclear holocaust during our time, or at any other time, will guarantee the same, that no one will be left behind. There is no sustainable development to strive for if the peoples of the world continue to live in fear over the presence and potential use of nuclear weapons, and more important, if the world's resources continue to be expended for the modernization of such deadly

weapons, instead of for improving the lives of millions of poor people in the world.

Mr. León González (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall read out an abbreviated version of our statement, with the full statement to be uploaded to the PaperSmart system.

The Cuban delegation congratulates you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau on your respective elections.

We fully support the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

On 26 September, for the second time in the history of the United Nations, we had an opportunity to celebrate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which elicits broad support from the international community and is an important opportunity to increase awareness about the need to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Cuba reiterates its strong support for the proposal made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to urgently begin negotiations on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons that would ensure the total prohibition and elimination of such arsenals, and aim for the timely conclusion of negotiations.

The existence of more than 16,000 nuclear weapons, of which 4,300 are deployed with operating forces and approximately 1,800 kept in a state of maximum operational alert, is incompatible with the continuation of life. The United Nations has been in existence for 70 years and it was no coincidence that, within a few weeks of its founding, the first resolution — resolution 1 (I) — adopted by its principal democratic and most participatory organ, the General Assembly, committed to addressing the most serious problem that humankind had faced five months prior — the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The text called for the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction. Seven decades later, that request remains unfulfilled.

A world free of nuclear weapons is a priority, and we have no right to continue postponing that crucial goal. With the support of the vast majority of Member States, the General Assembly will open a window of possibilities by convening a high-level international conference, by 2018 at the very latest, to identify

ways and means of eliminating nuclear weapons in the shortest time possible, with the aim of agreeing on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame. Cuba renews its commitment to nuclear disarmament and will spare no effort to secure the prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is unacceptable that nuclear deterrence remains the basis of military doctrines authorizing the possession and use of nuclear arsenals. Regrettably, 45 years after the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), nuclear Powers still do not comply with the obligation under article VI, which establishes the need to negotiate an international treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons, and instead, continue to refine their weapons through vertical proliferation, of which very little mention is made.

The ninth NPT Review Conference once again confirmed the gulf that exists between rhetoric and good intentions that are repeated time and again by some States that possess nuclear weapons and the commitments and concrete steps that they are genuinely willing to take. We deeply regret that the NPT Conference was unable to reach agreement despite the will and determination to make progress shown by the overwhelming majority of States parties to the Treaty.

The proposed modalities on the holding of the conference to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East was the argument used by those who blocked the final agreement, despite the special responsibility that two of them shoulder with regard to successive agreements on the subject within the context of the Treaty. I take this opportunity to stress that Cuba maintains its unqualified support for the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East, which would also be a key contribution to peace and security for all peoples in the region.

Until we succeed in eliminating nuclear weapons, international negotiations should begin as soon as possible with a view to concluding a treaty that provides comprehensive and unconditional security guarantees for non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of States possessing such weapons. Cuba reaffirms the inalienable right of States to research the production and peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination. Politicization of the issue should stop,

and there should be respect the central role performed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, whose professionalism, experience and technical capacity Cuba acknowledges.

In that regard, Cuba welcomes the agreement reached between the Islamic Republic of Iran and a group of the Organization's Member States. We believe that that outcome shows that dialogue and negotiation constitute the only effective tool to resolve differences between States. At the same time, we hope that this agreement finally leads to the lifting of the unjust sanctions imposed on the Iranian people.

The path to settling disputes, allaying doubts or suspicions and showing strict compliance with the obligations assumed in the international sphere runs through the strengthening of multilateralism and respect for the rules and provisions of international law. We categorically reject the application of sanctions and coercive measures as a means to settle disputes in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation or in any other field of international relations.

Cuba supports the efforts to optimize the United Nations disarmament machinery. However, we are convinced that the paralysis that affects a large part of that machinery is the outcome, first and foremost, of a lack of political will demonstrated by certain States to achieve real progress, particularly on the issue of nuclear disarmament.

The use of new information and telecommunications technologies should be fully consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with international law. We express our deep concern about the concealed and illegal use by individuals, organizations and States of the computer systems of other nations to attack third countries, given the potential that has to cause international conflicts.

Cybersecurity is a major problem that will continue to receive attention to the extent that the world is increasingly interconnected and information society is becoming increasingly consolidated. We reject the hostile use of telecommunications with the stated or concealed purpose of subverting the legal and political systems of States, as that constitutes a violation of internationally recognized standards in that area, whose effects can create tensions and situations that are not favourable for international peace and security.

Cuba condemns any use of chemical weapons or other weapons of mass destruction and is firmly committed to the Convention on Chemical Weapons and to strict compliance with its provisions. We welcome the successful conclusion of the operation to destroy and withdraw from Syrian territory all the declared chemical-weapon materials in an unprecedented time frame and under exceptionally difficult conditions. We also acknowledge the efforts, constructive cooperation and commitment shown by the Syrian Arab Republic.

We reiterate the urgent need to adopt an action plan to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Our country reiterates its commitment to the strict implementation of the Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons. Cuba reaffirms that the only way to strengthen the Convention is through multilateral negotiations and the adoption of a legally binding protocol that includes its basic pillars.

We do not have the right to give up our efforts to achieve a more secure and stable world where human and financial resources are allocated for sustainable development, especially now that the peoples of the world have agreed on a new development agenda. Now it must be implemented. We insist on our proposal to allocate at least half of current military spending to meeting the needs of economic and social development through a fund managed by the United Nations. It would be a invaluable contribution to the necessary means of implementation to achieve the post-2015 development agenda.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating the full support of the Cuban delegation to you, Mr. Chair, in carrying out your work and by wishing the Committee every success in its work.

Ms. Shorna-Kay Marie (Jamaica): I join other delegations in warmly congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau on your respective elections. Yours, Sir, is the challenging task of facilitating our exchange and action on vital and complex issues affecting international peace and security. We are confident that your skill will bring the work of this important Committee to a successful conclusion. I offer you Jamaica's full cooperation and support.

Jamaica aligns itself with the respective statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative

of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

Seventy years ago, when the United Nations was established in the wake of the Second World War, it was with the lofty goal to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. To that end, the Charter of the United Nations established the framework for a system of collective security based on the prohibition of the use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the establishment of multilateral institutions for giving practical effect to those principles. The progressive reduction of armaments and the achievement of the goal of general and complete disarmament are of the utmost significance in realizing the noble goal on which the Organization was founded.

During this seventieth anniversary session of the First Committee, it is important that we acknowledge and reaffirm those general principles as the foundation of our efforts. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the seriousness of the challenge we face. While we have avoided a war of global scale over the past 70 years, today we face increasingly complex interconnected threats to our peace and security. In the international situation, new challenges have surfaced as a result of acts of terrorism and violent extremism. That is combined with the persistence of conflicts and regional rivalries and disputes that continually raise the spectre of wide-scale war. Transnational organized crime and the presence of weapons of mass destruction continue to threaten international peace and security, while the proliferation of conventional arms in the hands of non-State actors poses grave risk to many countries and regions.

Those factors paint a disheartening picture of the current international situation, where there is serious risk of us losing further ground in our disarmament efforts. Those developments have direct implications for the work of the Committee, for where there is war there is unquenched demand for weapons of war. Our responsibility is to ensure that, by virtue of the regimes and arrangements to which we adhere, by our demonstrated commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and through genuine efforts to promote confidence-building by way of transparency and verification of action we will ultimately create a safer world for ourselves and for generations to come.

The chronic stalemate at the political and diplomatic levels justifies our feelings of concern and discouragement, but should not give rise to cynicism or undue pessimism. But how do we respond to the growing perception that disarmament and arms control are the neglected goals of the United Nations and that the United Nations cannot deliver on its disarmament commitments? In our view, we must continue to pursue our disarmament efforts relentlessly and with perseverance. To do otherwise cannot represent a viable option.

It is now time for us to consider how best to reinvigorate our efforts through new and alternative approaches to advance disarmament goals. That should include a possible change in the manner in which decisions are taken by different parts of the disarmament machinery. At the same time, we are painfully aware that the real challenge lies in exercising the political will and commitment to achieving our stated goals and objectives; for to ever gain consensus on amending the decision-making rules will require commitment at the political level. To do so, we need to rebuild trust and confidence among ourselves.

The humanitarian approach, which is gaining momentum, can inject new life and urgency into what is currently a moribund process. That approach, we believe, will allow us to be more ambitious and progressive and to bring on board more diverse actors. We therefore agree with the Secretary-General's timely observation that the more we understand about the humanitarian impacts, the more it becomes clear that we must pursue disarmament as an urgent imperative.

The Secretary-General's insightful observation is particularly relevant to the priority area of nuclear disarmament, where the recent focus by a growing number of States and civil-society groups on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons is helping to reinvigorate the stalled agenda. Jamaica welcomes the humanitarian initiative, which reflects its strong desire to progress on the nuclear-disarmament pillar.

We are deeply disappointed that the international community failed to seize the opportunity provided by the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to make significant progress on its commitment to ridding the world of nuclear weapons. For far too long, we have been locked in a cycle of intense frustration

over the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament. Yet, 45 years after the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and 25 years after its indefinite extension, some are prevailing on us to persist with the flawed step-by-step approach as the only realistic way to achieve our common goal of a world without nuclear weapons. However, those incremental steps have not proved successful in advancing our disarmament goals.

Jamaica therefore supports the strong call made for the negotiation and adoption of a legally binding instrument for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, which is embodied in the recent humanitarian pledge endorsed by 119 States. The time has come for us to fill the glaring legal gap that exists in the absence of an explicit prohibition of nuclear weapons. Moreover, this important session of the First Committee cannot ignore the Humanitarian Initiative. It must be placed firmly on our agenda.

Jamaica cannot conclude its remarks on this particular area without reference to the conclusion of the historic nuclear agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1 countries. We mentioned previously the importance of securing political will to surmount seemingly intractable problems, and that represents a prime example of what can be accomplished when States are dedicated to diplomacy backed by political will.

I now turn to a matter of immediate concern to Jamaica — the proliferation of firearms of every description. That is a feature of our world today that endangers the lives of ordinary citizens, undermines the rule of law, threatens economic and social stability and fuels violent crime. We renew our demand that those who manufacture such weapons exercise greater controls and support anti-proliferation efforts. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which entered into force less than a year ago, can make a significant contribution to those efforts.

We were indeed proud to participate in the first Conference of State Parties to the ATT, held in Mexico at the end of August, which laid the foundation for the full and effective implementation of the ATT. Nevertheless, we cannot rest on a successful first Conference. States parties now need to put in the hard work to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of the Treaty through cooperation and greater efforts aimed at capacity-building. In that connection, universal

adherence will be key to the success of our action. We therefore encourage those States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty at the earliest opportunity.

The ATT and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects are mutually reinforcing. The Programme of Action, which remains the focal point for our efforts towards eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, requires our urgent attention now more than ever. We must therefore look towards setting an ambitious agenda for the sixth biennial meeting of State parties in June 2016.

A few days ago our leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), the most comprehensive, universal global agenda for sustainable development the world has yet seen. The deliberations and work of the Committee and the rest of the disarmament machinery cannot be divorced from that transformative agenda, for as we know development without peace and security is short-lived.

As a small island developing State, we are of the view that now more than ever is the opportune time to redirect significant portions of the vast expenditures on weapons and military equipment of all kind to fund the 2030 Development Agenda.

Mr. Wang Qun (China): The Chinese delegation commends your highly efficient and pragmatic working style, Mr. Chair, and wishes you every success in steering the current session to success.

(spoke in Chinese)

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the victory of the Second World War against fascism and the Chinese people's war of resistance against Japanese aggression. Seventy years ago, people from various countries fought hard against fascism and won victory at huge sacrifice, laying down a solid foundation for enduring peace after the war. Both history and reality have proved that the pursuit of peace, development and cooperation meets the common aspirations of people around the world and is thus an unstoppable, historic trend.

Today, peace and development have become the theme of the times, and human society has increasingly become a community of integrated interests and shared future. Meanwhile, the world is still not tranquil, with lingering wars, turbulence and rising non-traditional security threats, such as the issues of cybersecurity,

terrorism, extremism and epidemics. Meeting those challenges is a vital task for all countries.

Against that new backdrop, the President of China, Xi Jinping, has proposed to build a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation and advocated a new approach of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. China believes that all countries should follow the historic trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation; embark on a new path of security, which is built by all, shared by all, win-win for all and safeguarded by all; and build a community of common destiny for all humankind.

China always honours its commitments. China has persisted in advancing the international arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation process, and worked hard to uphold world peace and stability.

First, China's firm commitment to peaceful development will never change. The pursuit of peaceful development is based not on expediency, but on our objective assessment of the past, the present and the future, and it is deeply rooted in the peace-loving tradition of the Chinese nation. On the basis of the previous 10 rounds of troop cuts, President Xi Jinping recently announced that China will further cut the number of troops by 300,000. That embodies China's firm commitment to peaceful development, and demonstrates its earnest efforts to maintain world peace.

Secondly, China's active participation in global nuclear governance will never change. China has strongly supported the nuclear-disarmament process, resolutely upheld the nuclear non-proliferation regime and firmly committed itself to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. China has ratified the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia in a timely manner; it has worked out all the outstanding problems pertaining to the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone with the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and is ready for an early signature of the Protocol. In the negotiations on the Iranian nuclear issue, China contributed its wisdom and played a crucial role in helping bring about that historic comprehensive agreement. China will continue to push for the smooth implementation of that agreement.

Thirdly, China's pivotal role in advancing the biological and chemical arms-control process will never change. As a victim of chemical weapons and a State

party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) with the largest amount of declared chemical facilities, China has faithfully implemented its obligations under the CWC, provided assistance through international cooperation to other State parties to enhance the latter's compliance capacity. China has provided experts and facilities for the verification of the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons, taken part in the joint shipments escorting Syria's chemical weapons and made its due contribution to facilitating the destruction of those chemical weapons. As a signatory to the Biological Weapons Convention, China has submitted timely confidence-building measures declaration materials, continued to improve its national compliance mechanism and actively conducted international exchanges and cooperation in the biological field.

Fourthly, China's strong support for establishing the rules and norms for international security will never change. There are now still no effective international legal instruments on issues such as outer space, cybersecurity and banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. It has therefore become a major task for the international community to address such lacunae by working out the rules and norms on the international security front. China has actively participated in formulating the relevant international rules and norms, and will continue to push for the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament on the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, and wishes to see the early conclusion of a negotiated fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference. In the meantime, China supports the efforts being channelled towards the early conclusion of an international code of conduct on cyberspace. In addition, I would like to emphasize that China's responsible approach to conventional arms-control obligations will never change.

Arms control and disarmament are closely linked to international security. It is therefore the shared responsibility and obligation of all countries to advance the international arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation process, and make a contribution to preserving the security of humankind. In that context, China has the following proposals.

First, it is essential that the integrity and authority of the international arms-control and non-proliferation regime be further strengthened. To strengthen the fairness, equality and universality of the international

arms-control and non-proliferation regime, the international community should work to uphold the principles of consensus and of undiminished security for all. At the same time, the international community should work to explore innovative ways and formulas, while building on past achievements, to break the deadlock without prejudice to the authority of the multilateral disarmament organ.

Secondly, it is important to properly address the challenges of new technology developments to the international arms-control process. Progress in science and technology have indeed benefited humankind, but their military applications have, in the meantime, posed immense potential risks and threats to the security and even the survival of humankind. The international community should adhere to the principle of security for all, abandon the practice of pursuing an absolute military advantage, carry out preventive diplomacy, curb the emerging arms race in the high-tech field and safeguard international peace and stability.

Thirdly, it is important to fill the vacuum of international rules and norms governing the new security frontier as soon as possible. Issues such as outer space, cyberspace and deep-sea and polar regions not only affect the well-being of humankind, but also bear on the security of all countries. The absence of international rules in those fields has resulted in our facing the law of the jungle. Apart from the rules of the relevant traditional arms-control fields, we should intensify our cooperation, through consultations on an equal footing, in formulating and improving international rules and norms, so as to ensure the peaceful development and use of such new frontiers to the benefit of the entire humankind.

Cybersecurity has now become an increasingly prominent and sensitive issue on the international security agenda, with a closer link between cyberspace and the world in which we live. Against such a backdrop, it is necessary and urgent for the international community to jointly elaborate an international code of conduct on cyberspace as soon as possible.

Cyberspace is an anonymous and flat space without borders, but that has not changed the international law and basic norms governing international relations that have formed the basis of international peace and security for 70 years. China believes that, in order to reach an international code of conduct on cyberspace that is acceptable to all, the following principles are

important: first, compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and other universally recognized basic norms governing international relations; secondly, respect for the sovereignty of each State in cyberspace; thirdly, the settlement of international disputes in that field by peaceful means; fourthly, the guarantee that cyberspace be used exclusively for activities aimed at maintaining international peace and security; and, fifthly, the guarantee that cyberspace not be used as a means to interfere in the internal affairs of other States or to the detriment of their national interests.

China commends the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security and welcomes its report (A/70/172), issued in June 2015. China expects that this cooperative mechanism will maintain its momentum by focusing its next phase of work on developing an international code of conduct on cyberspace. China will continue to commit itself to establishing a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative cyberspace and pushing for the early completion of an international code of conduct acceptable to all.

China is working hard to realize the Chinese dream of the great renewal of the Chinese nation. To that end, China is committed to upholding world peace, security, harmony and prosperity. China will take a more proactive role in the process of advancing international arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation, so as to safeguard and promote the well-being of humankind.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. I am confident that your able leadership and diplomatic experience will lead the Committee towards a successful conclusion. I assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation and wish you success.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

The international community is facing a difficult situation in the field of international security and disarmament. The successful conclusion of painstaking negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1, resulting in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which was immediately endorsed by the Security Council in July, proved that, with

serious and sustained negotiations based on a win-win approach, a peaceful solution to the most technically and politically complex issues is within reach.

The conduct of the Security Council in the past in relation to Iran's peaceful nuclear programme was unjust and illegal. Iran was and has been committed to its legal obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and determined to exercise its full nuclear rights, including enrichment, for peaceful purposes within the framework of the NPT. The sanctions of the Security Council and the unilateral sanctions of some countries were based on illusory and baseless allegations and created difficult conditions for the Iranian people.

The JCPOA is premised on reciprocal commitments by Iran and its negotiating parties. It ensures that Iran's nuclear programme, which has always been peaceful, be recognized as such, on the one hand, and provide for the termination of all provisions of relevant Security Council resolutions and the comprehensive lifting of all Security Council sanctions, on the other. The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to implementing its voluntary undertakings in good faith contingent upon the same good-faith implementation of all undertakings, including the removal of sanctions and restrictive measures by other participants of the JCPOA.

The Islamic Republic of Iran underlines the imperative of the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a requirement of international security and an obligation under the NPT. A complete lack of progress best characterizes the state of affairs with respect to the implementation of the nuclear-disarmament commitments under the NPT. It is true that some reductions have taken place. They are, however, limited and reversible and, worse, they are accompanied by extensive efforts to modernize nuclear weapons. The large budget devoted to the modernization process suggests that the nuclear-weapon States contemplate the indefinite possession of their nuclear arsenals, rather than complying with their treaty obligations to nuclear disarmament.

While the mere reaffirmation by the nuclear-weapon States of their commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons is welcome, it is obviously quite insufficient and does not equate with compliance with their nuclear-disarmament obligations under the NPT. We cannot avoid judging them on the basis of their deeds and not their words. Persistent non-compliance

with nuclear-disarmament commitments could have extensive ramifications. The wider the gap between the nominal commitment to nuclear disarmament and the implementation thereof, the greater the danger of the progress achieved unravelling and the possibility of the ultimate defeat of the purposes of the Treaty.

Regrettably, as a result of the opposition of a small minority, the 2015 NPT Review Conference could not conclude with a substantive final document. We do not want to dwell upon that point. We should not let the disappointing conclusion of the 2015 NPT Review Conference prevent us from moving forward on the nuclear-disarmament front. Now is not a time for recrimination, but a time to re-engage positively and together in an open and inclusive process, within the General Assembly, to identify and elaborate effective measures on nuclear disarmament for the full implementation of article VI, including legal provisions or other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. My delegation will soon present a draft resolution to that end and will work and consult with all delegations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to engage actively in all international diplomatic and legal efforts to save humankind from the menace of nuclear weapons and their proliferation, including through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East. The establishment of such a zone has been an important objective and priority for Iran as well as all other peace-loving nations in our region. We have consistently urged that the non-proliferation norm be applied globally and without exception. Nuclear proliferation is as dangerous in the Middle East as it is in other parts of the world. The existence of nuclear weapons in the hands of the Israeli regime is obviously the result of the application of double standards by certain nuclear-weapon States and their failing to abide by the very non-proliferation norm that they helped set and are legally committed to complying with and invariably enforcing. That continues to pose a serious threat to the peace and security of the NPT States parties in the Middle East. Aggression, occupation and war crimes have constituted the characteristics of a regime which is armed with nuclear weapons.

Israel continues to be the only impediment in realizing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Israel continues to block all international and regional efforts to fulfil that goal. In its latest obstructive act,

Israel, in defiance of the will of the vast majority of international community, 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 NPT Review Conference under the United Nations auspices.

I would like to conclude by saying that where there is a will, there is a way to overcome the challenges. We hope that our deliberations in this Committee will contribute to upholding internationally agreed norms and principles and to advancing of our common objectives.

Mr. Anshor (Indonesia): Let me join others in congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and other Bureau members on your election. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation throughout the session.

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as that delivered by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

We need to continue to build the positive momentum towards strengthening the nuclear architecture. We must admit, however, that there is still a long way to go before we achieve satisfactory results. We have to be cautious and remain aware that the current volatile situation could rapidly change for the worse owing to the possession, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Geopolitical tensions in many areas of the world are a testament to the precariousness of false confidence.

The non-proliferation challenge on the Korean peninsula is a constant reminder. Miscalculation, catastrophic accident and the potential consequences of brinkmanship could dramatically erase the current peace dividend that we enjoy right now.

The failure to convene the conference to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is another testament. It is a very unfortunate situation in the international community that may be described as benign neglect.

At the heart of Europe, the current situation has demonstrated to us that negative security assurances can be withdrawn rapidly as a result of dramatic changes in domestic political situations.

In South-East Asia, after the successful conclusion of the Protocol to the accession to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the conditions conducive to ensure the signing and ratification by all nuclear-weapon States have not yet been met.

For so long as even a single nuclear weapon exists, humankind is in danger of suffering a nuclear catastrophe, by design or by accident. Nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority for Indonesia, a country long committed to advancing regional and international peace and stability. In our assessment, compliance with nuclear-disarmament commitments remains far behind compared to those related to non-proliferation or the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Regrettably, despite the fact that the current international system is equipped with the architecture of treaties, commitments and forums to advance the objectives of non-proliferation, thousands of nuclear weapons continue to exist. The positive signs that were evident after the 2010 NPT Review Conference are diminishing. The 2015 NPT Review Conference failed to agree on a draft final document that sets forth concrete steps to advance progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.

The world's sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, the Conference on Disarmament, has been deadlocked for almost two decades. The deliberations in the Disarmament Commission has sparked frustration among member States. While we are celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we recognize that the lack of political will in the multilateral disarmament forums has been a major obstacle in abolishing nuclear weapons for decades. Therefore, the necessary political will to address the trust deficit must be demonstrated to revitalize the United Nations disarmament machinery, including the First Committee.

Despite the bleak picture in the field of global disarmament and non-proliferation, we continue to be hopeful, as the overwhelming majority of nations remain firm in their demands of freeing the world from nuclear weapons. In order to get our message across to more people more clearly, it is imperative that we place the humanitarian dimension of nuclear weapons at the centre of the nuclear-disarmament discourse. Global awareness regarding the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons must reinforce all efforts directed

towards negotiating a comprehensive instrument to ban nuclear weapons.

Indonesia remains optimistic that we can move the disarmament agenda forward. There are practical ways that can be explored by countries and the international community to advance the nuclear-disarmament objective. First, at the global level, Indonesia invites countries to show their political will by supporting practical ways to achieve that objective.

Countries and the international community should lend their full support to the commencement of negotiations of a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention, in line with resolution 69/58, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament". It is our firm belief that such a step is consistent with what the international community has done in the past to prohibit and outlaw other weapons of mass destruction.

Secondly, at the regional level, every non-nuclear-weapon State has an important role to play to ensure that its territory and region will not in any way be used in contravention to the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, Indonesia would like to reiterate the importance of maintaining South-East Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and free from the threat of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. We look forward to the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and its related documents by nuclear-weapon States as early as possible.

As President of the 2015 Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, Indonesia continues to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions that have yet to establish them, in particular in the Middle East.

Pending a comprehensive international legal framework that outlaws nuclear weapons, Indonesia fully supports the urgent conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States. Indonesia is also of the view that the universalization and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is vital. Countries, especially annex 2 States, need to demonstrate their political will and leadership by ratifying the CTBT to enable the Treaty to enter into force. Indonesia, as one of the

annex 2 countries, has shown its leadership by ratifying the CTBT in 2012.

On 29 September, Indonesia, together with Hungary, handed over the co-presidency of the Article XIV Conference of the CTBT to Japan and Kazakhstan. Even though it is no longer in that position, Indonesia will always be ready to contribute and support efforts for the successful universalization of the CTBT, as well as to further advance international peace and stability.

While we have not seen much progress in the area of disarmament, we are encouraged by the significant progress achieved under the non-proliferation regime, in particular the prevalence of diplomatic solutions in the negotiation on the Iranian nuclear issue. However, we are of the view that further efforts are needed to attain the universalization of the comprehensive safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure universal adherence to the non-proliferation commitments under the NPT. In the NPT context, Indonesia supports the continued efforts to strengthen the Treaty's incentive, where commitments by State parties to non-proliferation can allow for more access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Indonesia continues to affirm the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs. In that regard, we express our concern about unilateral coercive measures and emphasize that no undue restriction or conditionality should be placed on the transfer of such arms. We also stress the importance of the reduction of military expenditures by major arms-producing countries, in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments.

The illegal supply and illegitimate use of conventional weapons by unauthorized actors must be stopped. That can be done by strengthening the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Indonesia is also concerned about the developments related to anti-ballistic missile systems, and the threat of the weaponization and militarization of outer space. The exploration and use of outer space should be for peaceful purposes only and benefit all States.

With regard to the issue of outer space, the negotiation of any code of conduct on outer space activities should

be consistent with the respective mandates of all relevant United Nations bodies and should be convened in the format of inclusive, transparent and consensus-based multilateral negotiations within the framework of the United Nations.

Indonesia remains concerned about any initiative that would erode multilateralism in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation, as well as arms control. We are determined to continue promoting multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

In the midst of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we must redouble our efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Let us ensure that humankind forever is absolved from the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Ms. Baumann (Germany): On behalf of Germany, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. I assure you of Germany's utmost support for your work.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/70/PV.2) and the representative of Japan on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative.

This Committee is dedicated to issues that are of essential importance to peace and security for all of us. Therefore, it is no surprise that our deliberations are intense and sometimes controversial. However, we should remind ourselves time and again of our joint goal — a safer and securer world with fewer weapons.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed between Iran and the E3+3 in July shows that diplomatic solutions can be reached if all parties concerned demonstrate the necessary political will.

With regard to this year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, it is our view that even though we did not agree on a final document, that should not be perceived as a shortcoming of the Treaty itself. The Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the indispensable cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation. While it is not perfect, it continues to be the best basis on which to pursue nuclear disarmament. Therefore, we should refrain from any action that could diminish the value of that Treaty. Furthermore, the 2010 action plan remains valid and should be fully implemented.

Germany shares the assessment that more should and could be done. Given that there are still more than 16,000 nuclear weapons in the world, we need to push harder for progress. Therefore, Germany supports efforts to launch negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, preferably in the Conference on Disarmament, but it is also open to alternate forums. Furthermore, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification provides us with the opportunity to advance knowledge and develop skills that will be essential for verifying multilateral nuclear disarmament.

Germany welcomes the debate on the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear-weapon detonations. The three conferences in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna reminded us — as did the commemorations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki — of the many reasons why a nuclear weapon should never be used again. At the same time, it is not realistic to expect that nuclear disarmament can advance without engaging those States possessing nuclear weapons. The debate about nuclear weapons has a humanitarian, but also clearly a security dimension, which cannot be ignored. We should use every opportunity to resume dialogue and engage constructively. That could be achieved, *inter alia*, by establishing an inclusive open-ended working group.

Germany greatly appreciates and supports the international community's work in advancing the verified elimination of chemical weapons. The systematic and repeated use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Syria, reported by the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), is a clear breach of the Convention and international law. It further aggravates the disastrous humanitarian situation of the Syrian people. Germany therefore welcomes the unanimous decision of the Security Council to establish a Joint Investigative Mechanism to identify those involved in the use of chemicals as weapons. Germany will do its part to ensure that the mechanism can quickly take up its important work by providing financial contributions and expertise.

The inconsistencies in Syria's declaration on its chemical-weapons programme under the Chemical Weapons Convention are another major cause of concern and must be clarified convincingly. Reports about the alleged use of sulphur mustard by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham in Iraq and Syria constitute a new and alarming quality. In future, we will see OPCW play an important role in addressing the use of chemical

weapons by non-State actors. After a long period of standstill, the upcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention will be a chance to make the Convention a more efficient and effective instrument.

Small arms and light weapons cause tremendous human suffering and are one of the root causes of displacement and migration. Against this backdrop, it is fully justified that the topic has been high on the Security Council's agenda this year. Germany recognizes internationally binding instruments such as the Arms Trade Treaty as a sound basis of its small arms and light weapons policy. It is good news that Sustainable Development Goal 16.4 foresees a significant reduction of illicit small arms trafficking.

German Foreign Minister Steinmeier highlighted the importance of this issue here in New York only last week. We attach great importance to the joint Group of 7 initiative with the African Union, aiming at better small arms and light weapons coordination in the Sahel. This initiative will enhance our assistance to this region, which is heavily affected by these kinds of weapons.

Let me address an emerging issue of great importance — lethal autonomous weapons systems. Given the speed of technological progress, it is high time to take this issue seriously. There is a common understanding that machines should not be allowed to take life-and-death decisions without human intervention. Germany stands ready to shoulder further responsibilities in order to advance the discussions in this regard.

Finally, allow me to make a remark on cyber issues: Germany firmly believes that information and communications technologies are increasingly relevant in conflicts. They have already become an important factor in international security. Agreeing on a set of transparency and confidence-building measures and establishing mechanisms in case of a cyberattack could be the right way forward to face this danger. Germany will continue to engage actively in this field.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Sir, I wish to express our satisfaction at seeing you presiding over the work of the First Committee, and to extend a cordial acknowledgement to the other members of the Bureau and the secretariat. You have my delegation's support and commitment in seeking a successful outcome in the Committee.

Peru aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement made by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

As a peace-loving country, Peru is party to the international arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. In that context, I welcome the outcomes of the First Conference of the States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which was held in August in Mexico, where, by consensus, the city of Geneva was designated as the headquarters of the secretariat and the first head of the secretariat of the ATT was appointed. This is a vitally important instrument to my country, as it will allow the regulation of the international trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons. Peru is currently a State signatory to the Treaty and is updating domestic legislation in order to be able to ratify it as soon as possible.

Given the concern of the international community over the illicit production, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled proliferation in many areas of the world, Peru reiterates its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We know that the traffic and transfer of arms significantly promotes other illegal activities that undermine international law, governance and the peaceful and safe coexistence of our citizens. We are therefore fully committed to implementing these instruments and collaborating with the elaboration and implementation of related norms and mechanisms in order to fight this scourge.

My delegation welcomes the First Review Conference of the Convention of Cluster Munitions, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia. For my country, cluster munitions are a high-priority issue, given their indiscriminate impact on the civilian population, which also exacerbates poverty and limits the development of local and national capacity. Peru, as a State party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, has submitted its first transparency report, which covers the period from March to August 2013. Peru is coordinating with Norwegian international cooperation on the possibility of Peru's receiving technical assistance in the destruction of cluster munitions.

Nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear arms are another matter of great interest to my country, since our main goal is achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons. In that context, Peru maintains its firm position in favour of the full implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), stresses the importance of achieving universality of that instrument, and therefore urges all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. We also urge the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments under article VI of the Treaty and move towards the full elimination of these weapons.

We are deeply disappointed over the lack of consensus at the recent NPT Review Conference, which ultimately impeded the adoption of the draft outcome document. Nevertheless, the draft outcome document on nuclear disarmament that was circulated in the final hours of the Conference did not meet expectations. The failure of the Conference should serve as a fresh impetus to those of us who truly believe in the need for the timely prohibition and full elimination of nuclear weapons to renew our efforts for these objectives.

Peru advocates the universalization of regimes prohibiting weapons of mass destruction. In that respect, I commend the great work done by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in recent years. Peru is also a party to all multilateral instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation, which constitute one of the pillars of our foreign policy and embody my country's genuine resolve to achieve international peace and security through complete disarmament. This firm position led Peru to be one of the first States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in November 1997, little more than a year after its adoption by the General Assembly, and to be the second annex 2 State to implement it.

Peru was also one of the promoters of the establishment of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world, under the Tlatelolco Treaty. For Peru, the CTBT is a key instrument of international efforts for the progressive reduction of nuclear weapons and the prevention nuclear proliferation. We therefore welcome the progress that continues to be made towards the universality of this instrument. Peru advocates the timely entry into force of the CTBT. Aware of the serious consequences for the very existence of humankind that can result from nuclear tests and

weapons in development, and expressing our desire and political will to prevent the recurrence of situations resulting from nuclear tests or the these weapons, Peru is committed to the humanitarian pledge.

Regarding the disarmament machinery, my delegation believes that the reactivation of the Conference on Disarmament is a matter of priority, since that forum should be the primary negotiating body for disarmament and international security issues. We are very concerned that in recent years the States members of the Conference on Disarmament have not been able to reach agreement on a programme of work to substantively address its items. We urge all members to show greater political will to ensure the onset of substantive work by adopting and implementing a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. My country also acknowledges the efforts of Ambassador Fodé Seck of Senegal, Chair of the Disarmament Commission in 2015, to reach agreement on the agenda of the Commission for its three-year cycle.

Peru is convinced that, by promoting effective confidence-building measures, States will be able to move towards the integration and strengthening of the cooperation mechanisms and actions that will allow us to confront on an urgent basis extreme poverty, inequality and social exclusion. It is therefore important to continue to promote at all levels an environment that is conducive to arms control, the limitation of conventional weapons and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which will allow every State to allocate greater resources to its economic and social development.

This year, my country will once again facilitate the draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, whose headquarters is located in the Peruvian capital, Lima. In that regard, I stress the important role and support of the Regional Centre in contributing, alongside the States of the region, to progress on a number of disarmament initiatives, confidence-building measures and the fight against illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, munitions and explosives, which pose a serious threat to the security of the region.

As stated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/138), which Peru welcomes, the Centre continues its programme of assistance to the Caribbean on the effective implementation of Security Council resolution

1540 (2004). Peru is grateful to the countries that have contributed to the Centre in support of its operation and programme of activities throughout the region, and calls on all countries to continue their generous contributions. Peru values the work being carried out by the Office for Disarmament Affairs at its various headquarters. We wish to highlight in particular the new impetus that has been given to the headquarters of the Office at Vienna, with which my country, together with other countries, is developing projects to promote actions that contribute to disarmament.

Finally, I wish to conclude this statement by reaffirming Peru's unswerving commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and weapons control. We are committed to doing our utmost in the work of the Committee, as we are convinced that our achievements here will contribute to strengthening international peace and security.

Mr. Van der Kwast (Netherlands): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, and the Bureau on your assumption of the Committee leadership. You will not be surprised if I say that you can count on the full support of my delegation.

The agreement between the E3+3 and Iran on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (see S/2015/544, annex) was truly a historic event. Its final success will be measured by the full and timely implementation of the Road Map for the Clarification of Past and Present Outstanding Issues regarding Iran's Nuclear Programme, as agreed between the International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran. Through its full implementation, Iran can reassure the international community that its nuclear programme is of an exclusively peaceful nature. It is important that Iran cooperate fully with the Agency regarding possible military dimensions, as agreed in the road map.

The conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty remains a priority for the Netherlands. We are very pleased that the Group of Governmental Experts on a Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear and other Explosive Devices produced a substantial consensus report. The logical next step is the start of negotiations, preferably in the Conference on Disarmament. However, as the current political situation does not allow negotiations to start, we should continue our preparations on the basis of the conclusions and recommendations of the report both in and outside the Conference on Disarmament.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains for us the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament structure and continues to deserve our full support. We are disappointed that no consensus could be reached at the Review Conference earlier this year, especially as we believe that we were close to an agreement. Not reaching consensus at the Review Conference is, however, not a failure of the NPT. As a way forward, we can continue to build on the 2010 NPT action plan, and in particular on those actions that still need to be implemented. We should also consider using the relevant parts of the Review Conference document as at least a reference for our further work.

Following the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, we have made good progress. We look back at the first Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Cancún, Mexico, as a success. Many procedural and financial issues were dealt with at the Conference, allowing for a solid start for that important Treaty. We thank Mexico for hosting this meeting. Now it is time to start with the implementation of the standard for the regulation of international trade in conventional arms that the Treaty has set.

The first Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, was also a success, and we thank Croatia for hosting the meeting. The Political Declaration adopted in Dubrovnik underlines the fact that cluster munitions should become a thing of the past. The Dubrovnik Action Plan sets out a detailed and forward-looking road map for the next five years and contains concrete benchmarks for its implementation. The Action Plan is a good basis from which to work for the presidency of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The main challenge for the Convention on Cluster Munitions remains the strengthening of the norm of non-use of cluster munitions. In this regard, we are deeply concerned about recent reports about the use of cluster munitions in Syria, Yemen and Ukraine. The other challenge for the Convention on Cluster Munitions is the further universalization of the Treaty. We therefore warmly welcome this year's resolution on cluster munitions.

The cyberdomain can be used by both States and non-State actors to threaten international security. Cybersecurity and promoting international peace and stability in the cyberdomain are therefore essential. That is why the Netherlands organized the Global Conference on Cyberspace earlier this year.

Cybersecurity needs to be considered in conjunction with themes such as freedom and the potentials of economic growth online. In order to reduce the risks posed by insufficient security within the cyberdomain, many ongoing bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives are contributing to increased transparency, confidence and stability in the cyberdomain. These confidence-building measures are of the greatest importance. The Netherlands is interested to participate in the Group of Governmental Experts on cyber to further enhance these confidence-building measures.

Two years of discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems have answered some questions, but other questions remain. We have to further deepen our understanding of what we exactly mean by "meaningful human control" in this discussion. However, we believe it is time to take our discussions one step further. At the upcoming Meeting of the States Parties, we would be in favour of establishing a Group of Governmental Experts that could come up with recommendations for further steps, which could then be taken into account at next year's Review Conference.

We attach importance to the issue of unmanned aerial vehicles. Armed unmanned aerial vehicles in themselves are not prohibited weapons under international law. Current and existing rules apply, and there is no reason to consider the existing international legal framework inadequate to regulate the use of armed drones. However, there are general issues of international law regarding the use of force and the deployment of weapons that need further clarification, and we need to start a dialogue on those issues. It is important that existing laws and transparency on the use of drones are upheld, and that is why the Netherlands remains committed to an open dialogue on this issue.

On space, both in the Conference on Disarmament and at this session of the First Committee, a lot of attention is given to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Recent discussions in the Conference on Disarmament underlined again that this is an acute problem that demands a speedy solution as more and more players are active in outer space. In the long run, the Netherlands sees benefits in a treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, but negotiating a treaty takes time, while we think we should act now. Therefore, a code of conduct could be our starting point, as it could be implemented immediately. The meeting in June on a code of conduct under the able chairmanship

of Mr. Sergio Marchisio of Italy can serve as a basis for further work.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this meeting and congratulate you on your chairmanship of the First Committee. Your prudence and experience will lead to the successful outcome of the work of the Committee.

Libya reiterates its respect for its commitments arising from international disarmament instruments, particularly on weapons of mass destruction, that we have ratified. It supports all international efforts to create an atmosphere conducive to the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction everywhere. Libya is committed to reconsidering certain international instruments on disarmament that it has not signed, which we will do in the framework of our national security requisites and take the necessary positions thereon.

We can guarantee the non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons only through the total elimination of these weapons. In this connection, we recall Libya's abandonment of its nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction programmes in 2003. We hope that all States will do as we and other States have done. Libya calls for urgent action to conclude an unconditional and legally binding instrument to protect non-nuclear States from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Libya calls for the implementation of all provisions of resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", which calls for the urgent commencement of negotiations on a non-discriminatory and comprehensive treaty to prohibit the use, acquisition, production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, the commemoration of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the convening of a high-level international conference on disarmament no later than 2018 to review the progress made in this regard.

Libya expresses its deep concern over the catastrophic humanitarian effects and enormous destructive consequences of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, their discriminatory nature and the absence of any mechanism to provide relief to victims. We support the Vienna humanitarian pledge,

to which 113 States have acceded, including Libya. We call on all Member States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Weapons (NPT) to accede to it.

The NPT remains the cornerstone of universal nuclear non-proliferation. We call for the full implementation of the Treaty and its three pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and use of energy for peaceful purposes. We emphasize the inalienable rights of parties to the NPT to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, in accordance with articles I and II of the Treaty. Libya also emphasizes the important role undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency and its safeguards regime. It should be promoted and strengthened.

It is regrettable that, despite strenuous efforts to achieve universality of the NPT, there was major disappointment in the wake of the 2015 NPT Review Conference because the Conference did not reach consensus or produce an outcome document as a result of the differences of opinion on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Freeing the Middle East of nuclear weapons is a prerequisite to stability in the region; it is essential for confidence-building. We call therefore for the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction in the region and for nuclear installations to be subjected to international inspection and monitoring, in accordance with the NPT, the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted since 1974, Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

Attempting to free humankind from weapons of mass destruction is the only way to build a global system devoid of lethal weapons. In this connection, my country has honoured its commitments under the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, according to specific plans, and destroyed all its chemical weapons. Libya has also signed the Arms Trade Treaty, proceeding from its firm support for the elaboration of joint international standards that prevent the proliferation of conventional weapons in hotbeds of tension, particularly in Africa. In this connection, we stress the need to respect entrenched principles of international law, such as the right of States to defend themselves, maintain their territorial integrity and security, and resist foreign occupation. We emphasize the need to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit

Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and to continue building upon the results achieved in implementing the Programme.

There is a pressing need to activate the multilateral disarmament machinery, particularly the Conference on Disarmament, which unfortunately is at an impasse because of lack of political will. We emphasize the need to take the necessary steps to enable the Conference on Disarmament to play its role in nuclear disarmament by resuming negotiations to arrive at a treaty to prohibit the production of fissile materials and on the destruction of their arsenals, concluding a legally binding instrument that bans the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. We would like to emphasize the important role undertaken by the Conference on Disarmament, as the only deliberative body in charge of submitting recommendations on disarmament matters. We express our concern at the stagnation experienced by the Commission for 15 years.

Finally, we would like to keep the matter of outer space separate from that of disarmament, as well as the need to elaborate a code of conduct relating to that matter. We hope that this will be accomplished soon.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): It is great to see you, Sir, in the Chair, and I wish to join the others who spoke before me in commending you and the other members of Bureau on your well-deserved election. I wish to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation as you discharge your important responsibilities.

I also want to align our statement with that delivered by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.2), respectively, and wish to complement them with the following remarks in our national capacity.

This general debate provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the work we have collectively undertaken over the past seven decades of the existence of the United Nations in the areas of disarmament and international security. It also affords us an opportunity to recommit to the noble aspirations of general and complete disarmament and effective international control, knowing too well that, despite averting a major world war, we have witnessed too many conflicts that have inflicted wanton suffering upon millions of people around the world. The pledge to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war needs

to be fulfilled, as does as the pledge to achieve total, irreversible and internationally verifiable disarmament of nuclear weapons. These are essential requirements for achieving the lofty objectives of the United Nations.

To us, it is a matter of great concern that, instead of decrementing their arsenals to achieve their total elimination, as envisaged in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), nuclear-weapon States and other possessors of nuclear weapons are modernizing, upgrading and refurbishing them. Far worse is the fact that, instead of deterring, the existence of nuclear weapons has only galvanized non-nuclear-weapon States to acquire them. This situation has resulted in an undesirable arms race that presents an existential threat to all humankind. Though seven decades have elapsed, the horrors of the humanitarian consequences of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear blasts are still fresh in our minds. "Never again" risks becoming an empty slogan.

It is imperative, therefore, that the elimination of nuclear weapons and related technologies remain a high priority. It is the only guarantee of their non-use or threat of use. Similarly, we must exert all efforts towards finding a comprehensive way of eliminating these weapons, including by agreeing on a legally binding international instrument for their prohibition. Pending their total elimination, it is only fair to request nuclear-weapon States to provide unconditional negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

The efforts being made at the regional level, including through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, are a step in the right direction. We therefore firmly believe that there should be no further delay in commencing talks aimed at establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Certainly, that would be a useful contribution to regional and world peace and security. We must also spare no effort in preventing non-State actors from acquiring and using any weapons of mass destruction. The implementation of the relevant international instruments, particularly Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), is key in this regard.

We wish to underscore that the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are the fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They play an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT and help to create an environment conducive to nuclear cooperation. We

deem it important that the safeguards be implemented without affecting the rights of and benefits to States parties provided in article IV of the Treaty, including the right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy.

We welcome the IAEA's important role in ensuring nuclear safety and security. While this work is important in averting nuclear disasters, as witnessed at Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi, it should never be used as an excuse to deny States parties' rights to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

While addressing the threats posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, we must not forget that today it is the conventional weapons, especially the small arms and light weapons, that are causing havoc and mass suffering to people across the world. Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan once noted:

“The death toll from small arms dwarfs that of all other weapons systems — and in most years greatly exceeds the toll of the atomic bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In terms of the carnage they cause, small arms, indeed, could well be described as ‘weapons of mass destruction.’”
(A/54/2000, para. 238)

We could not agree more with this alarming observation. Indeed, small arms and light weapons and their ammunitions are flooding many countries and continents; falling into the wrong hands; exacerbating conflicts; undermining development; disrupting social services, including education and health; and curtailing peoples' enjoyment of human rights.

It is in this regard that we have been supportive of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We are also signatories to the Arms Trade Treaty, the only legally binding instrument for regulating the trade in arms between countries. It is incumbent upon us to combat the illicit trade in arms and ammunitions and to prevent their diversion to unauthorized persons or groups. We must continue to promote measures aimed at ensuring the proper marking and traceability of arms and ammunitions, and we must foster cooperation to achieve this objective. Tanzania is undertaking these measures and is grateful for the assistance received, including through the Regional Centre on Small Arms.

In conclusion, permit me to underscore the inextricable link between disarmament, peace and security and development. We cannot possibly achieve the transformative Sustainable Development Goals if we maintain excessive military spending, which is estimated at \$1.7 trillion per annum. Regrettably, while armaments and ammunitions gather dust and corrode in warehouses, or are being exchanged for diamond and gold somewhere, billions of people remain trapped in extreme poverty and hundreds of thousands of children die of hunger and acute malnutrition and continue to lack basic social services.

Neither guns nor bullets will bring about a life of dignity for all humankind, as aspired to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Neither nuclear weapons nor other weapons of mass destruction will guarantee global peace and security, and neither words nor declarations or resolutions will bring us closer to the goal of general and complete disarmament. Only determined actions, clear objectives and solid political will will get us there. We must summon the necessary strength and courage and commit to action. Tanzania will play its part.

The Chair: I shall now call on those representatives who have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention to five minutes.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): Let me first congratulate you, Sir, on assuming your chairmanship and let you know that my delegation looks forward to working with you and your team as you carry out your duties. My request to take the floor is to exercise my right of reply to respond to some of the remarks made earlier by the representative of the Russian Federation.

First, with regard to so-called American violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Agreement (INF) Treaty, let me just say that, on the contrary, it is Russia that is violating the INF Treaty. Let me note that on 29 July 2014 the United States announced its determination that the Russian Federation is in violation of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty — specifically, the determination that the Russian Federation is in violation of its INF Treaty obligations not to possess, produce or flight-test a ground-launch cruise missile with a range capability of 500 to 5,500 kilometres or to possess or produce launches of such missiles. This is a very serious matter.

The finding of Russian non-compliance was repeated in the 2015 version of the compliance report. The United States is committed to the viability of the INF Treaty and encourages Russia to return to compliance with its obligations under the Treaty and to eliminate all prohibited items in a verifiable manner.

On the second issue of the so-called plans of the United States to modernize nuclear weaponry in Europe, this issue was fully addressed when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was negotiated. The basing arrangements were made clear to all delegations and were made public. Russia did not object. The deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of our NATO allies is consistent with the NPT. These weapons remain under United States control and are not transferred. As outlined in the 2010 *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, life-extension programmes of existing warhead designs work to reinforce the United States commitment that it will not develop new nuclear warheads, seek new military missions or provide for new military capabilities. The United States has slashed its non-strategic nuclear weapons by more than 90 per cent since 30 September 1991, while Russia continues to maintain a far greater stockpile of such arms.

The third issue raised by the representative of the Russian Federation was about missile defences being destabilizing. With an emphasis on transparency and confidence-building, we have explained that nothing that the United States is doing with respect to our missile-defence plans will undercut international security. It would not be in our interest to do so. It would be prohibitively expensive and from a technical perspective it would be extremely difficult. The Cold War mindset about ballistic-missile defences is no longer valid. Limited ballistic-missile defence capabilities are not capable of threatening Russia's strategic nuclear forces and are not a threat to strategic stability.

President Obama has consistently said since 2009 that the European Phased Adaptive Approach missile system is necessary to protect the United States and our allies from the threat posed by ballistic missiles from outside the Euro-Atlantic region. NATO has repeatedly made clear that missile defense is not about any one country, but about the threat posed by proliferation more generally. In fact, over 30 countries have obtained or are trying to obtain ballistic-missile technology. Let me be clear — we will continue to move forward with implementation on the European Phased Adaptive Approach in Europe.

Finally, I would note that the United States is not concerned about the impact on strategic stability of Russia's deployment of 68 interceptors at the Moscow anti-ballistic missile system; 68 deployed interceptors are 24 more than we even had plans to deploy. Furthermore, Russia is open about declaring that the Moscow anti-ballistic-missile system is specifically designed against the United States, and just like the United States, Russia is modernizing its radars and interceptors as part of its system. However, it still has not raised concerns in the United States about strategic stability. Over multiple administrations, the United States has put forward a number of proposals for cooperation on missile defence. Russia has declined to pursue any of these proposals.

My final point is United States efforts and commitment to furthering nuclear disarmament are well known, and we look forward to working with all interested parties on a positive disarmament agenda and to do so in an open and transparent manner.

Mr. Ibrahim (Syrian Arab Republic): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor, and allow me to congratulate you on chairing this session of the First Committee.

I would like to refer to the baseless allegations concerning my country mentioned in the statement of the representative of the Israeli regime. Syria is a full-fledged member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and is fully committed to the Chemical Weapons Convention and its provisions. Syria condemns in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons, including the horrific use of such weapons by terrorist groups against Syrian civilians and Syrian soldiers.

It is absurd to listen to the representative of the Israeli regime falsely speaking about Israel's concern for regional peace and security in the Middle East and in the world. It is absurd to listen to his pretension regarding concerns about the expansion of terrorist organizations in the region, while we all know of the marriage of convenience between Israel and those terrorist groups in Syria. Israeli support for different terror groups in my country, including the Al-Qaida-affiliated Al-Nusra Front, mainly in the Syrian occupied Golan, has not been limited to only treating those terrorists in Israeli hospitals and then bringing them back later into Syria in order to continue their crimes. Israel is assisting those terrorist groups logistically by providing military support to them. This support is

obvious in the repeated military aggressions against Syrian territory by Israel in order to help those terror groups maintain their control and expansion over areas in Syria.

It is also absurd to listen to him speaking about Israel's commitment to the goal of achieving a peaceful environment in the region, mainly in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, while it is an apparent fact that Israel is not a member of any of the international agreements on weapons of mass destruction, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and Israel is the sole possessor of such kinds of weapons in the region. My Mission will return to Israel's repeated violations of those agreements during the thematic debate of the First Committee.

Mr. Uliyanov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Like my American colleague, I too wish to make use of the right of reply.

It is no secret that Russia and the United States have certain claims against each other regarding violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Agreement (INF) Treaty. That is an unfortunate fact, but I think there is a major difference between our two countries on this.

When we speak of American violations, we base our statements on a plethora of facts and arguments. The opinion that the deployment of MK-41 launching systems on the ground would be a violation of this Treaty is shared by many American experts who specialize in this topic. Regarding the accusations of Washington, D.C., against the Russian Federation, none is based in fact. They are entirely polemical. That is the major difference in the approaches of our two countries.

As to the European missile defence project, the United States is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), even though it is in the North African continent. One of the basic documents of the OSCE is a military and political code of conduct, and one political obligation enshrined in that document is the principle is that States shall not strengthen their own security at the expense of the security of other States. Yet, with the case of European

missile defence, this is precisely what is happening. The United States is strengthening its own security at the expense of Russia's security. At the same time, we note that on 5 April 2009, speaking in Prague, President Obama clearly stated that in case the Iranian threat were removed, the driving forces for deployment of missile defense systems in Europe would also no longer exist. The threat posed by the Iranian nuclear programme, if it ever existed, has been fully removed as a result of the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. However, the United States plans remain unchanged, which is precisely what I said in my statement and has just been confirmed by my American colleague.

Finally, I wish to make one last point regarding nuclear sharing. The United States representative referred to the fact that at one point an agreement had supposedly been reached according to which nuclear sharing is not prohibited. We are not aware of any such agreement. We have combed through our diplomatic archives seeking some confirmation of this statement, and found none. Furthermore, the same conclusion can be drawn from recently declassified American documents. There was no agreement of any kind on nuclear sharing in the 1960s. We have every reason to assert that this practice violates articles I and II of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Many countries of the Non-Aligned Movement share that position. They have every reason to share that view.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I apologize for taking the floor again. Let me just say in response to Russia's charges that the United States is being polemical on these issues that Russia does not have a monopoly on facts. It claims that its facts are the facts. Well, we have tried to have discussions with Russia on the issue of ballistic-missile defence and, as I mentioned in my statement, Russia has not been willing to do so. With regard to the charge about our missile-defence system in Europe, we have said very clearly, and we have made this point to our Russian friends, that we still face very serious challenges on the ballistic-missile front, and we will continue to go forward with our plans to defend ourselves and our allies from that ballistic-missile threat.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.