



General Assembly

Seventieth session

First Committee

4th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands)

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

Agenda items 88 to 105

General debate on all disarmament and related international security agenda items

The Chair: Before I open the floor for statements, I would like to remind all delegations that the rolling list of speakers for this phase of our work closed at 6 p.m. on Friday, in accordance with our programme of work and timetable. Eighty-six delegations inscribed their names on the list by the deadline, in addition to the 26 speakers who took the floor last week. For 86 people to speak in the 13 and a half hours allocated to the general debate this week, it is very important that we follow the agreed time limit of 10 minutes when speaking in a national capacity and 15 minutes when speaking on behalf of several delegations.

Delegations are also reminded that today the list of speakers opened for our thematic discussion segment, which will begin on Monday next week. For delegations' convenience, Secretariat staff are in the Conference Room with the various lists of speakers for the seven clusters before the Committee, and those wishing to inscribe their names on them should do so as soon as possible.

Mr. Morejón Pazmiño (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I will try to be brief. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 33 States members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). We would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee at the seventieth session

of the General Assembly. We would also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Courtenay Rattray of Jamaica for his tireless work as Chair during the previous session.

The Community would like to recall the historic decision of the Heads of State and Government of CELAC's member States in Havana at the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, on 28 and 29 January 2014, to formally declare Latin America and the Caribbean to be a zone of peace, and to reaffirm CELAC's unwavering commitment to resolve disputes by peaceful means, with the aim of banishing forever the use or threat of use of force in our region and against individual countries.

At the founding Summit of CELAC in December 2011, held in Caracas, our Heads of State and Government adopted a special communiqué on the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with the region's long-standing position in support of a world free of nuclear weapons. In special declarations at each subsequent Summit — in Santiago in 2013, Havana in 2014 and Belén, Costa Rica, in 2015 — they reiterated that same commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world. Today, CELAC reaffirms the importance of making progress towards the fundamental goal of nuclear disarmament and achieving and sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we would like to express our opposition to enhancing existing nuclear weapons or developing new types of such weapons as inconsistent with the obligation of nuclear disarmament. We also reiterate the importance of eliminating the

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role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies.

We are committed to launching a multilateral diplomatic process aimed at negotiating a legally binding instrument for the transparent, irreversible and verifiable prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, within a multilaterally agreed-on time frame, as was proposed at the third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna in December 2014. Such an instrument is essential to achieving nuclear disarmament and would meet the obligations of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as expressed in article VI of the Treaty. During the current session, it is the intention of CELAC member States, together with other interested States, to start exploring practical and concrete ways by which it could be negotiated and adopted as soon as possible.

Our Community is very concerned about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. CELAC calls on all States to raise this issue whenever nuclear weapons are discussed. We therefore commend the convening of the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna for their deliberations and contributions to the global discourse on achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. As testified to by survivors and the scientific evidence, nuclear weapons constitute a grave threat to security, development and civilization in general. It has also been determined that no State or international organization is capable of dealing with and providing humanitarian assistance and protection in the aftermath of a nuclear explosion. The Conferences also highlighted the ongoing potential risk of nuclear weapons' detonation, whether by accident or design. In that regard, I should emphasize that at the recent CELAC Summit on 28 and 29 January in Belén, our Heads of State and Government endorsed the Austrian pledge, now the Humanitarian pledge. We welcome its endorsement by 118 States.

CELAC continues to maintain its firm stance in support of the full implementation of the three pillars of the NPT — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination or double standards. We emphasize the importance of achieving universality for the NPT, and therefore urge States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. We call on the nuclear-weapon States to comply with

their commitments under article VI of the Treaty and to work for the complete elimination of such weapons. We urge them to fully and immediately implement the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed on at the 2000 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which are in force and binding on all States parties. Any failure to implement them undermines the Treaty's integrity and credibility.

We must express our grave disappointment at the lack of consensus at this year's NPT Review Conference, which ultimately prevented the adoption of the draft outcome document. However, the nuclear disarmament provisions in the draft outcome document distributed during the final hours of the Conference did not meet CELAC member States' expectations. In our view, they are a step backwards from the outcome documents of the previous Review Conferences. This Review Conference's failure should serve as further impetus — for those of us who truly believe in the importance of banning and eliminating nuclear weapons as soon as possible — to renew our efforts to that end. We also reiterate that the indefinite extension of the NPT agreed on at the 1995 Review Conference does not imply the right to possess nuclear weapons indefinitely.

CELAC regrets the failure to implement the agreement reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference on holding an international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Besides believing that this would constitute a significant contribution to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament, CELAC believes firmly that the establishment of such a zone would be a significant step forward for the peace process in the Middle East. In that regard, we feel it is highly regrettable that no agreement was reached on this issue at the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and we would like to remind all States parties to the NPT that the establishment of such a zone was an essential component of the decisions leading to the indefinite extension in 1995 of the NPT, which should be implemented.

The Community reiterates the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and urges those States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, whose ratification is essential for its entry into force, to speed up their signing and/or ratification process of that instrument. We also

urge all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear-weapon test explosions, other nuclear explosions or any other relevant non-explosive experiments, including subcritical experiments and those performed by super-computers aimed at enhancing nuclear weapons. Such acts are contrary to the aims and purposes of the CTBT and the spirit of the Treaty, and thus undermine its potential impact as a nuclear-disarmament measure. In that regard, CELAC welcomes the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, convened on 29 September under article XIV of the Treaty.

The Community welcomed the designation of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. We highlighted all the events held around the world in its observance, and we call on the United Nations and its Secretariat and agencies, as well Governments, parliaments and civil society, to continue to mark the day every year. In that regard, we welcome the commemoration by the General Assembly this year.

We note with appreciation the agreement reached between Iran and the P5+1 in Vienna on 14 July on the Iranian nuclear programme. CELAC emphasizes the fact that the agreement once again demonstrated that dialogue and negotiations are the only effective way to resolve differences among States.

CELAC is aware of the urgent need to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing and trafficking of firearms and their parts, components and ammunition. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects has a profound impact on stability, worsens violence and insecurity and undermines respect for international law. It is the cause of many deaths every year and consumes sizeable resources that could otherwise be used for development.

CELAC hopes that the Arms Trade Treaty, the first legally binding instrument to address the arms trade, can help to provide an effective response to the serious consequences that the illicit and non-regulated arms trade has for many people and States, particularly through its diversion of arms to non-State actors and unauthorized users, who are frequently linked to transnational organized crime and drug trafficking. We also hope that it can help to prevent armed conflict and violence, as well as violations of international law, including international human rights instruments and humanitarian law.

At the same time, with the Treaty's entry into force, in December 2014, we urge that it be applied in a balanced, transparent and objective manner, while respecting the sovereign right of all States to ensure their self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We acknowledge the first Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, convened at the end of August in Cancún, Mexico, and we would like to highlight Mexico's leadership of the preparatory process for the meeting and its organization.

The problem of anti-personnel mines continues to require the international community's attention. In that regard, CELAC would like to recall and commend the declaration of Central America as a mine-free zone. We also acknowledge the valuable assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Service. We stress the importance of cooperation for humanitarian demining and assistance to victims, and hope that the successes of recent years will continue. We also take note of the Declaration of Maputo+15, adopted at the third Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in June 2014.

CELAC supports international efforts to reduce the suffering caused by cluster munitions and by their use against civilian populations, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. We also recognize and appreciate the desire of any State to take multilaterally agreed-on action to deal with the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions. We note Colombia's ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the establishment of Central America as a cluster-munition-free zone during the fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in San José, Costa Rica. The Community also takes note of the outcome of the first Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention, held in Dubrovnik in September.

CELAC would like to emphasize its firm conviction that the complete elimination of chemical and biological weapons is a priority in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we stress the importance of universal adherence by all States to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, and to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the importance

of all States parties' compliance with all their provisions and requirements.

CELAC affirms its absolute rejection of the use of chemical weapons or any other weapon of mass destruction, regardless of where or by whom they are used. We welcome the recent accessions of Angola and Myanmar to the Convention on Chemical Weapons, and we call on States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Convention as soon as possible. We also call on all possessor States parties to ensure that their chemical-weapon stockpiles are completely destroyed within the final agreed deadline.

CELAC's member States have a common interest in promoting and expanding the exploration and use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes, for the benefit and interest of all States and as the patrimony of all humankind, regardless of their social, economic or scientific development. In the context of international security, CELAC recognizes the major opportunities that information and communications technologies (ICT), including social media, provide as a vehicle for promoting a better understanding among nations and achieving internationally agreed-on development objectives, as well as as a tool that promotes universal access to information.

At the same time, CELAC firmly condemns spying and indiscriminate large-scale and global monitoring among countries by State or non-State actors in violation of international law, and any such act directed against any Member State. We underscore the importance of safeguarding the use of cyberspace for peaceful purposes and ensuring that any use of ICTs is fully compatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law, especially those relating to State sovereignty, non-interference in States' internal affairs and the promotion and protection of all human rights for all. In that regard, we support reinforcing the international norms and principles applicable to States in the area of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, by promoting actions and strategies aimed at strengthening cybersecurity, preventing cybercrime and taking into consideration that an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment is essential for all.

Finally, CELAC would like to highlight the important work being done by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and

for the assistance it gives the countries of the region in implementing disarmament measures in various areas.

I should not end without thanking the interpreters, who enable us to be understood as well as possible despite my extremely rapid reading of my statement.

The Chair: I would like to thank the representative of Ecuador for his kind cooperation in reading a shortened version of his statement in order to keep to the time limit, which is very helpful to our collective interests.

Mr. Varma (India): We would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee, and to assure you and the Bureau of the Indian delegation's full support and cooperation.

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

We would also like to thank Acting High Representative Kim Won-soo for his important statement at the beginning of the plenary (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

India has been unwavering in its support for global, non-discriminatory, verifiable nuclear disarmament. Addressing the General Assembly on 1 October (see A/70/PV.22), India's Minister for External Affairs, Ms. Sushma Swaraj, said that India was aware of its responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State and that its support for that goal was undiminished.

The goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. All States possessing nuclear weapons can make a contribution by engaging in a meaningful dialogue aimed at building trust and confidence by reducing the prominence of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. We believe that increasing the restraints on the use of nuclear weapons is not only an essential first step; in the current complex international environment it is also necessary for enhancing strategic trust globally.

India considers the Conference on Disarmament to be the appropriate forum for the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament and believes that there are inherent dangers in some recent proposals to fragment the disarmament agenda or splinter the established disarmament machinery.

We supported resolution 69/58 and the working paper (CD/2032) submitted by States members of the Group of 21 Non-Aligned Nations in the Conference on Disarmament, seeking the start of negotiations in the Conference on a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, India supports commencing negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of the mandate outlined in document CD/1299, and we share the widely felt disappointment that such negotiations continue to be blocked. India welcomes the adoption by consensus of the report (A/70/81) of the Group of Governmental Experts on a fissile material cut-off treaty established pursuant to resolution 67/53, which underlined that the Treaty and its negotiation in the Conference remain a priority that enjoys international support, and that CD/1299 and its mandate remain the most suitable basis on which to begin negotiations.

As a responsible nuclear Power, in its nuclear doctrine India continues to stress a policy of credible minimum deterrence with a posture of no-first-use and non-use against non-nuclear-weapon States. We remain committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

We have contributed to international efforts to enhance nuclear safety and security standards through various programmes of the International Atomic Energy Agency and look forward to the success of the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit, to be hosted by the United States. The international community should continue to display the utmost vigilance in order to prevent terrorist groups gaining access to weapons of mass destruction and related materials and technology.

We welcome the successful conclusion of the negotiations between the E3+3 and Iran that resulted in agreement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are worthy examples of global non-discriminatory treaties aimed at completely eliminating their respective categories of weapons of mass destruction. The timely destruction by other States parties to the CWC to their remaining stockpiles is critical to upholding the credibility and integrity of the Convention. India contributed to the efforts made under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to destroy Syria's declared chemical-weapon

stockpiles. We share the widespread interest among BWC States parties in strengthening the Convention's effectiveness and improving its implementation through a protocol negotiated for that purpose. We support a robust consultation process leading up to the eighth Review Conference of the Convention next year, in order to contribute to its success by ensuring that adequate preparations are made on substantive issues.

As a major actor in space, India has vital development and security interests in the cosmos. We support strengthening the international legal regime for protecting and preserving access to space for all and preventing the weaponization of outer space, with no exceptions. We support the substantive consideration in the Conference on Disarmament of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. While not a substitute for legally binding instruments, in this area transparency and confidence-building measures can play a useful and complementary role. Discussions on a draft of an international code of conduct for outer space activities should be inclusive, covering all nations active in space, in order to ensure a product that has universal acceptance and can be adopted by consensus and through a process anchored in the United Nations.

India continues to consider the Arms Trade Treaty from the perspective of our defence, security and foreign policy interests. We will be watching to see how the Treaty is implemented, especially in view of some of the gaps in it that India pointed out during its negotiation and that have only become more pronounced since then. India hopes that the First Committee will support measures to ensure the improved functioning and long-term sustainability of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as a premier disarmament research body.

As in previous years, India will be introducing three draft resolutions and one draft decision. We look forward to an opportunity to elaborate on some of those issues during the thematic debate. For the purposes of brevity, I have not read our entire statement, but the full text has been circulated.

Mr. Rose (United States of America): On behalf of the United States delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the Netherlands on your election as Chair of the First Committee during the seventieth session of the General Assembly. We pledge our full support to you in your able guidance of this body's important work. We also welcome the election

of the other members of the Committee's Bureau, and look forward to working with them as well.

At the outset, I would like to assure the Committee of my nation's commitment to seeking the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. To achieve that long-term goal, the United States is pursuing a full-spectrum, pragmatic approach. By steadily reducing the role and number of our nuclear weapons in a way that advances strategic stability, we foster the conditions and opportunities for further progress.

The numbers tell the real story. The United States has reduced its total stockpile of active and inactive nuclear warheads by 85 per cent from its Cold War peak, from 31,255 nuclear warheads in 1967 to 4,717 as of 30 September 2014. More work needs to be done, but those results speak louder than words. We have made significant progress. That process, and the wider regime established to prevent nuclear proliferation, have always underpinned our deep understanding of the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons. That is why we are committed to using every available path to pursuing further progress on disarmament and arms control. And even as we proceed with steady implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START), President Obama has made clear his willingness to seek further reductions of up to one third below the New START levels. But we have also made clear that progress in that direction requires a willing partner and a strategic environment conducive to further reductions.

In contrast to our full-spectrum approach, proposals for such concepts as a nuclear-weapon ban or convention cannot succeed, because they fail to recognize the need to develop the verification capabilities and build the security conditions needed for progress on disarmament. Instead, they risk creating a very unstable security environment where misperceptions or miscalculations could escalate crises with unintended and unforeseen consequences, not excluding the possible use of a nuclear weapon. We must focus our efforts on realistic and achievable objectives that can make the world a safer place.

We share the frustrations regarding the pace of disarmament, but it would be a mistake to allow that frustration to propel us towards the false choice that nuclear weapons are either a humanitarian or a security

issue. They are both. Our pursuit of nuclear disarmament takes that into account. Despite what some people think, nuclear deterrence and nuclear disarmament are actually complementary. Nuclear deterrence seeks to constrain threats as we work to reduce nuclear weapons and shore up efforts to prevent further proliferation. Both ultimately seek to prevent the use of nuclear weapons. That is why President Obama made it clear in Prague that, even as we work towards the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, as long as such weapons exist the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary and guarantee the defence of our allies.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to play a critical role in global security and provides a foundation for our efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. We continue to uphold the NPT's undertaking in article VI

“to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to ... nuclear disarmament”.

But while we recognize that more needs to be done, we do not accept the notion that there is any legal gap in our fulfilment of those undertakings. At the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May, our reason for not joining a consensus had to do with the language concerning a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Although the United States supports that worthy goal, it cannot be imposed from outside the region or absent the consent of all States involved. Like similar zones in other regions, it can succeed only if it reflects the accepted norm that such zones should be based on arrangements freely arrived at by States in the region. Be assured that we will continue our work to identify opportunities for regional dialogue and encourage a way forward that takes into consideration the legitimate interests of all States in the region.

The experience of the Review Conference confirmed our long-held belief that we need more genuine international dialogue and engagement on nuclear-disarmament issues, including between the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. As envisioned in the Review Conference's draft final document, the United States is prepared to support an open-ended working group to identify and elaborate all effective measures that contribute to our shared nuclear-disarmament goals. There are, naturally, a

wide range of views on the purpose of such an open-ended working group; that reflects differences among States on how to take forward nuclear disarmament. We will not settle those differences at this session of the First Committee. But we can improve the quality of debate through support for an open-ended working group draft resolution that encourages the widest possible participation. Let us not lose this opportunity for engagement.

As a further contribution to this dialogue and cooperation, last December the United States and the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) launched the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. This exciting new endeavour brings together 27 states — nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States alike — committed to exploring the tools and technologies needed to effectively verify future nuclear disarmament agreements. While, of course, this dialogue does not involve the sharing of any sensitive nuclear-weapon-related information, we are convinced that there is a role that non-nuclear-weapon States can play in this area. We look forward to the second plenary of the Partnership, to be held in Oslo in November. And on 14 October, the United States and the NTI will host a First Committee side event to update States and civil society on the Partnership's progress and next steps.

When the final chapter of the age of nuclear weapons is written, history will record that the P-5 process was among the earliest successful efforts to enhance the type of multilateral transparency, dialogue, confidence-building and mutual understanding needed for progress towards the verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. Together, the P-5 are pursuing intensified engagement that is essential to setting the foundation to advance nuclear disarmament. We look forward to discussing these and other issues at the P-5 process side event to be hosted by France on 16 October.

Turning to outer space matters, the United States will use this year's First Committee session to advance space security and sustainability. The 22 October joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees will be an ideal opportunity to engage Member States on this important topic. The meeting was set up as a direct result of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, and we encourage Member States to come to the meeting prepared to discuss their implementation of such measures.

Finally, up to now I have tried to focus on the positive. But I cannot end without pointing out that the accusations levelled by the Russian representative against my country last Friday are utterly baseless (see A/C.1/70/PV.3). United States missile defences are not directed against Russia's or China's strategic nuclear forces. Over many years, the United States has put very forward-leaning proposals on the table for cooperation with Russia on missile defence. However, Russia has refused all offers and instead has made absolutely unacceptable demands on the United States and its allies as a precondition for any cooperation. Furthermore, the United States has always been, and remains, in full compliance with all of its NPT and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty obligations. We have many times publicly and privately explained why this is the case. Our Russian colleagues may feign misunderstanding, but the facts could not be clearer.

In our political system, Arms Control Treaty provisions are the law of the land, and the United States is a nation governed by the rule of law. Russia's accusations are a classic attempt at misdirection, as it is Russia that is flagrantly violating key provisions of international law and undermining international security. Russia continues to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, a breach of the Charter of the United Nations. Russia is in violation of the INF Treaty, as it has tested new ground-launched cruise missiles, which are explicitly prohibited by the Treaty. And it is Russia that has failed to respond to President Obama's proposal to negotiate further reductions in our strategic and tactical nuclear forces. The United States remains committed to advancing towards a world without nuclear weapons and furthering international security, but we need a willing and sincere partner.

The Chair: I would like to welcome the 24 disarmament fellows who are in the Conference Room, to the right of the Chair, to observe the proceedings of the Committee as part of their programme.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): It pleases me to start my statement by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. I am confident that your diplomatic capabilities and extensive experience will undoubtedly contribute to the success of the Committee's work and the achievement of its objectives. I also stress the determination of my delegation to cooperate with you to ensure the success of your mission.

In addition, my delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of Arab States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

International and regional efforts aimed at disarmament provide hope and optimism, and raise global awareness about the need to eliminate all types of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which pose a significant threat to international peace and security. As a part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's commitment to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international legitimacy, which are fundamental pillars of its foreign policy, it attaches special importance to strengthening the role of the United Nations in all fields, particularly in relation to issues of international peace and security, and disarmament. It is the Kingdom's belief that these issues represent an integrated unit without which the world cannot live in peace and stability.

The promotion of international peace and security requires genuine political will and strong determination from all countries, particularly those in possession of nuclear weapons, so that we can dispose of the reliance on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as instruments of national security. In that context, my country welcomes the designation of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

Despite the fact that many regions, due to the cooperation of the countries in the region and their understanding of the inevitability of coexistence, have successfully established nuclear-weapon-free zones, we find that the Middle East defies international and regional efforts to make it a zone free of nuclear weapons. This is caused by the rejection of the State of Israel of any pursuit of this goal. It is really unfortunate that both international consensus and the urgent desire felt in the region to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone are barred by Israel, which obstructs the wish of the peoples of the region to live in a zone free of nuclear terror.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regrets the failure of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, convened between 27 April and 22 May, to reach an agreement on the outcome document. That disrupted the efforts aimed at establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the

Middle East, spreads doubt about the credibility of the Treaty and encourages the countries of the region to enter into the race to acquire nuclear weapons.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hopes that the agreement reached between the major countries and Iran over its nuclear programme will strengthen security and stability in the region and in the entire world, and will reassure countries in the region as well as the international community. We also hope that Iran will be committed to the principles of good-neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of Arab countries, and that it will respect their sovereignty. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reaffirms the inherent rights of the States of the region to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with the standards and guidelines of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and under its supervision.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of implementing the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Kingdom is one of the first countries to have acceded to international treaties relating to the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. We also welcome the Security Council resolution related to the Joint Investigative Mechanism and ask that it quickly begin its work in order to identify the perpetrators who used chemical weapons in Syria.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia attaches great importance to the issue of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The Kingdom is one of the countries that believes that the United Nations programme to combat illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons is a starting point and a basis upon which we can build. The programme has underscored many harmful issues that negatively impact the stability of countries and that also affect security and peace at the national and regional levels. This prompted the Kingdom to take a series of precautionary administrative measures and to adopt policies aimed at the promotion and strengthening confidence-building and cooperation mechanisms to confront this devastating crisis at all levels.

I would be remiss if I did not express our appreciation for the efforts by the Security Council, particularly the efforts of its Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), to control and prevent the provision of any form of support to non-State actors

that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. In that regard, we reiterate the importance of implementing the resolution in order to limit terrorist organizations' access to weapons of mass destruction, and to intensifying supervision of nuclear services providers to ensure that they are not providing any illegitimate entities with nuclear materials or technology.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of confining the use of outer space to peaceful purposes. The relevant international legal agreements play a positive role in regulating the activities in and strengthening the peaceful use of outer space. The Kingdom also stresses the importance of international cooperation within this multilateral framework to strengthen information security and to secure national interests on the Internet.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is of the firm belief that, with international will, we are capable of reaching rational solutions for all problems that obstruct our ability to resolve many of the issues brought before the Committee for consideration.

Mr. Winid (Poland): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the chairmanship of the First Committee at the seventieth session of the General Assembly. I want to assure you of the Polish delegation's full support and cooperation in the fulfilment of your difficult but interesting and stimulating mandate.

Poland fully associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/70/PV.2). Building upon that, I would like to point out a couple of issues of particular importance for my Government.

Seventy years ago the United Nations was established to prevent future tragedies, such as those of both World Wars. As the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, mentioned in his remarks in the General Assembly two weeks ago,

“Peace and law: those are the two key words that enable us to understand and appreciate the importance of the United Nations over past 70 years in the world's history.” (*A/70/PV.13, p. 15*)

As the security situation deteriorates in a number of regions around the world, here in the First Committee, if we want to guarantee a more secure world, we need to reaffirm our respect for international law, and our

commitment to implementing our obligations. We hope this session will serve to build bridges among growing political divergences. We see a number of issues that will require our particular attention in the coming weeks. I will concentrate my remarks on a couple of issues.

First, the First Committee should confirm its continued support for the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament commitments we took upon ourselves. This is particularly relevant this year as the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons fell short of reaching an agreement on the way ahead for further implementation of the treaty.

In our view, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains a cornerstone of the international system of nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It keeps us on the right course towards complete nuclear disarmament, helps countries to maintain a high level of engagement in nuclear non-proliferation efforts and, at the same time, ensures access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We see no shortcuts, no simple solutions, or any alternatives to that forum.

The full implementation of the NPT requires efforts by all of us in this room. In particular, any discussion on nuclear disarmament has to be inclusive and pragmatic, and must respect the sovereignty, security concerns and commitments of all States. We believe that the historic agreement of 14 July on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, in conformity with the principles of the NPT, will strengthen the Treaty. At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that during the last year we witnessed events that are in contradiction with the spirit and letter of international commitments in the sphere of nuclear weapons. We continue to condemn the violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the illegal annexation of Crimea. These actions are in clear breach of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, as well as specific commitments under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994.

We remain equally concerned by challenges in the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC). Any use of chemical weapons constitutes a violation of international law, a war crime and a crime against humanity. The reports of the repeated use of chemical

weapons in Syria add urgency to calls for the universal application of disarmament commitments stemming from the Convention. We expect that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism will allow for clarification of those reports.

As in previous years, Poland will introduce at this session of the General Assembly a draft resolution on the implementation of the CWC. The draft resolution underlines the exceptional role of the CWC in the area of disarmament, preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, international cooperation and protection against chemical weapons. We hope it will gain the support of the Committee.

Poland served as Chair of last year's meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). The Convention provides a unique forum to gather diplomatic, legal and military expertise and to address emerging issues, such as, for example, lethal autonomous weapons systems. A forward-looking and focused discussion on the issue, held in April this year, has proved the relevance of the CCW and its ability to tackle these subjects. We welcome the comprehensive report of the Chair of the CCW Meeting of Experts. We hope that the work on this issue will continue next year. As the outgoing Chair of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, Poland will submit the draft resolution on the CCW for the consideration of the First Committee. We hope that — as in previous years — the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Poland remains committed to doing its part in the efforts to ensure further progress in the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. This year Poland has coordinated the work of the Committee on article 5 implementation dedicated to deal with the mine-clearance activities. I use this occasion to congratulate Mozambique for successfully completing the anti-personnel-landmine clearance process throughout its national territory. We hope that this year's meeting of States parties will result in decisions that will further improve the effectiveness of the Convention.

Poland deeply appreciates the development of the Arms Trade Treaty implementation process. We expect that progress in the universalization of the Treaty

will be achieved through an increase in the number of ratifications and, especially, the accession to it of players that have the biggest share in the international arms market.

Ms. Pobee (Ghana): My delegation warmly congratulates you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. We have confidence in your able leadership of the First Committee and wish to assure you of our support and cooperation in the discharge of your onerous duties.

Ghana associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the Second World War. The repercussions of the bombings are still felt today, and the continued possession and stockpiles of nuclear weapons remain a serious threat to human existence. The risks to present and future generations are heightened by the fact that the already bloated nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States, containing the most destructive explosive weapons ever created, are being further modernized and upgraded. It is a matter of grave concern that these weapons remain the only weapons of mass destruction not yet explicitly prohibited under international law.

The elimination of nuclear weapons has been on the agenda of the United Nations since its establishment, yet the prohibition of those weapons and a serious commitment to multilateral negotiations towards their elimination has eluded us. There is therefore an urgent need to reinforce the principles of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains the only multilateral treaty with binding commitments for nuclear disarmament.

Ghana shares the view that the NPT remains critical for nuclear disarmament. The Treaty's strengths, in terms of its universality, legal commitment and safeguards for the development, acquisition, possession and use of nuclear weapons, compel us to address its inherent challenges. We acknowledge the fact that the NPT, with its inherent shortcomings, faces significant challenges in holding the nuclear-weapon States to their legal obligations and undertakings under the Treaty, and that the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the failure to meet interim

objectives under the step-by-step approach are a matter of concern. We are equally disappointed that this year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons did not produce agreement on a final document. However, we must not allow the near-inaction of the nuclear-weapon States to resolve differences and move towards the dismantling of nuclear weapons to dampen our commitment. Rather, we should resolve to seek new and innovative approaches to bridge differences, and to build confidence and transparency going forward. The importance of the NPT in the quest for nuclear disarmament remains paramount and demands a renewed commitment to its objectives.

Ghana is encouraged by the fact that the NPT has engendered a change in the discourse around nuclear disarmament and brought into sharper focus the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons while seriously questioning their security and prestige value. We subscribe to the humanitarian pledge issued on 9 December 2014 at the conclusion of the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. The total of 119 Member States, including my country, that have endorsed the pledge, should not allow the momentum generated after the Conferences in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna to die down in view of the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear-weapon detonations. We urge continued dialogue on this matter and the beginning of a diplomatic process that could lead to negotiations on a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons, taking due cognizance of the humanitarian as well as legitimate security considerations of all parties and stakeholders. In that regard, Ghana shares the view that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) offers the hope of halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and could thereby make an important contribution to total nuclear disarmament. We welcome the recent ratification of the CTBT by Angola and renew our call to all annex 2 States that have yet to ratify the CTBT to fast-track the process of ratification.

We welcome the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed between Iran and the E3+3 in Vienna on 14 July. We urge parties to the Plan of Action to implement it in good faith as a true measure of its success. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action gives us hope that, with dedication and focus, we can also resolve other seemingly intractable challenges, particularly in relation to the convening of the conference on the

establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In that regard, we reiterate the concerns expressed on behalf of the African Group and renew our call on all interested parties, particularly States in the Middle East, to engage in a spirit of mutual understanding and constructive engagement. We maintain that the establishment of a nuclear-free Middle East is of crucial importance, and urge progress in determining the parameters for the convening of the agreed conference.

A fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is a *sine qua non* for a world free of nuclear weapons. Ghana therefore welcomes the consensus report (see A/70/81) of the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to, but not negotiate, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We support the view that the report and recommendations should serve as a basis for future negotiations on a possible FMCT, ideally under the auspices of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). It is, however, disturbing that the CD, which is the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, remains paralysed, having for some time failed to reach consensus on a programme of work and thus to commence substantive deliberations. The failure of the CD to move the global disarmament agenda forward undermines the important role it plays in international security. We once again urge the CD to show leadership and carry out its mandated functions.

The recent alleged use of chemical weapons, such as the use of mustard agents in mortar attacks by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, should be a matter of great concern to the international community. We must therefore renew our commitment to the development of both bilateral and multilateral strategies to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, particularly terrorist groups. To that end, the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is essential. I am pleased to inform the Committee that the Government of Ghana has extended an invitation to the experts supporting the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) to visit Accra from today, 12 to 15 October, to assist in preparing a national implementation action plan. We are grateful to the Committee for the assistance.

As we proceed to the fourth Nuclear Security Summit, scheduled for next year in Washington, D.C.,

we urge nuclear-weapon States to show leadership and prevent nuclear terrorism. It is our expectation that the Summit will lead to concrete outcomes on minimizing the use of highly enriched uranium, securing vulnerable materials, countering nuclear smuggling and deterring, detecting and disrupting attempts at nuclear terrorism.

The illicit transfer, excessive accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in many regions of the world pose a threat to international security. Given the scale of harm and instability that small arms and light weapons have caused in Africa, they have aptly been described as the true weapons of mass destruction, particularly in Africa. Ghana therefore remains committed to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, and joins other Member States in calling for the full and effective implementation by States of the Programme, as well as the 2005 International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, at the national, regional and international levels.

We join in acknowledging the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the successful convening of the First Conference of State Parties in Cancún, Mexico, this year. The Treaty is indeed a significant achievement and an important step in advancing security and improving accountability, responsibility and transparency in international arms transfers. We urge all Member States to support the implementation of the ATT and to extend technical, financial and material assistance to developing countries to enable us to fulfil and implement the Treaty's obligations.

In conclusion, I wish to recall the words of Ghana's first President, Mr. Kwame Nkrumah, to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session on 23 September 1960, "armaments ... not only threaten the future of mankind, but provide no answer to the major problems of our age" (*A/PV.869, para. 61*). Fifty-five years on, this statement remains relevant and perhaps even more poignant. Situating it within the framework of the overarching theme of the seventieth session of the General Assembly and the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals, Ghana joins in the calls for a fundamental review of the links between disarmament and development and the current excessive global military spending, estimated at \$1.8 trillion in 2014 in favour of the billions of people trapped in hunger, poverty and hopelessness.

Permit me to quote an important paragraph in the Atlantic Charter drawn up aboard the *USS Augusta* in Newfoundland by United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Prime Minister of Great Britain Winston Churchill on 14 August 1941.

"Sixth, after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all men (and women) in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want".

Let us be inspired by these words to commit to purposeful action in the interest of humanity.

Mr. Bessedik (Algeria): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. You can obviously count on our full support and cooperation for the success of the Committee's work.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Nigeria on behalf of the African Group, and Oman on behalf of the Arab Group (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

Algeria attaches the utmost importance to general and complete disarmament as a means of ensuring international peace and security, and reiterates its commitment to multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. We also reiterate the need for all Member States to pursue multilateral negotiations in good faith, as agreed by consensus in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2), to achieve general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. In previous years, many efforts, proposals and initiatives to which Algeria has fully contributed were devoted to achieving that goal. However, it has to be said that effective steps and substantive progress in this area are still far away.

As a State party to the main treaties related to weapons of mass destruction, Algeria reaffirms that nuclear disarmament remains its highest priority and expresses its serious concern over the danger to humankind posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. We welcome the commemoration on 26 September of the International

Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons devoted to promoting the objective of a nuclear weapon-free world.

Algeria reaffirms its full confidence in and commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a unique international instrument and cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and would like to stress once again the need to universalize the Treaty and ensure compliance with each of its three pillars. According to the NPT, nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility to achieve nuclear disarmament. Accordingly, nuclear-weapon States should respect and fully implement their Treaty obligations, as well as their commitments contained in the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, chaired by Algeria, and in the action plan adopted by consensus at the eighteenth NPT Review Conference, held in 2010.

We express our deepest regret about the absence of a positive outcome of the 2015 Review Conference, despite intensive consultations and endeavours. We still think that we have lost a precious opportunity and created doubt over the credibility of the whole system. We are profoundly disappointed at the fact that the question of the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East was the cause of that failure. The Algerian delegation calls for the effective implementation of resolution 68/32, including the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons. Furthermore, my delegation recalls the decision of the General Assembly to convene, no later than 2018, a high-level conference to review the progress made on the matter and emphasizes the need for early and appropriate preparation to ensure a successful conference.

In order to invigorate and strengthen the global architecture for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, my delegation would like to reiterate the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in order to allow its entry into force. In that regard, we welcome the ratification by Angola in 2015, which brings the number of States parties to the Treaty to 164 out of 183 signatory States. The dynamic of ratification reflects the full support of the vast majority of the international community to the Treaty, consolidates the achievement

of its universality and strengthens the non-proliferation regime and disarmament globally.

It is well known that Algeria, which was a nuclear testing site in the early 1960s, understands and fully shares the trials and consequences of such tests. We welcomed the conferences held in 2013 and 2014 on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Such meetings offer the opportunity to highlight the irreversible, devastating effects of nuclear weapons and the immeasurable suffering they cause to human beings and to nature. My delegation wishes to reiterate the need for the conclusion of a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances for all nuclear-weapon States. We consider the establishment of such an instrument to be an important step towards nuclear disarmament.

The majority of Member States have chosen to use atomic energy exclusively for civilian purposes, in accordance with article IV of the NPT. For many developing countries, nuclear energy represents a strategic choice for their economic development and energy security needs. Accordingly, Algeria reaffirms the legitimate right to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the non-proliferation regime. Algeria welcomes the successful conclusion of nuclear negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1, resulting in the finalization of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in July 2015.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones constitutes not only a confidence measure, but also a concrete step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we reaffirm that the entry into force in 2009 of the Pelindaba Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa represents an important contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security and strongly reflects the commitment of African States. My country, which was among the first countries to draft, sign and ratify the Pelindaba Treaty, calls in particular on States with nuclear weapons that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the relevant annexes of the Treaty.

Obviously, the example of the Pelindaba Treaty and other nuclear-weapon-free zones should be followed, particularly in the volatile region of the Middle East. Algeria deeply regrets that this region remains deprived of such a status years after the adoption, by the NPT Review and Extension Conference of 1995,

of the resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. By rejecting the status quo, Algeria stresses its strong commitment to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 action plan. My delegation expresses its strong disappointment about the total absence of tangible progress on the issue and on the promotion of peace and security in this region and beyond.

Lack of political will is clearly the reason for the continuing dead end in the Conference on Disarmament and obviously a source of frustration and disappointment. At the same time, while welcoming the efforts made during the 2015 session of the CD, in particular the adoption of decision CD/2022 to re-establish an informal working group of the CD, Algeria reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. Once again, Algeria calls on the CD to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work and encourages all member States to demonstrate the necessary political will so that the CD can fulfil its negotiating mandate. We believe that the CD has the capacity to break the deadlock if all the States members of the Conference have the political will to move forward on the issue of global nuclear disarmament. With a view to unblocking the persistent deadlock in some parts of the disarmament machinery, we are of the view that the fourth special session of the General Assembly should be convened in order to thoroughly review all disarmament issues.

Algeria considers the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention to be important components of the international legal architecture related to weapons of mass destruction and calls for their balanced, effective and non-discriminatory implementation. Concerning the issue of conventional arms, on May 2015 my country joined the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its three Protocols. On the basis of its national experience, Algeria reaffirms that the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons are more than ever of the utmost relevance.

Finally, we view the First Committee as an essential component of the United Nations disarmament machinery, and we remain committed to working

actively and constructively during the present session. In that context, Algeria will submit its annual draft resolution on the strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region in the course of our meetings, for which we seek the support of all delegations.

Mr. Chasnouski (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, we congratulate you, Sir, on your election to your post. We assure you and your Bureau of our full support.

Issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security have always been among the top priorities on the international agenda. The reason for that is obvious. The development of appropriate, mutually acceptable, long-term decisions are the key to ensuring stability, development, well-being and, ultimately, the survival of humankind. Today, however, the following conclusion must be drawn.

The system of international security is becoming diluted with increasing speed. The world is fragmented and divided and has been shaken to its very core by armed conflict and terrorist acts. There is widespread use of intimidation, sanctions, various restrictions and military action. The typical traits of international relations have become mutual alienation and mistrust. Meanwhile, global threats are not being met with the appropriate response. This has happened before in history — when nuclear weapons were used for the first time 70 years ago, and humankind peered into the abyss. The horrific reality hit us that the threshold of complete annihilation exists, and we should not forget that.

We can solve such problems only by re-establishing balance in international relations through mutual understanding and responsibility, awareness of and acknowledging the multilateral nature of the international community. By rebuilding trust we will ensure peace and security and define appropriate responses to global challenges and threats. It is true that the tragedy lies in the fact that it is easier to announce the need to take that route and than to actually do so. For that reason, we need to work on concrete steps to enhance international peace and security and strengthen the role of the United Nations rather than replace genuine efforts by empty rhetoric.

The Republic of Belarus, which has survived two world wars, attaches special importance to putting such principles into practice. That is why 20 years ago, Belarus consciously and unconditionally

relinquished its nuclear weapons and joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Within the framework of the United Nations, Belarus has consistently spoken out in favour of banning the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction. It is clear that the work carried out by several States to modernize their existing arsenals is, in essence, the creation of new and more dangerous types of weapons of mass destruction.

Belarus made an equally significant contribution to strengthening European security and increasing predictability in the region by reducing the number of conventional weapons in its possession. The weapons destroyed by Belarus, in accordance with the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE), represented 10 per cent of all the weapons and military technology that were destroyed by all States parties to the CFE Treaty. In September 2003, Belarus joined the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. One of the most important obligations under that Convention is the destruction of existing arsenals. In that connection, Belarus has the seventh-largest arsenal of anti-personnel mines in the world and has taken determined steps, with the help of the international community, towards destroying them.

We believe that international security is indivisible. Unfortunately, that principle has still not been implemented in practice. Attempts to achieve greater security for oneself at the expense of others only damage the interests of all members of the international community, which is why Belarus is in favour of using only political and diplomatic means to strengthen regional and strategic stability. We are always ready to engage in consultations and an open discussion on this issue. We consider universal multilateral agreements in the area of international security, disarmament and arms control to be the only viable instruments that can ensure the same code of conduct for all participants. The full ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and meaningful work on the Conference on Disarmament are the kinds of steps that we think could contribute in practice to building an international security architecture that works to the benefit of all.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin by extending to you, Sir, my warm congratulations on your election as Chair of the First Committee and to

assure you of the full support of my delegation. I also congratulate all the members of the Bureau.

Senegal associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Nigeria of behalf of the Group of African States, respectively (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

The reshuffling of power throughout the world, current geopolitical tensions and regional instabilities are complicating the process of disarmament and non-proliferation. Nevertheless, those challenges should not be used as a pretext for inaction. On the contrary, given so many uncertainties and the current pressure on the nuclear regime, it has become all the more necessary to make significant strides in disarmament and non-proliferation. In that connection, we deplore the failure of the most recent NPT Review Conference to reach a consensus. Nevertheless, I would like to express my pleasure at the progress we have seen this year.

As part of that progress, I cite, with regard to conventional weapons, the first Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Cancún, Mexico, in August, which enabled us to decide on the location of the secretariat and to adopt all documents relating to its operation. We call for the universalization of the Treaty so as to achieve the established objectives, notably the establishment of effective systems for monitoring such arms with a view to limiting the sale of conventional weapons, but especially to prevent weapons being diverted towards illicit markets, which fuels conflicts and creates instability in the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

Similarly, we welcome the adoption on 22 May by the Security Council of resolution 2220 (2015), on strengthening cooperation to tackle the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Nevertheless, we must ensure that the concerns of African States with regard to the proliferation and the illicit transfer to non-State actors of small arms and light weapons, as well as ammunitions, which represents a genuine challenge to the continent, are properly addressed by that resolution.

On the nuclear front, we welcome the agreement reached on the Iranian nuclear programme of 14 July, after 12 years of negotiations, which we think is a great step forward with regard to non-proliferation efforts. Nevertheless, that commitment to Tehran's nuclear programme does not settle the issue of the Middle East,

as the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region remains on the agenda. Those successes show that multilateralism is, more than ever, the most appropriate approach for reaching concrete results.

However, nuclear disarmament remains one of the most worrisome issues of collective security. The ultimate goal is to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, which can be achieved only through a single solution, which is complete disarmament. That is why we reiterate the call of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement to organize negotiations as soon as possible on a global treaty on nuclear weapons aimed at banning them and prohibiting their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use, as well as on their destruction. We call on all nuclear-weapon States to lend their support to the proposal of the Non-Aligned Movement to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament and to work for the complete elimination of nuclear warheads.

Negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which is another essential pillar of disarmament and non-proliferation, have also reached a stalemate, despite some progress. It would be advisable in the interim to ensure that the stocks of fissile materials scattered throughout 32 countries do not fall into the wrong hands and to ensure that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty enters into force as soon as possible.

At the same time, the inalienable rights of countries to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the watchful eye of the International Atomic Energy Agency must be upheld. To that end, we must strengthen the Agency's authority and capabilities. We also reaffirm the exclusive rule of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament. The same goes for the Disarmament Commission, which, in a global context in which there are many security challenges, continues to draw the attention of the international community. It must begin the first year of its new cycle of negotiations, from 2015 to 2017, with the same agenda as the four previous cycles, following which no new recommendation was adopted.

As far as other weapons of mass destruction are concerned, we call for the signature and ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as for

the universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, whose Review Conference was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in September.

My country welcomes the invaluable contributions of non-governmental organizations to the field of disarmament. In that regard, I reaffirm that they must be given their rightful place in our deliberations.

In conclusion, I call on all delegations to show flexibility and good political will throughout this session. For my part, I wish to assure the Committee once again of my delegation's willingness to participate fully and constructively in all our work.

Mr. Bamrungphong (Thailand): The Thai delegation joins previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Committee, and assures you of our support throughout this session.

Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

In celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we can look back on many achievements in the field of international peace and security, but we are reminded that there is more work to be done in the coming decades. More work needs to be done towards a safer and more secure world that is conducive to development and prosperity, not least under the Sustainable Development Goals that were adopted by our leaders last month. It is clear that action and participation by all in the realm of disarmament and non-proliferation is necessary for the realization of those goals.

Considering our common aspiration to a world free of nuclear weapons, the disappointing result of the NPT Review Conference earlier this year was a palpable setback, especially for the prospects of a weapons of mass destruction-free zone in the Middle East. The only appropriate response is to redouble our efforts on that front. Thailand is encouraged, nonetheless, by recent positive developments, namely, the steadily growing support for the Humanitarian Initiative on the consequences of nuclear weapons and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), successfully reached between the E3+3 and Iran in July.

In support of the humanitarian initiative, Thailand co-hosted, in Bangkok in March, a Regional Roundtable on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons and Prospects for a Ban Treaty on the eve of the NPT Review Conference. We are delighted by the increasing number of States joining the humanitarian pledge and the expanding discourses on this topic generated by more stakeholders across a wider range of sectors, especially on how a legally binding international instrument on the prohibition of nuclear weapons could and should be realized. We also commend in particular the good work of civil society in that regard and look forward to continuing discussions in a concrete manner on how to take that forward. The time is now and only a serious discussion will lead us towards creating the meaningful partnership necessary to work towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. We hope to do our part in bridging the gaps in perspectives.

Thailand is the depository State of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). Together with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Thailand will continue its efforts to encourage the signing and ratification by the nuclear-weapon States of the Protocol to the Treaty, which once in force will significantly strengthen SEANWFZ as a key security instrument for the region. We commend all the existing achievements towards nuclear-weapon-free zones and look forward to progress in other regions, including the Middle East.

Thailand also recognizes the role of regional, subregional and bilateral mechanisms in facilitating discussions on peace and security, particularly the ASEAN Regional Forum, which has played a crucial part in generating vital dialogue within the Asia-Pacific region. Through those avenues, we trust that the aspirations on disarmament and non-proliferation can be further promoted.

The national implementation of existing non-proliferation obligations remains a priority. Thailand has constantly developed its capacity to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), particularly through enhancing interagency coordination mechanisms within the Thai Government service, improving laws and regulations and exploring avenues for outreach.

Thailand maintains an active interest and involvement in non-proliferation and nuclear security initiatives, including the Proliferation Security

Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Summit. Regarding the latter initiative, Thailand hosted another Sherpa meeting in February, leading up to the 2016 nuclear security summit. We hope that those contributions will help consolidate international action and partnership on non-proliferation and nuclear security even further.

At the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna only weeks ago, Thailand re-emphasized its cooperation with the Agency and its commitments to its safeguards regimes. We commend the role of the Agency and recognize its upcoming responsibility in the implementation of the landmark JCPOA. We will also further our commitments under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty with the impending enactment of our new nuclear energy legislation.

The universalization and implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention are vital to a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free world. Recent highlights of Thailand's ongoing efforts in that area include the passing of a new law, the Pathogen and Animal Toxins Act and capacity-building activities co-hosted with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in Thailand.

Thailand agrees with the notion that small arms and light weapons are the real weapons of mass destruction, causing untold human suffering more than any other weapon. We further note the connection between the illicit trade, trafficking and unauthorized use of conventional weapons and their negative implications for development. We also note with concern the social and gender dimension of the issue, as women and children are disproportionately affected by such weapons. Thailand is committed to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), to which we are now a signatory and are in the process of ratification. We believe the successful conclusion of the first Conference of States Parties to the ATT, held in Cancún in August, in which we participated, will be solid ground for the full and effective implementation of the Treaty.

We also continue to actively implement our obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. In June this year, we hosted the Bangkok Symposium on Landmine Victim Assistance with the aim of addressing the humanitarian concerns of the Convention and to promote the full participation of mine victims in society on an equal basis. We also remain

engaged in other frameworks, including the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We support its objectives and uphold comparable principles and complementary practices according to international standards, with a view to acceding to the Convention once we are ready to fulfil its obligations.

Thailand commends the ongoing work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. We reiterate our full support to the Centre, especially during this time of extra challenges following the Centre's temporary relocation to Bangkok after the devastating earthquake in Nepal. We also reiterate our call for a more active, inclusive and dynamic Conference on Disarmament, considering that much important work still awaits the Conference's consideration.

To conclude, let us underline that efforts for peace and security concern us all. In those efforts, we should hear and involve as many as we can and reach out as widely as possible. As we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations this year, we hold hopes that the next 70 years will be guided by stronger commitments, as well as fresh ideas and actions from a broader range of partnerships and perspectives. Thailand will do its part in contributing positive elements to the process.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee during its seventieth session. I assure you of my delegation's full support for the work of the Committee and look forward to a productive session under your leadership.

I would like to stress some essential tasks that we believe should underpin our current and future disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

First, we need renewed political will and leadership to realize our vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world. It is disappointing that this year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) could not build on the positive momentum created at the 2010 Review Conference. For too long, the debate on prioritizing one pillar over another has hindered our progress on strengthening the NPT regime. We all know that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are interdependent and mutually reinforcing goals that must be pursued simultaneously. The political will of both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States is needed more than

ever to break the current deadlock and to set off this virtuous cycle.

With regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we call on each of the eight States whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force to show leadership by being the first to take action. The Republic of Korea hosted a CTBT Group of Eminent Persons meeting in Seoul this June, adopting the Seoul Declaration, which called for all annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, and urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from any further nuclear tests. A stronger political impetus is needed to overcome the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament, and to begin negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials without delay. The Republic of Korea stands ready to work with other Member States to build on the forward momentum achieved in the course of the 2015 NPT Review Conference negotiations and to make tangible progress in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Secondly, the international community should step up measures to address new proliferation threats involving non-State actors, including terrorists. Recently, the world has witnessed unprecedented and increasingly dangerous trends in terrorism. It is well known that extremist terrorist groups have been keen to obtain nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The catastrophic consequences that would result should these deadly weapons fall into the hands of terrorists are beyond our imagination. It is more urgent than ever to prevent this black swan of our age. The full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) will be vital in that regard. The Nuclear Security Summit process has galvanized key efforts to secure nuclear materials across the globe and to bolster the international nuclear security framework. The Republic of Korea looks forward to another successful Summit in Washington, D.C., next year.

Thirdly, the international community must do more to address the real weapons that are causing mass destruction today, which are small arms and light weapons. The entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty last year was an important milestone in our efforts to address this grave challenge. The universal implementation of the Treaty would help stem flows of small arms into conflict zones and to perpetrators of war crimes and human rights violations. The Republic of Korea is taking steps to ratify the Treaty at the

earliest possible time. We welcome Security Council resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015), which have paved the way for the enhanced role of the Council in tackling this serious challenge to global security.

Fourthly, we need to address the emerging issues in disarmament and non-proliferation, including outer space security, cybersecurity and lethal autonomous weapons systems, among others. Rapid technological developments call for our strengthened work in these areas. The Republic of Korea supports and has actively participated in the efforts to establish the international code of conduct for outer space activities, as well as the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

Last but not least, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the ever-growing threat of North Korea's programmes of weapons of mass destruction, including its nuclear programmes. The latest nuclear deal on the Iranian case has demonstrated that the trickiest knot in nuclear non-proliferation can be undone through diplomacy and dialogue. Now is the time to resolve the last remaining challenge to the global non-proliferation regime posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The international community should send a clear and unified message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it cannot find any future in its nuclear programmes. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must realize that it cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon State in any circumstance, and that denuclearization alone will offer it the right path towards peace, security and economic development. We urge North Korea to fully comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, abandon its nuclear programmes, and take the path of dialogue and cooperation.

We further express our grave concern over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continuous threat to launch a so-called satellite at any time it decides. We urge North Korea to refrain from any further provocations in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, which prohibit any launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea using ballistic-missile technology. Any such provocation will be met with a firm response from the international community, and will only serve to deepen the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's isolation.

As my President stressed in her address to the General Assembly last month (see A/70/PV.13), if North Korea takes the bold step of giving up its nuclear ambition and chooses the path of openness and cooperation, the Republic of Korea will work with the international community to support North Korea in developing its economy and improving the lives of its people.

I would like to conclude by once again pledging my delegation's full commitment to working for the success of this year's session of the First Committee and beyond.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): I, too, wish to start by congratulating you, Sir, on your election. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. As we look forward to your prudent guidance and leadership, let me also assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

Throughout recent years, there have been discussions questioning the adequacy of existing security arrangements, especially the major cornerstones that create the foundation of the contemporary security architecture within the twenty-first-century requirements. We partially share this view. However, taking into account the universal nature of the fundamental principles upon which the security architecture rests, we are confident that the main problem is actually related to an unwillingness to strictly comply with the obligations undertaken rather than to the imperfections of the system itself. Obviously, in certain cases non-compliance can irreversibly erode the current security system and produce large-scale negative implications. This is exactly what we are witnessing today.

The security assurances provided to Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum in connection with the latter's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have been ignored, and one of the guarantor States has itself openly challenged the territorial integrity and sovereignty of that country. This is an extremely dangerous development that threatens to have far-reaching negative implications, among others, on the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Ukrainian case is not an isolated one in our region. The first alarm of this kind went off in August 2008, when the Russian Federation launched a full-scale military aggression against Georgia, which

resulted in the illegal military occupation of 20 per cent of my country and the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Georgians. Not only does the ongoing occupation of our regions represent a fundamental threat to Georgia's security and stability, but the lack of respective international control mechanisms in those regions creates a fertile ground for all sorts of illegal activities, including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear proliferation. In that connection, I would like to remind the Committee that there have been several recorded attempts of nuclear smuggling via the Russian-occupied Georgian regions, and the international community has been duly informed about them. In fact, since 2006 there have been 22 cases of nuclear smuggling attempts, of which nine originated from the mentioned regions.

The threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, related materials and technologies has become one of the major challenges to our common security. It is well known that more than 16,000 nuclear warheads still exist, and the risk of these weapons falling into the hands of unauthorized actors is indeed alarming. In this regard, full compliance with the obligations under the relevant international arrangements, such as the NPT, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and so on, must stand out as the international community's main priorities.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the key element for progress towards total nuclear disarmament. It is crucial that all States fulfil their commitments within the NPT and implement the 2010 Action Plan, which includes concrete steps on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity and welcome the historic results achieved in the negotiations between the E3+3 and the Islamic Republic of Iran on a comprehensive settlement regarding the Iranian nuclear programme. This proves that even in the case of extremely complicated situations, hard work and political will can help to provide a constructive solution.

Georgia appreciates the United States initiative to launch a global dialogue on nuclear security within the regular Nuclear Security Summit format. This

forum has become a platform for addressing the most challenging issues at the highest level of international cooperation. We have significant work to do in order to allow the outcomes of the Washington, D.C., Seoul and The Hague summits to give rise to concrete results.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, as an instrument vital to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, must enter into force without further delay. For its part, Georgia continues to actively cooperate with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's Provisional Technical Secretariat to strengthen the monitoring and verification system.

The threats posed by chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons and materials continue to be at the top of the international security agenda. Given the importance of this issue, the Governments of Georgia, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of the Philippines have initiated the creation of the United Nations Group of Friends of CBRN Risk Mitigation and Security Governance. A formal announcement about the establishment of this group was made during a high-level side event entitled "CBRN National Action Plans: Rising to the challenges of international security and the emergence of artificial intelligence", which was held on 7 October, in collaboration with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

The Group of Friends, which will soon circulate to all Member States a concept paper outlining its objectives, activities and organization of work, intends to convene its first meeting before the end of the year. Together with our partners, Morocco and the Philippines, as well as the European Union — which provides funds for the CBRN Risk Mitigation Initiative Centres of Excellence — and other relevant stakeholders, Georgia is determined to make meaningful contributions to CBRN risk mitigation.

We regret that the international disarmament forum — namely, the Conference on Disarmament — continues to fail to fulfil its mandate. Undoubtedly, the Disarmament Conference should exercise a significantly greater influence and produce a larger impact in the field of its competence, especially in view of the current international security environment. To match this objective, no effort can be spared to promote revitalization of this unique forum for negotiations, which played a crucial role in elaborating

most of the major international disarmament and non-proliferation instruments to date.

Georgia fully supports the shared approaches of the international community regarding the problem of illicit trade in conventional arms. The uncontrolled dissemination and excessive accumulation of conventional arms and ammunition represents a serious threat to international peace and security. Unfortunately, large numbers of weapons are being accumulated in Georgia's occupied regions, in grave violation of the fundamental principles of international law and of Russia's international commitments, including those under the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement. Instead of withdrawing from the occupied regions as was envisaged under the Agreement, Russia has reinforced its illegal military presence there, introducing additional personnel, armaments and equipment. We again call on Russia to fulfil its obligations under international law, including those under the August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement, and withdraw all its illegally deployed forces from Georgia.

Georgia is well aware of the grave consequences of the uncontrolled spread and excessive accumulation of arms. Therefore, during the negotiation process of the Arms Trade Treaty, Georgia was an active supporter of the adoption of an effective legally binding and robust mechanism. We consider the adoption of this landmark document to be a historic diplomatic achievement and the successful culmination of the determination and many years of efforts of the international community aimed at fostering global peace and security.

The degree of violence and brutality that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has brought to the Middle East is of the greatest concern for my country. Certain regions of Georgia are also targeted for recruiting new fighters for different organizations in Syria and Iraq. Addressing this challenge, especially taking into account its transnational and cross-border nature, requires a well-coordinated international approach. In 2015, Georgia became a member of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL and is actively engaged in several working groups established within the Coalition. Working groups constitute unique platforms that enable us to share and gain international best practices on issues related to countering ISIL.

At the national level, we are working on an internal policy aimed at countering the rising threat of extremism and terrorism. Certain legislative amendments have

already been initiated by the Government with a view to implementing resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014). The adoption of these amendments aims at bringing the Georgian criminal code in line with the best international practices. At the same time, to address the root causes of the spread of violent extremism, Georgia is developing inclusive policies for the social and economic development of vulnerable groups, fostering education and youth employment and political engagement, thus speaking not only the language of law and restrictions but also that of opportunity and sustainable development for a better future.

I would like once again to assure you, Mr. Chair, of our full cooperation with the Committee.

Ms. Chan (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. Chair, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to guide the work of the First Committee. At the same time, we thank Ambassador Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica, and his team, for the work they accomplished in the last session of the First Committee.

Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Taking stock of the main achievements of and the challenges remaining for the international community in the areas of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control today, the results have been mixed. On the one hand, in December 2014, we succeeded in getting the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) to enter into force in just 18 months and, in late August 2015, the First Conference of States Parties was held in Cancún, Mexico. Although we now have a first international treaty that imposes legally binding obligations on States with a view to ensuring accountability and effective controls for international transfers of conventional weapons, ammunition, parts and components, the situation on the ground is far from what we expected from the Treaty's entry into force.

We still see many, very serious activities taking place that violate the Treaty's objectives — violations that are unfortunately experienced first-hand by civilian populations in the Middle East and Africa, whose suffering the ATT was supposed to prevent. The ATT was developed to ensure that exports of conventional weapons would not stoke conflict or that Security Council embargoes would not be circumvented, thereby

facilitating terrorism or other serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. The prohibitions set forth in the Treaty are not suggestions: they are obligations. Accordingly, irresponsible transfers to conflict areas must be stopped and must be stopped now. In this regard, Costa Rica calls on States exporting and importing conventional weapons to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty without further delay.

For those of us who are already States parties to the Treaty, we must intensify our efforts for the full and effective implementation of its provisions. States such as Costa Rica that do not produce or export weapons are working to establish the structures, procedures and capacities required by the Treaty to allow for full compliance with its obligations and, at the same time, promote international cooperation and assistance. Costa Rica currently receives assistance from the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control, with the goal of becoming a model for implementation for Central America as well as to support South-South cooperation.

Costa Rica expresses its dismay at the high numbers of civilian casualties resulting from internal or international hostilities. While civilians have fallen victim to collateral damage in the past, today they are directly targeted by combatants, and, in many cases, their homes, schools, hospitals, property and production have deliberately become military targets.

The eleventh report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/2015/453), issued in June, presents a heart-rending picture of the situation around the world. Of the 17 conflicts analysed in the Secretary-General's report, only two are cross-border conflicts. To this we would add data from the non-governmental organization Action on Armed Violence, which estimates that there were almost 150,000 deaths and injuries from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas between 2011 and 2014. Of this number, 78 per cent were civilians.

For this reason, Costa Rica rejects and condemns the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, such as those we have seen in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan and Gaza. Costa Rica calls on States to develop higher standards and commitments to prohibit and restrict their use, not only to end the appalling violations of international humanitarian law, but also because drastically diminishing harm to civilians is key to reducing the incentives for local people to take

up arms and join extremist causes. My delegation supports the Secretary-General's recommendation that parties to a conflict restrict the use in populated areas of explosives with wide-ranging effects, and we recognize that such use is a humanitarian problem that must be addressed.

Costa Rica also expresses its concern with respect to the recent use of cluster munitions in various parts of the world. We have seen such use in Libya, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. Costa Rica condemns any use of cluster munitions by any actor, because these actions violate the spirit, purpose and letter of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and only intensify human suffering and humanitarian emergencies. We therefore reiterate the importance of all States parties joining the Convention and implementing the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

We are also concerned about the use of armed drones to carry out targeted killings outside of armed conflict zones. The capabilities offered by drones are leading Governments to reinterpret international human rights and humanitarian principles on the defence of the right to life and the protection of civilians from the effects of armed conflict. In addition, the use of armed drones is contributing to dehumanizing armed conflict and reducing the threshold for the use of force, sowing terror in places where they are used. For my country, it is urgent that we take action to better understand this issue, address its implications, increase transparency and ensure accountability. The United Nations should play a leading role in the adoption of such measures, particularly through the work of its disarmament bodies. Accordingly, I would note that a study on this subject was prepared by the Office of Disarmament Affairs and published today; the Office invites all delegations to read it.

Costa Rica regrets that the 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons failed to adopt a final outcome document. If consensus had been achieved, the Review Conference might have been a real turning point, a golden opportunity to give a new impetus to nuclear disarmament. However, as we stated at the time, the humanitarian promise is the tangible outcome of the Review Conference. Costa Rica welcomes it and the recognition that there is in effect a legal vacuum around the issue of nuclear weapons.

For Costa Rica, it is clear that we cannot continue leaving the task of nuclear disarmament exclusively in the hands of the nuclear-weapon States, as they have shown they are not interested in giving them up. The nations most interested in establishing prohibitions have been and continue to be those nations that do not have such weapons but can at any time fall victim to their indiscriminate effects.

We know that peace and security as a global public good is achieved, in part, by honouring the Charter of the United Nations, in particular Articles 10 and 26, compliance with which Costa Rica has advocated for decades. However, peace and security requires more than arms control; it also requires addressing climate change, reducing inequality and eliminating poverty. Those are the real enemies of States.

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), we believe that the main tools for promoting and strengthening national and international security and achieving Goal 16 are the strengthening and enhancing of democracy and the promotion of and respect for the rule of law. Costa Rica will continue to insist on the need to move beyond stale security doctrines based on strictly military paradigms towards those that rely essentially on sustainable development and human security paradigms. We reiterate our confidence in the multilateral system, our strong commitment to international law and our commitment to advancing the foregoing goals.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): Mr. Chair, I would like to warmly congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election. Against the backdrop of serious threats to international peace and security, the First Committee is expected to make great efforts to achieve tangible results. Turkey attaches great importance to the Committee's work, Sir, and you can count on our full cooperation during your tenure.

While the Committee's primary and ultimate objective remains disarmament and non-proliferation, overall military spending worldwide continues to increase in face of rising global challenges to security and stability, including the threat of terrorism, as most horrifically demonstrated by the heinous terror attacks on Saturday that took the lives of 100 Turkish citizens. This stark contradiction further impedes the disarmament machinery from performing effectively, if not sufficiently.

We fully share the concerns regarding the danger posed by nuclear weapons to humankind and nature. Our aspiration remains a world without nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Turkey continues to work with other Member States, international organizations and civil society to uphold that ultimate goal. Many representatives have expressed here their respective countries' readiness to contribute further to a world without nuclear weapons. We concur with these strong statements and find them encouraging. Nevertheless, we also believe that our statements must be complemented by concrete steps compatible with the realities on the ground.

From the outset, Turkey has firmly believed in the need to uphold the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the centrepiece mechanism of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We advocate that only an equal and balanced treatment of the three mutually reinforcing pillars of the Treaty can pave the way towards nuclear disarmament. As Turkey remains fully committed to the objectives of the NPT, we would like to reaffirm our firm conviction that its incremental implementation through practical steps must still be seen as the only way forward. We therefore closely follow the discussions around the provisions of article VI of the Treaty concerning effective measures towards nuclear disarmament. Obviously, the general disappointment stemming from the fact that a consensus document was not adopted at the NPT 2015 Review Conference has heightened this debate.

Although Turkey is ready to discuss which practical steps will be more effective, we would like to urge all stakeholders that no action should be undertaken that could undermine the integrity of the NPT or create an alternative to its full implementation and universalization. And as for continued relevance of the NPT regime, it goes without saying that the primary responsibility lies with the nuclear-weapon States. We encourage them to consider effective measures to ensure progress in nuclear disarmament. It is unfortunate that some Member States remain outside the NPT regime. We call upon them to join the regime, as we support its universalization and effective implementation in good faith and consistency.

We acknowledge the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system as the fundamental tool in global non-proliferation efforts. We regard the comprehensive safeguards and the additional protocol as indispensable verification standards. Strengthening

the safeguards system and promoting the Agency's role and finances are also essential for the sustainability of the regime. It is our firm belief that States in full compliance with their safeguards obligations should have unhindered access to civilian nuclear technology, as provided for in the NPT. We must also ensure that all requisite steps are taken so that there will be no diversion of nuclear programmes from peaceful to military uses.

We would like to welcome the agreement reached between Iran and P5+1 on nuclear issues and also reaffirm our strong desire that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action be implemented in good faith so as to reassure our neighbourhood against proliferation concerns. Having always supported the peaceful resolution of this matter through dialogue and diplomacy and as a country that has offered its good offices to facilitate the deal in the past, Turkey welcomes Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). On the other hand, Turkey is concerned that resolution 53/74, of 4 January 1999, on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, is yet to be implemented. It is disappointing that during the 2015 NPT Review Conference it was not possible to reach an agreement on the convening of such a Conference. However, that should not be seen as a failure. If realized, such a step would constitute an important confidence-building measure. In any case, Turkey will continue to support constructive efforts in that direction.

Turkey strongly believes that the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests constitutes an indispensable measure to achieve both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we stress the centrality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in achieving such objectives. The international community has waited long enough for the Treaty to enter into force. Once again, we invite all States, particularly annex 2 States, to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. Turkey is part of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). The NPDI is proving to be a true Middle Powers Initiative that promotes the implementation of the consensus outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference.

The Conference on Disarmament has a special responsibility in the contemporary disarmament agenda. We should strive to maintain the relevance of the Conference by fulfilling its fundamental task. The Conference needs to be energized and revitalized,

in order to reassume the unique negotiation role with which it is mandated. Turkey believes that the Conference on Disarmament possesses the necessary mandate, membership and rules of procedure in order to effectively discharge its duties.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention are important components of the global system against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Turkey does not possess any such weapons and reiterates its call for wider adherence to and effective implementation of these Conventions. Bearing in mind that the CWC is the only comprehensive multilateral treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, Turkey will continue to cooperate with the Organization on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), particularly with regard to the dismantlement of the Syrian regime's chemical-weapons inventory. We condemn in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons on civilian populations in Syria, such as chlorine, which constitutes a brazen violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law and is a threat against international peace and security.

In that regard, even though the eighth report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria (A/HRC/27/60) and the third report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission clearly indicated that chlorine gas, as a chemical weapon, was systematically and repeatedly used by the Syrian regime within a 10-day period in April 2014, we are concerned to see that the international community could not take the necessary steps in the face of such attacks, which directly targeted civilians. Thereby, we have unfortunately observed new chemical-weapons attacks, in the form of chlorine and/or phosgene gas, in and around the city of Idlib during the course of March and April by the Syrian regime. In that vein, we hope that the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism will serve as a mechanism to hold the perpetrators of such attacks responsible for their gross human rights violations.

We discuss the threats posed by nuclear and chemical weapons extensively. However, equally threatening are conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons. The illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to peace and security, and to the social and economic development of many countries. Hence, Turkey welcomes the entry into force of

the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2014. Since that date, we have supported and actively participated in the process and signed the ATT thereafter. We would like to reaffirm here the Government of Turkey's intention to ratify the Treaty at the soonest. Last but not least, we remain committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Each of the seven clusters that we will address in the First Committee deserves particular emphasis. Each challenge grouped in these clusters is our common challenge and so is the responsibility to stand up to them. We should uphold that responsibility. We hope that such deliberations will contribute to eliminating the obstacles on the way to a safer and more secure world. I wish to conclude by reiterating our delegation's full support and cooperation in bringing this session to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Morro Villacián (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to also congratulate you, Sir, and the Netherlands on having been elected Chair of the First Committee, along with the other members of the Bureau. Rest assured that you will have the full support of the Spanish delegation. Spain aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union (see A/C.1/70/PV.2). In the same vein, we would like to reaffirm our full commitment to multilateralism and to the United Nations, as well as to the treaties and collective initiatives that promote disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

As other delegations have already mentioned, developments over the past year in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament were both positive and negative and should inspire us to continue working to foster international peace and security. We welcome the agreement reached in Vienna on 14 July between the E3+3 and Iran, which demonstrates the strength of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and reinforces the international non-proliferation regime. Spain congratulates the parties that have made the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action possible and, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will do all in its power to assist in its effective implementation, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2231 (2015).

We would also like to highlight the role to be played by the International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA) in verifying this agreement. We reiterate our support for the IAEA and its efforts in the areas of physical and technological safety and technical cooperation to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Once again, Spain underscores the importance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and as the basis for driving the nuclear-disarmament process and developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, which are elements that constitute the Treaty's three pillars. That is why we deeply regret that the NPT Review Conference held in May was unable to reach consensus on a final outcome document. In any case, that should not be a reason to lose courage, as we must continue working to build on agreements already made and proposals that received broad support at the last Conference.

We also regret that it was not possible to reach an agreement on convening a conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems in the Middle East. We reaffirm our support for resolution 49/71, of 9 January 1995, and the agreements adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We urge all parties to demonstrate genuine political will to engage in dialogue and to seek a consensus that would allow the Conference to be held as soon as possible and to be attended by the representatives of all countries of the region. Once again, we call for the universality of the NPT and urge those countries that are not yet parties to sign the Treaty.

We must underscore yet again the need to comply with article VI of the NPT as regards nuclear disarmament, focusing on the responsibility of States with the largest arsenals. Like many others, my country has participated in the conferences held to discuss the tragic humanitarian impact derived from the use of nuclear weapons referred to in the outcome document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. That discussion highlights the urgent need to drive the nuclear-disarmament process. However, it also involves security issues that we believe should be addressed realistically within the framework of the NPT and with the participation of the nuclear Powers.

We strongly support the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as the only organ established to negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties. Likewise, we regret that the Conference has been paralysed for far too many years and the lack of impetus in the disarmament negotiations, including those related to a future treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear

weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. A major step in the disarmament process would be the immediate entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, adopted nearly 20 years ago. We call on those countries that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, in particular annex 2 States to do so as soon as possible.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is an extremely important tool for preventing non-State actors or terrorist groups from accessing weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. Since its presidency of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), Spain has worked to strengthen the effective implementation of the resolution and will try to drive the process towards its global review, which will be presented at the end of 2016. The goal is to adapt the resolution to a new context and have it guide our actions as we confront the threats faced by the international community. We are fully committed to that important task, and it is for that reason that in April Spain approved its national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), which contains objectives, guidelines and organizational structure to ensure compliance with the resolution.

Spain condemns the use of all chemical substances as weapons and expresses its concern about the situation in Syria in the light of reports drafted by the Fact-Finding Mission of the Organization on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We support Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013) and 2235 (2015) and welcome the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism established in the latter. Similarly, we welcome the progress made in the destruction of chemical-weapons arsenals and facilities in Syria. We hope that the total dismantling of that country's chemical-weapons programme will be completed urgently and irreversibly. With the regard to biological weapons, we will work towards the success of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Review Conference to be held next year.

We welcome the entry into force on 24 December of the Arms Trade Treaty, which is the first universal and legally binding instrument that governs trade in conventional weapons. We are delighted that the first Conference of States Parties, held in Cancún, Mexico, in August, was able to provide the Treaty with the standards and administrative measures needed for its implementation. The challenge now lies in

making it universal and in ensuring that it is properly implemented.

We underscore the importance of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and of Security Council resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015), on small arms and light weapons — a priority for Spain because their proliferation hampers the social and economic development of many countries and fuels conflicts, organized crime and terrorism. Likewise, we welcome the fact that the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in September, was able to adopt a Political Declaration and Action Plan to guide the Convention's work in the coming years.

Finally, in the coming weeks, we hope that the First Committee could convene an open debate that would enable us to bridge positions and build more trust with one another.

Ms. Dagher (Lebanon): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, and the members of the Bureau on having been elected and to assure you of my delegation's full support and engagement throughout this session.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement and on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

The seventieth session started with an international, all-inclusive pledge to achieve sustainable development leaving no one behind, and promoting peace and security at all levels. In turn, international peace and security will not be sustainable unless disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is set as a priority on the global agenda. Lebanon strongly supports the urgent need for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on nuclear weapons.

Lebanon deeply regrets the failure of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference last May to reach a consensual outcome, mainly on a concrete road map for the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. In that regard, Lebanon reminds the Committee that Israel is the only non-party to the Treaty, and that it continues to threaten peace and security in

the region by continuing to amass nuclear weapons, let alone refusing to place its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

While reaffirming the right of each State to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Lebanon believes that the goals and commitments enshrined in the NPT remain as pertinent as ever, and calls on all parties to implement their engagements, and particularly to implement without further delay the resolution on the establishment of a zone of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

This year also marks 70 years since nuclear weapons were first used. Hiroshima and Nagasaki still stand as painful reminders of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The world needs no additional proof, nor can it afford another catastrophic use or misuse of nuclear weapons. Lebanon has joined more than 119 countries in supporting the humanitarian Pledge and looks forward for a universal commitment on the engagements initiated in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna and which Lebanon endorsed. Lebanon also believes that educating younger and future generations on the imperative nature of nuclear disarmament remains a priority in building a peaceful world.

This year also marks the fifteenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. Lebanon believes that gender issues should be broadly mainstreamed into all aspects of the First Committee's work. The Arms Trade Treaty's inclusion of a provision on gender-based violence is an achievement in that regard. Lebanon welcomes the Treaty's entry into force and looks forward to seeing its universal, strong and effective implementation. We also reaffirm our commitment to implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and welcome the adoption of target 4 of Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which aims to "[b]y 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows ... and combat all forms of organized crime".

Lebanon reiterates its engagement on the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Based on our ongoing painful experience since 2006 as a victim of such weapons, we condemn any use of cluster munitions and call for the Convention's universalization.

Finally, today the world is facing challenges to some of the commitments we made 70 years ago, challenges ranging from armed drones to autonomous weapons to activities in cyberspace and outer space. We should not forget the values that those commitments were based on. Human rights and international humanitarian law should remain our guiding principles, and universality and inclusiveness should continue to be part of the framework for regulating every activity.

I thank you, Sir, and look forward to a positive outcome for this session. I wish you and the members of the Bureau every success in your work.

Mr. O'Sullivan (Australia): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee at its seventieth session and would like to assure you of my delegation's strong support for your work. I would also like to echo your sentiments in commiserating with the Government and the people of Turkey on the tragic events of last Saturday.

As the Committee begins its formal proceedings, we ought to pause to reflect on what we are trying to achieve. We have a shared goal of a world whose peoples live in peace, security and prosperity. That may seem a long way off, if we focus solely on serious current challenges such as the ongoing tensions in Ukraine and the Middle East, particularly the dreadful conflict and suffering arising from the struggle against Da'esh in Syria and Iraq. Our shared disarmament objectives may also seem a long way off following the inability of this year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to agree on a consensus outcome, and the continuing stasis in the Conference on Disarmament. But if we are to realize our collective ambition of enhancing global security and stability, we must recommit to the painstaking work of practical nuclear disarmament and confidence-building measures that engage all States concerned.

There are some grounds for cautious optimism. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, if fully implemented, will reassure the global community as to the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Australia applauds the efforts of Iran, the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, Germany, France, China and the European Union in reaching the agreement, and strongly supports the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in monitoring and verifying its implementation.

Australia has a long history of advocating practical and realistic approaches to disarmament. Our objectives are not only humanitarian but also aimed at enhancing the security of all States. We therefore argue that disarmament that leads to our collective goal of a world without nuclear weapons must involve all States, including those possessing nuclear weapons. And the building blocks of nuclear disarmament remain as important as ever. They include the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was opened for signature nearly 20 years ago.

The General Assembly has long recognized the need for a legally binding and effectively verifiable ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. Australia warmly welcomes the recent report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/70/81) to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We urge States to consider it and find ways to move forward on negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty, including within and on the margins of the Conference on Disarmament.

Australia is pleased to be part of the United States-led International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, and to be co-chairing with Poland a working group on on-site inspections. These are practical and important steps for getting us closer to verifiable global zero. Australia welcomes the statement delivered on Friday (see A/C.1/70/PV.3) by the representative of Japan on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and will continue to be an active contributor on disarmament issues, both nationally and through our membership in the NPDI. More needs to be done, especially by the nuclear-weapon States. For example, the NPDI strongly advocates greater transparency on the part of those States.

Adopting the moral high ground on nuclear weapons is not enough to achieve practical outcomes on disarmament. For example, a treaty banning nuclear weapons will not lead to nuclear-armed States giving up their arsenals. We have to accept that the hard practical work necessary to bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons must still be done. There are no short cuts. When the world has eliminated nuclear weapons, some sort of international legal instrument may be necessary to ensure that the process is not reversed, but a treaty now would not help us get there. While the

2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was unable to produce a consensus outcome, that does not mean we must be resigned to five years of minimal ambition before the next one. Previous consensus outcomes remain valid, including the final documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences and, most importantly, the 2010 action plan.

We were pleased to see the Arms Trade Treaty enter into force on 24 December 2014. We acknowledge and warmly appreciate the intensive follow-up efforts of many countries, particularly Mexico, in its role as host of the recent First Conference of States parties to the Treaty in Cancún.

Australia is deeply concerned about the ongoing reports of the use of chemical weapons in Syria and Iraq. We call on the international community to redouble its efforts to completely eliminate any remaining stockpiles of chemical weapons or production capabilities, to prevent anyone from acquiring, producing or using chemical weapons and to hold those who do so accountable. Australia welcomes the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2235 (2015), because it sends a strong, unified message to violators of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Australia will continue working with others to ensure realization of those aims. One particular concern is the use in law-enforcement scenarios of aerosolized chemicals that affect the central nervous system.

Australia welcomes the continuing attention paid to the issue of space and cyberactivity over the past year. We welcome the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (A/70/174). We are pleased that the Group was able to extend its consideration of the issues beyond international law into the area of standards for responsible State behaviour. We look forward to engaging closely on the issue in the coming months.

The safety, security and sustainability of the space environment should be a higher priority for the international community, given our increasing reliance on space for our prosperity and development. Australia places a premium on practical and near-term steps for protecting every nation's access to the space environment. We see transparency and confidence-building measures, such as those contained in the draft of an international code of conduct for outer

space activities, as an important contribution to space security, including by addressing the pressing issue of space debris.

Australians have a reputation as pragmatists, not ideologues, and we remain committed to playing our part and working with others, constructively and with determination, to achieve our shared goal of enhancing global security and stability through the work of this important Committee.

Mr. Abdullahi (Nigeria): Nigeria joins previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Committee during this session. We have no doubt that the Committee will benefit from your wealth of experience and expertise. We also commend your predecessor, Ambassador Rattray of Jamaica, for his leadership and admirable efforts.

Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and by the representative of my delegation on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/70/PV.2).

Last year, at the Committee's sixty-ninth session, Nigeria joined other Member States in highlighting the daunting security challenges confronting our world. However, there have been few changes since that are likely to give us confidence or reduce the serious challenges posed to global peace and security by terrorism, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and the lack of determined efforts to achieve global nuclear disarmament. In 2014, in the context of threats to international peace and security, my delegation highlighted the astronomical proportions of global defence budgets, including the enormous resources that nuclear-weapon States devote to maintaining and upgrading their nuclear arsenals, as well as unauthorized non-State actors' unfettered access to a broad range of conventional weapons.

The dangers and effects of uncontrolled access to conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, can be seen all around us. From Africa to the Middle East, the unprecedented carnage and bloodshed visited on innocent populations by mindless terrorists and insurgents have left cities and communities empty, destroyed or deserted, damaged by the unwarranted loss of precious lives, property and livelihoods and by forced mass migration. Sadly, such mindless forms of aggression are largely enabled and effectively

supported by arms illicitly purchased or transferred by non-State actors.

On 24 December 2014, the Arms Trade Treaty entered into force. Nigeria signed and ratified the treaty in the hope that its robust, effective and non-discriminatory implementation will become an efficient tool for regulating the global transfer of conventional weapons. My delegation welcomes the convening of the first Conference of States Parties to the Treaty in Cancún and congratulates Mexico on its success in hosting that landmark event. My delegation commends the commitment of the 77 States parties to the Treaty and encourages them and other Member States to join the good cause of ensuring a world of regulated conventional arms transfers. As President of the next Conference, to be held in 2016, Nigeria will work with Mexico and other delegations to facilitate the drafting of a resolution on the Treaty for adoption by the General Assembly at its seventieth session, highlighting the measures taken by States parties so far to ensure the Treaty's robust implementation. While encouraging further efforts to achieve Member States' universal and broad ratification of the Treaty, we must emphasize the importance of safeguarding its integrity by ensuring that it protects the interests of all States, not just those that are major international arms producers and exporters.

While small arms and light weapons in the hands of criminals, terrorists and other armed groups are responsible for the deaths of thousands, nuclear weapons remain the ultimate weapons of mass destruction and their total elimination should be the final objective of all disarmament processes within the spectrum of goals pursued by the United Nations. We would also like to restate our opposition to modernizing existing nuclear weapons and developing new types.

As already expressed by the African Group, Nigeria regrets the inability of the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to arrive at the desired consensus on a final outcome document, in spite of the concerted efforts of non-nuclear-weapon States to accommodate others' views. Despite this obvious setback, my delegation will continue to highlight the unquantifiable risks and threats posed to humankind by the continued existence of nuclear weapons. Nigeria therefore calls for the implementation of all agreed-on measures and undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States in the context of the Treaty. It is our hope that the setback of

this year's Review Conference will serve as a necessary reminder of the need to renew commitments to the Treaty's overall objectives.

Nigeria also wishes to highlight the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament generally and nuclear-weapon States' lack of progress in totally eliminating their nuclear arsenals, in accordance with their legal obligations and undertakings. Nigeria strongly supports the call for a total ban on all nuclear weapons, the only category of weapons of mass destruction not prohibited by an international legal instrument. Until then, we will continue to support the call for effective assurances to be made to all non-nuclear-weapon States concerning the use or threat of use of such weapons by nuclear-weapon States. In that regard, we stress the necessity of concluding a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

Nigeria believes in the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We note the holding on 29 September of the ninth ministerial-level Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT and recognize it as an essential step in promoting the nuclear-disarmament process. My delegation also takes this opportunity to call on all States that have not signed or ratified the Treaty to do so.

With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, we note that a 19-year impasse has prevented the Conference from fulfilling its mandate as the world's sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations. There can be no doubt that its long-standing inability to agree in order to act on its mandate is adversely affecting its reputation and credibility. It is our hope that its members will hasten to do what is required of them and work to achieve the goals for which it was established.

Nigeria continues to underscore the First Committee's important role in realizing the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, and to reiterate that the ethos of multilateralism remains the safest guarantee of international peace and security. We will therefore continue to work constructively in the Committee and in all other forums to achieve the goal of disarmament. On behalf of the African Group, during our meetings Nigeria will submit three draft resolutions for which we will be seeking the support of all delegations on, respectively, the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone

Treaty, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, and prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes.

Mr. Sano (Japan): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the First Committee, and to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation. I look forward to working closely with you and all our colleagues on our important shared tasks.

The year 2015 is the seventieth since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the end of the Second World War. During those 70 years, Japan has followed the path of a peace-loving nation, while consistently respecting freedom, democracy, fundamental human rights and the rule of law, based on its feelings of deep remorse about the war. In this milestone year, we renewed our commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is extremely regrettable that we were not able to adopt a final document at the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Today, the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) faces serious challenges, but the international community must use them as an opportunity to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Japan is determined to continue to make every possible effort to further maintain and strengthen the NPT regime with the goal of securing peace and stability in the world. Given the result of the Conference, Japan will submit a draft resolution to the Committee entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", setting out practical and concrete measures for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Japan believes it is important that we gradually implement such measures with the goal of ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons altogether, and we hope fervently that our draft resolution will have wide support.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and its three pillars should be implemented in a balanced manner if we are to maintain its effectiveness. However, it can hardly be denied that the implementation of nuclear disarmament lags behind that of the Treaty's other pillars. The lack of substantial progress on nuclear disarmament has led to frustration and distrust among non-nuclear-weapon States, despite the fact that in

accordance with the final documents of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, nuclear-weapon States are required to take the steps outlined in them. We therefore strongly urge those States to take voluntary disarmament measures despite the lack of agreement at the last Review Conference. Among other things, Japan underscores the importance for nuclear-weapon States to increase their efforts to improve transparency around their nuclear arsenals, including by providing more frequent and detailed reporting on them throughout the next review cycle. We urge all nuclear-weapon States to further reduce all types of nuclear weapons and eventually to multilateralize nuclear-weapon-reduction negotiations. Japan, along with other members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, will continue to propose concrete and practical measures to that end.

Ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and starting negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty as soon as possible are important building blocks in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Last month, Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fumio Kishida, together with his counterpart from Kazakhstan, Mr. Erlan Idrissov, co-chaired the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT. Since next year will mark the twentieth anniversary of the CTBT's opening for signature, Japan once again urges those countries listed in annex 2 of the Treaty to sign and ratify it.

Regarding a fissile material cut-off treaty, the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (A/70/81), prepared under their Canadian Chair, is a well-balanced document covering all the important issues. We call on all the States concerned to examine the report seriously and consider the next step towards commencing negotiations.

It is disappointing that for nearly two decades the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to do any substantive work as our sole multilateral negotiating forum. Although we did hold a series of substantive discussions this year that were more in depth than those of the previous year, we believe that the Conference member States should demonstrate their commitment to revitalizing it. Japan's priority of starting negotiations

on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference as soon as possible remains unchanged.

Both disarmament and non-proliferation are important to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons and should be addressed in a mutually reinforcing manner. Japan strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continuing nuclear and missile development programmes, which pose a serious threat to the peace and security of the region and of the entire international community. It is a clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 2005 joint statement of the Six-Party Talks. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with those Security Council resolutions, refrain from any further provocative action and abandon all its nuclear weapons and missile development programmes completely, verifiably and irreversibly.

As for the Iranian nuclear issue, Japan welcomes the two agreements represented by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between the E3+3 and Iran and the road map outlined between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran, which will help to reinforce the international non-proliferation regime. We very much hope that they will be implemented steadily. In that regard, Japan will continue to support the work of the IAEA, which plays an important role in verification and inspection, under the leadership of its Director General, Mr. Yukiya Amano.

With regard to the Chemical Weapons Convention, Japan welcomes the nearly completed destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. Regarding the use in Syria of toxic chemicals as weapons, Japan welcomed the Security Council's adoption of its resolution 2235 (2015), establishing a Joint Investigative Mechanism of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations, and calls on all parties to cooperate fully with the investigation. Japan, in close coordination and cooperation with China, has also been committed to making every possible effort to complete the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons in China.

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Japan expects the discussion during the current intersessional process to promote common understanding and effective action towards the Convention's next Review Conference in 2016.

Japan welcomed the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the successful convening of the first Conference of States Parties to the Treaty in Cancún, Mexico, and we commend the leadership shown by the Mexican presidency of the Conference. The ATT is an epoch-making achievement in the history of conventional arms control, benefiting and strengthening as it does the rule of law and human security, as well as building confidence among its States parties. It is important that we ensure that the basis for the Treaty's implementation is further consolidated at the next Conference, in 2016, and we expect that endeavour to be achieved under Nigeria's leadership as President of the Conference.

At the 2015 NPT Review Conference, 76 States, including nuclear-weapon States, participated in drafting a joint statement on disarmament and non-proliferation education. We believe that education is a valuable tool for advancing nuclear disarmament by raising awareness. Every year, large numbers of people, many of them from foreign countries, travel to the cities that were devastated by nuclear weapons, and we hope that more will come to see the reality of nuclear bombing with their own eyes.

Finally, I would like to conclude by stressing that the acts of ensuring national security and furthering disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, are not mutually contradictory but actually complement each other. Disarmament will unquestionably improve the regional and global security environments and enhance confidence among States. Japan strongly calls upon all States to take united actions towards the common goal of achieving a peaceful and secure world, free of nuclear weapons, through nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

The Chair: I shall now call on those delegations who have requested the floor to exercise their right of reply. In this context, please let me remind all delegations of valid time limits in view of the availability of interpretation services.

Mr. Kang Myong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee this year.

My delegation is taking the floor to exercise its right of reply to the statements made by the delegations of South Korea and Japan. Their statements

are provocative and dangerously misleading, even preposterous, and therefore compel my delegation to set the record straight. My delegation would like to make its position clear on four issues.

First, with regard to the reference made to the Iranian nuclear deal in addressing the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, as far as Iran's nuclear agreement is concerned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's position is that it is the result of Iran's protracted efforts to have its independent right to nuclear activities recognized and sanctions lifted. However, the situation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is quite different. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a nuclear-weapon State, both in name and reality, and it has interests as a nuclear-weapon State. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not at all interested in a dialogue to discuss the issue of making it freeze or dismantle its nuclear weapons unilaterally first. The nuclear deterrence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not a bargaining chip to be put on the negotiating table, but an essential means to protect its sovereignty and vital rights from the nuclear threat and hostile policy of the United States. Therefore, it is illogical to compare Iran's nuclear agreement with the situation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Secondly, with regard to the nuclear test in January, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea put forward a proposal that if the United States and South Korea were to suspend large-scale military exercises, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would be willing to consider the suspension of nuclear tests. The United States, however, turned down the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's proposal outright, showing that the real concern of the United States is not the nuclear test, but the Americanization of the entire Korean peninsula. The joint military exercises conducted by the United States and South Korea several times every year go beyond the limit in view of the hostility, aggressiveness and provocative nature, which were less evident even in Europe when the two global military blocs were confronting each other during Cold War times.

The recent military exercises being conducted on the Korean peninsula are focused on landing aerial strikes and commando operations to occupy Pyongyang. No matter how sincere and fair a country is, it will fall victim to the strong if it is weak. Genuine peace can be ensured only when a country is strong enough. There is no other choice for my country, which

is fully exposed to the hostility of the largest nuclear-weapon State. Since 2013, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has maintained a strategic line of simultaneously strengthening its nuclear armed forces and developing its national economy, and over the years its righteousness has been proved more than right.

Thirdly, with regard to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch of a peaceful satellite, the peaceful use of outer space is the legitimate right of all States. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's peaceful use and exploration of outer space is not only an exercise of its sovereign right, but also an exercise of its legitimate right under international law, as it is a State party to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a proud space-faring nation, will continue to launch application satellites necessary for economic development at the time and place that it sees fit, while making everything as transparent as possible, in accordance with the internationally established norms and practices. Anyone with an objective and fair view will see the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's rocket launch as that of a peaceful satellite, but those who are driven by malicious intent and a policy of confrontation towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will see them as long-range missiles.

Lastly, my delegation rejects the Japanese delegation's reckless remarks with regard to the nuclear and missile development of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Japan is not actually in a position to find fault with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear deterrence for self-defence. Japan should always keep in mind the bitter lesson of the last century, when it waged wars of aggression, seized by the ambition of the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, but in the long run drank a bitter cup of defeat. Japan should not seek the way of ruin by opting for the revival of militarism under the pretext of proactive pacifism, but should gain the trust of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other neighbouring countries — to begin with, by settling all its past crimes, including its hideous crimes against the Korean people. If Japan is truly worried about the armed forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it had better request that the United States withdraw its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is the root cause that compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to possess nuclear weapons.

Mr. Belousov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation would like to use its right of reply to respond to the statements made by the representative of the United States, who is present in this room, and by the representative of Georgia.

First of all, it is important to provide some explanations or clarifications with regard to the statement made by the representative of the United States that the global defence missile system is not aimed at Russia. The first step in undermining the strategic stability of the world was taken by the United States by leaving the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 and implementing its plans for establishing a global missile defence system. For several years, the Russian Federation conducted negotiations with the United States and expressed its concerns about those plans. In the course of those negotiations, the United States stated more than once that the global missile defence system created by the United States is not aimed at Russia.

In response to the justified request of the Russian Federation to provide legal guarantees of the fact that Russia was not targeted, the United States refused. Despite the fact that leaving the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty undermined the strategic balance between the Russian Federation and the United States, the Russian Federation still took unprecedented steps towards further reducing its nuclear arsenal by signing the latest agreement on further reductions and restrictions of strategic offensive weapons with the United States. We are successfully implementing that agreement. Furthermore, that step was taken in the understanding that, in addition to the global missile defence system, there are other negative factors that affect global stability. Those include the establishment and implementation of the concept of an instant global strike, which is premised on the use of very high-tech weapons and is an unprecedented increase in the arsenals of the United States and their allies. Against that backdrop, Russia has not only not neglected its obligations, but continues to live up to its obligations.

With regard to the allegations that we refuse to continue negotiations with the United States regarding the further reduction of nuclear arsenals, I should like to remind the Committee that President Putin, in his statement of 24 October 2014, unequivocally stated that Russia insisted on continuing negotiations on reducing its nuclear arsenals on the condition that such negotiations not be based on double standards.

What was meant by that? That the outcome of such negotiations should be the strengthening of the security of all its participants rather than obtaining military advantages by some States over others. For the time being, the United States has made no proposals to conduct negotiations based on that approach. The purely empty rhetoric of the United States on that topic is unacceptable to us.

With regard to the alleged violations by Russia of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the representative of the United States, unequivocally and without providing any clear objective or reliable data, criticized Russia for not complying with that Treaty, which is very important for international security. However, we would note, as we have in the past, that once again the United States has framed the issues upside down. We are the ones who are expressing very serious concerns about the unmanned aerial vehicles and the Mark 41 Vertical Launching Systems, which, owing to their characteristics, fall under the scope of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Our concerns have been addressed in the form of groundless insinuations. From our point of view, that is in no way justified. If we want to have a serious discussion to settle all the differences between the United States and the Russian Federation concerning the Treaty, let us discuss it in a very business-like way in the framework of a mechanism that exists for that purpose rather than making populist statements and playing to the gallery. That pertains to what was said by the representative of the United States.

With regard to what was said by the representative of Georgia, we cannot simply fail to respond to the many strong statements made against Russia. The units of the Russian armed forces that are in the territory of South Ossetia and Abkhazia are there on the basis of bilateral agreements between the Russian Federation and South Ossetia, on the one hand, and between the Russian Federation and Abkhazia, on the other hand. Those military units are carrying out a very important mission in ensuring the peace and security of those States and the security of their borders. Their presence there cannot be questioned because it is in full compliance with international law.

I am not going to address in detail the other statements made by the representative of Georgia, but I will ask the Georgian representatives to not exhaust their enthusiasm in the First Committee, but rather to use their enthusiasm and energy in the framework of

the Geneva international discussions on security and stability in Transcaucasia. A meeting on all the various issues related to South Ossetia and Abkhazia will be held on 15 October in Geneva. I would suggest that my Georgian colleagues prepare to hold discussions there, rather than distort the facts in a manner that is in no way connected to the reality of the situation. Let us be realistic and look at what the situation is like in those territories rather than engage in wishful thinking.

Mr. Ibrahim (Syrian Arab Republic): Syria reiterates its strong condemnation of the horrific use of chemical weapons against its citizens and soldiers, and stresses its commitment to the full implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention as a State party and within the framework of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

It is a fact and a reality now that the current Turkish regime has shifted from its policy of zero problems to that of 100 per cent problems with its neighbours and for peace and security throughout the world. The Turkish regime continues its support by financing, arming and training foreign terrorist fighters and terrorist organizations and sending them to Syria to commit horrific crimes against Syria, its people, its infrastructure and its historical and cultural heritage.

The representative of the Turkish regime made false and baseless allegations against my country in an attempt to cover up and protect the terrorist groups that are using chemical weapons and materials provided by his regime against Syrian civilians and soldiers. It seems that he and his regime do not care about or pay any attention to the reports about the use by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and other terrorist groups of such horrific weapons, since his regime is in an unholy alliance with those terrorist organizations.

On 22 May, footage was published on the website of the Turkish daily newspaper *Jumhurriyet*, showing Turkish inspectors searching a truck watched by security officers, a prosecutor and sniffer dogs. The truck was one of four trucks carrying the same load. In the footage, the official first opened boxes marked as fragile and full of antibiotics, but under those boxes they found dozens of mortar shells. The four trucks were carrying a total of 1,000 mortar shells, 80,000 rounds of ammunition for light and heavy weapons, as well as hundreds of grenade launchers, all of them meant for terrorist groups in Syria.

The United Nations and its concerned Member States should oblige the Turkish regime to stop its flagrant violations of United Nations resolutions related to combating terrorism. Otherwise, the danger and crimes of terrorists' horrific acts will reach other countries around the world.

Ms. Yoon Seong-mee (Republic of Korea): I would like to respond to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

First of all, with regard to the claim that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has nuclear-weapon-State status, the international community has repeatedly made it clear that North Korea cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon State under any circumstance. That is clearly stated in the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). We advise North Korea to wake up from such delusions. Pyongyang must realize that a nuclear arsenal cannot guarantee its security.

Secondly, the joint exercises of the Republic of Korea and the United States have been conducted annually for several decades to respond to the clear and distinct military threat from North Korea and are purely defensive in nature. Those exercises have been conducted in a transparent manner as well, with advance notification for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and under the observation of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission.

North Korea has continued to threaten regional and global security by carrying out three nuclear tests for long-range ballistic missile launches, as well as multiple short- and mid-range ballistic missile launches. The sinking of the Republic of Korea's naval vessel, the *Cheonan*; the artillery attack on Yeonpyeong island by North Korea in 2010; and the landmine and artillery provocations this year are just a few examples that demonstrate the existence of the persistent and clear military threat by the North. The facts speak for themselves.

Lastly, Security Council resolutions 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013) made it clear that North Korea is not entitled to any launch using ballistic-missile technology. The Security Council further spelled out clearly through its presidential statement S/PRST/2012/13 that North Korea's launches are serious violations of relevant Security Council resolutions

"even if characterized as a satellite launch or space launch vehicle".

It is regrettable that the statements of the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea demonstrate that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has no intention of abiding by international norms. Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations specifies the obligation of Member States to abide by the decisions of the Security Council, and Article 103 clearly states that the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations prevail over the obligations under other international agreements.

Therefore, it is more than evident that North Korea is bound by its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions. Given North Korea's past record of brazenly conducting nuclear tests and missile launches, its claim to the peaceful use of outer space can hardly be justified.

Mr. Sano (Japan): Let me very briefly respond to the remarks made by our colleague from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I will make two points.

First, the international community must be reminded that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues the development of its nuclear and missile programmes in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the joint statement of the Six-Party Talks. It is imperative for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete actions towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization in order to return to compliance with its safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency and with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Japan strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take such concrete actions.

Secondly, there have been no changes in Japan's basic posture and orientation for the past 70 years. In other words, Japan has adhered to a basic policy of maintaining an exclusively national defence-oriented policy and not becoming a military power that poses a threat to other countries. We will continue to adhere to the cause that we have supported to date as a peace-loving nation.

Mr. Kvelashvili (Georgia): I am making this statement in response to the statement made in right of reply by the representative of the Russian Federation.

Georgia views the Geneva international discussions as one of the extremely important formats, and we try

to make good use of all its negotiating frameworks to address all security and humanitarian issues, including reciprocation by the Russian Federation to Georgia's unilateral pledge of non-use of force, as well as the return of hundreds of thousands of Georgian internally displaced persons and refugees to their places of origin. But I would like to reassure the representatives of the Russian Federation that Georgia will use all other formats, including the United Nations, first and foremost; the Security Council; the First Committee and other platforms to address all the security challenges we face and highlight the illegal actions Russia has taken against Georgia.

Let me go into some specifics, because the representative of the Russian Federation mentioned that they had some kind of bilateral arrangements with the occupied territories. Russia maintains thousands of troops and advanced assault weapon systems in Georgia without the consent of the Georgian Government and against the provisions of the Georgian Constitution. Russia operates its apartheid-style, xenophobic occupation regimes in western and central zones of occupation inside Georgia, which cover 20 per cent of Georgian territory and directly control political, economic and social life in the occupied territories. Those are the very same Russian regimes that carried out ethnic cleansing and other mass atrocities against the majority Georgian population throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Russia's presence in Georgia constitutes an illegal military occupation in flagrant violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and dozens of other agreements within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation system, as well as the provisions of the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement between Georgia and Russia, which was mediated by the European Union. Russia has signed and ratified the so-called treaties of integration with the occupation regimes, which have been condemned by the international community as yet another illegal step aimed at annexing the occupied Georgian regions.

Russian troops in the occupied territories constitute a threat not only to the national sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Georgia — a State Member of the United Nations, by the way — but also to the security of all neighbouring countries, the region, wider Europe and well beyond. That is why we call again and again on the Russian Federation to

withdraw all its occupation forces from Georgia without any further delay.

Mr. Bergemann (United States of America): I take the floor to exercise my delegation's right of reply in response to the statement delivered by the representative of the Russian Federation a few moments ago.

The United States categorically rejects the claims made by the Russian Federation regarding alleged non-compliance by the United States with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The United States is in full compliance with its international obligations under those Treaties. As already elaborated by our delegation, we reiterate that it is the Russian Federation that is in violation of its commitments under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Kang Myong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I apologize for asking for the floor again. I will be very brief. I would just like to make two points.

First, my delegation totally rejects the statement made by our South Korean colleague. I already made clear the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea vis-à-vis the nuclear issue, which is the product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and its position vis-à-vis its right to the peaceful use of outer space. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is already a full-fledged nuclear-weapon State. We are not asking South Korea to recognize us as a nuclear-weapon State. We are already a full-fledged nuclear-weapon State and we are content that with the nuclear deterrent for self-defence we can safeguard the sovereignty, peace and security of the Korean peninsula.

With regard to the ongoing annual joint military exercises being conducted in South Korea and its vicinity several times a year, everybody knows that its nature is provocative and aggressive because it involves strategic nuclear bombers flying non-stop from the United States mainland or Guam island to the Korean peninsula to stage nuclear-bomb-dropping drills several times a year. Aircraft carriers and submarines loaded with nuclear missiles constantly enter the waters around and in the Korean peninsula and take part in nuclear-war exercises.

It may be good for dialogue and negotiations to be regular and annual, but it is extremely dangerous when hostile military drills are conducted annually and regularly. One side's threat will provoke a reaction from the other, and in the process of such interaction a war will break out. This is the lesson of history.

My second point, which touches upon the Japanese delegation's remarks, is that Japan actually has no standing to talk about the elimination of nuclear weapons. Japan's three non-nuclear principles are mere decoys. Every year, nuclear aircraft carriers and submarines freely go in and out of the territorial waters of Japan. Plutonium is piled up in excess. Political figures in Japan raise their voices to call for the revival of militarism and the nuclear weaponization of the country. The Japanese delegation's statement is full of deception, hypocrisy and distortion and is not even worthy of a passing note.

Ms. Yoon Seungmee (Republic of Korea): I apologize for taking the floor again. I just have to respond again to the remarks by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It is very regrettable that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to make futile attempts to

justify its nuclear missile programmes in defiance of international norms and at the cost of a decent life for its people. As long as North Korea continues its nuclear-missile programmes, it is obvious that the international sanctions against the country will be maintained and even strengthened. These will deepen North Korea's isolation and make its economic development more difficult.

But if North Korea makes a strategic decision to abandon its nuclear programmes, we are prepared to cooperate with the international community to fully help North Korea to participate in the global economy and develop peacefully. We hope that North Korea moves in this direction.

Mr. Sano (Japan): I will be very brief. First of all, Japan's three non-nuclear principles are well known. We have upheld and we will continue to uphold these three non-nuclear principles.

Secondly, the plutonium in Japan is used only for peaceful purposes, which International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards monitoring has proved every year.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.