



# General Assembly

Seventy-second session

## First Committee

**22<sup>nd</sup>** meeting

Wednesday, 25 October 2017, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Bahr Aluloom ..... (Iraq)

*In the absence of the Chair, Mr. Sparber (Liechtenstein), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### Agenda items 52 (b) and 90 to 106 (continued)

#### Thematic discussion on specific subjects and introduction and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and related international security agenda items

**The Acting Chair:** In keeping with the indicative timetable contained in document A/C.1/72/CRP.2, today is the last day available for our thematic discussions. We will take up the cluster “Disarmament machinery” this afternoon. However, before commencing with the list of speakers on that cluster, in accordance with its adopted timetable, the Committee will first hear a briefing by the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I wish to remind delegations that the meeting will be suspended today at 5.30 p.m., in order to follow the yearly tradition of accommodating the presentation ceremony of the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates.

It is now my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, Mr. Fernando Luque Márquez of Ecuador.

I will first give the floor to Mr. Luque Márquez to make his statement. Thereafter, we will change to an informal mode to afford delegations an opportunity to ask questions.

I now give the floor to Mr. Luque Márquez.

**Mr. Luque Márquez** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Chair for inviting me to inform the First Committee on developments and the results of the final week of meetings of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, held from 5 to 9 June.

I am very gratified to inform the Committee that the Working Group was able to reach consensus recommendations on goals and a programme of work for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. One could have thought that the time that elapsed between the second week of meetings of the Working Group in July 2016 and the third, and final, week of meetings in June of this year could have compromised the follow-up on the theme under discussion, and therefore the chances for agreeing on recommendations.

Nevertheless, I always believed that that period could instead have allowed for greater fleshing out and consideration of the topics that potentially divided us, such as those for which there was already general agreement. That time also allowed us to hold ongoing conversations among several delegations and two open consultations — one here in New York on 1 March and the other in Geneva on 15 May. It is my view that those

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meetings facilitated the achievement of the positive final result.

Just as during the July 2016 session, I proposed to continue our deliberations with a rolling text based on the version that had been used on the last day of last year's session. As I stated one year ago in my briefing to the First Committee (see A/C.1/71/PV.20), the use of a rolling text, although more laborious, allows the proposals of all participants to be reflected and discussed, and enables us to find collective solutions to difficulties along the way. It also allows the Chair of the Working Group to weigh how the various proposals garner support and consensus. Finally, I believe that having the text on a screen, open to discussion and proposals by all, facilitated us reaching consensus on the recommendation of goals and a programme of work.

Of course, at the beginning of our final week of work there was still divergence between two groups of delegations on the scope of a fourth special session — one that supported a niche idea that the success of the session would depend upon first holding a general debate on one or more specific themes, and another that called for a broad scope for deliberations consistent with what had taken place in previous special sessions devoted to disarmament. Similarly, there were also differing views on criteria for consensus, the role consensus should play in a special session and how that should be reflected in our recommendations.

After three days of discussions, whenever we approached the end of the time available, I would present a working document for the Group's consideration in the hope that it would be accepted by all. Some additional hours of deliberations were still needed, but at the end of the evening of Thursday, 9 June, thanks to the great flexibility of all participants, it was possible to agree on language that, without fully satisfying every delegation, was nevertheless acceptable to all.

In that regard, I would like to express my special gratitude to those delegations that, on both sides of the various perspectives under consideration, showed their commitment to multilateralism, thereby enabling us to adopt by consensus the recommendations for goals and a programme of work for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which are set out in the Group's report (A/AC.268/2017/2). Those recommendations, anchored in the principles, priorities and goals of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament (resolution

S-10/2), are forward-looking in that they call for the fourth special session to develop the means, based on the current situation, to continue to make progress on disarmament.

The recommendations also highlight the importance of the United Nations disarmament machinery. At the same time, they stress the need to review its functioning with a view to strengthening it and maintaining its relevance by making it more effective. In order to ensure that the conversation on disarmament not be abstract, it was recommended that the fourth special session identify and establish concrete, practical and effective measures to promote international disarmament and security. Finally, one of the agreed goals is that the results of the special session would be reflected in one or more consensus documents.

Part of the Group's mandate was to consider "the possible establishment of the preparatory committee for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament". The Group deemed it appropriate to remit to the General Assembly, and therefore to the First Committee, the consideration of that issue.

I would like to thank all of the delegations that actively participated in the Group's work; the members of the Bureau, who are always ready to support me with their counsel and ideas; and the staff of the Secretariat, without whom it would not have been possible to develop or reach this positive conclusion of the work of the Group.

We in the First Committee must now decide what path to embark upon. In order to do so, we will need additional consultations with a view to convening the fourth special session devoted to disarmament and to determine the modalities for such a session.

It is my firm conviction that the holding of the fourth special session will be beneficial for all States and, most important, for the people we represent, as it was the people who decided, 72 years ago, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

**The Acting Chair:** I thank Mr. Luque Márquez for his briefing.

In keeping with our established practice, I will now suspend the meeting to give delegations an opportunity to hold an interactive discussion on the briefing we have just heard through an informal question-and-answer session.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.15 p.m. and resumed at 3.20 p.m.*

**The Acting Chair:** The Committee will now begin its consideration of the cluster “Disarmament machinery”. I once again urge all speakers to kindly observe the established time limits.

I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.33 and A/C.1/72/L.34.

**Mr. Rahdiansyah** (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

NAM remains concerned about the continuous erosion of multilateralism in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The Movement is determined to continue promoting multilateralism as the core principle of negotiation in those areas and as the only sustainable approach to addressing the issues, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

NAM reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and reiterates its call for the CD to agree by consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work without any further delay, taking into account the security interests of all States. In that regard, the Movement reaffirms the importance of the principle set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as follows:

“The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage.” (*resolution S-10/2, para. 29*)

The Movement welcomes the efforts made by the Presidents of previous CD sessions coming from NAM member States to bring about the resumption of the CD’s substantive work in 2017. NAM takes note of the deliberations and discussions on substantive issues that were held during the 2017 session of the CD, and welcomes the efforts it made on its programme of work. The Movement encourages all CD member States to demonstrate the political will necessary to ensure that the CD fulfils its negotiating mandate.

NAM reaffirms the importance and relevance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), with its universal membership, as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery to consider various problems in the field of disarmament and submit concrete recommendations to the General Assembly. NAM welcomes the adoption by consensus of the recommendations of Working Group II of the Commission entitled “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”. The Movement calls upon all Member States to achieve consensus in the relevant UNDC working group next year on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery is a shared objective. Based on its existing rules of procedure and methods of work, the disarmament machinery has produced landmark treaties and guidelines. NAM believes that the main difficulty lies in the lack of political will by some States to achieve progress, particularly on nuclear disarmament. For its part, NAM stands ready to constructively engage on advancing the issues on the United Nations disarmament agenda and the ways and means of strengthening the disarmament machinery.

NAM underscores the importance of the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV), as it would offer an opportunity to review — from a perspective that is more in tune with the current international situation — the most critical aspects of the disarmament process and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and of controlling and reducing conventional weapons. In that regard, the Movement welcomes the successful convening of two substantive sessions in 2016 and one substantive session in 2017 of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, chaired by Ecuador, which agreed on the objectives and agenda for SSOD-IV.

The Movement expresses its profound concern over the continued lack of adequate representation of NAM countries in the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, and requests the Secretary-General and the High Representative to take steps to ensure balance and equitable representation in the Office. NAM also stresses

that the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research should be adequately strengthened and its research and information functions accordingly extended, as provided for by the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Movement would like to draw attention to the draft resolutions that it is introducing under this cluster, as follows: “United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament” (A/C.1/72/L.34) and “Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament” (A/C.1/72/L.33), and welcomes support for them.

In conclusion, the Movement underscores that, as the display of political will is fundamental to the disarmament machinery’s effective performance, it urges all countries to work together, cooperate further and tangibly demonstrate their commitment to ensuring that the disarmament machinery will once again, and in the not-too-distant future, unleash its potential to advance peace and security for the entire world.

**Mr. Al-Dobhany** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to state that the Group of Arab States associates itself with the statement just delivered by the representative Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

The doctrine of the Arab Group to achieve the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is part and parcel of its principled commitment to nuclear disarmament, leading to a world free from nuclear weapons. That is the top priority of all efforts aimed at achieving disarmament and international security, as agreed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978.

The Arab Group recalls that the terms of reference and activities of the United Nations disarmament machinery are underpinned only by such special sessions, which cannot be amended unless there is a new special session of the General Assembly dedicated to that purpose. The Group therefore welcomes the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We look forward to seeing the session reach tangible results in terms of avoiding the many developments across the international arena that heighten threats to international security.

The Arab Group also looks forward to the General Assembly high-level conference on nuclear disarmament to be held in 2018, which would crown the positive endeavours undertaken by NAM, to which all Arab States belong. The conference comes at a time when the international disarmament system is witnessing an important and historic development, with the establishment of the first internationally binding instrument that prohibits nuclear weapons and delegitimizes their possession, transfer, proliferation, development, use or threat of use, leading to their elimination.

While the Arab Group welcomes the efforts made in the context of the Conference on Disarmament, we reaffirm the importance of empowering the Conference to play its role, since it is the sole deliberative forum in the United Nations devoted to disarmament. We stress that the current impasse in the work of the Conference on Disarmament is not due to any shortcomings in the Conference’s mechanism, but rather to the lack of political will of its member States. The Arab Group therefore underscores the need to maintain the primary role of the Conference on Disarmament.

The various topics on the Conference’s agenda — namely, nuclear disarmament, the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), preventing an arms race in outer space, and security guarantees — are all intertwined and in synergy with the global objectives in this area. They are part of the comprehensive agenda of nuclear disarmament. We should not address one before the other, nor should we address some from the perspective of non-proliferation at the expense of a comprehensive approach to nuclear disarmament. That is also applicable to the proposed FMCT, which we need in order to address the accumulated stockpiling of such materials in countries that are now in possession of nuclear weapons. Otherwise, it would be just another tool to sustain the status quo in which nuclear-disarmament obligations are being breached.

The Arab Group has expressed its disappointment time and again about the failure of the Disarmament Commission to reach consensus for years on any recommendations, with the exception of the positive development witnessed during the past session. That is the result of the lack of political will and the inflexibility of some nuclear-weapon States, thereby blocking the path towards consensus.



The Arab Group undertook substantial efforts towards reaching consensus. It played a constructive role, especially within the framework of multilateral endeavours, to achieve nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Group stresses the need for nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate the necessary political will and the required flexibility in order to enable the Commission to reach consensus during the next session and achieve objective results, just as it did in the latest session. The agenda for the next session should take into account the concerns of all countries and give priority to nuclear disarmament.

**Ms. Jenie** (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which is made up of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, and my own country, Indonesia.

Global disarmament and non-proliferation issues can best be addressed through multilateralism and with all countries carrying out their obligations responsibly. Indeed, based on its existing rules of procedure and methods of work, the United Nations disarmament machinery has produced important treaties and guidelines and promoted confidence and trust among States.

ASEAN believes that enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery must be a shared objective. The main difficulty lies in the lack of political will by some States to achieve progress, particularly on nuclear disarmament. It is a regrettable reality that disarmament within the United Nations framework has been moving at such a frustratingly slow pace.

ASEAN stresses the importance of preserving and strengthening the nature, role and purpose of each part of the disarmament machinery, namely, the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the First Committee of the General Assembly. ASEAN is concerned at the deadlock in the CD on agreeing on a programme of work. We encourage the member States in that body to demonstrate the necessary political will so that it can fulfil its negotiating mandate. At the same time, ASEAN would like to highlight that the agreed outcome from the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly

Devoted to Disarmament and from a working group of the UNDC demonstrate that it is possible to achieve progress in disarmament today.

We recognize that States have the legitimate right to ensure their own security, but exercising that right should not be at the expense of the collective security of all States. In that regard, ASEAN recognizes the value of multilateralism in instituting a rules-based approach to norms and as a tool for building trust.

We remain at a crossroads as far as the disarmament machinery is concerned. We have the choice of either moving the machinery forward collectively for the greater good of humankind, or we could remain deadlocked in the absence of political will, which may put humankind in harm's way. The choice is ours to make. As long as countries continue to possess nuclear weapons, instability, insecurity and the possibility of proliferation will be present. The continued possession of nuclear weapons also calls into question the commitments made by nuclear-weapon States and undermines the multilateral framework for strengthening international peace and security. ASEAN urges all countries to uphold their commitments and come together to reinvigorate the disarmament machinery with their positive and concrete actions.

**Ms. Carey** (Bahamas): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the thematic debate on the cluster "Disarmament machinery".

As this is my first statement to the First Committee, I would like to congratulate the Chair on his successful election to lead the Committee. I also extend congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. All may be assured of the support of the delegation of the Bahamas in their work.

At the outset, allow me to reiterate the significance CARICOM attaches to the United Nations disarmament machinery and the work of the related mechanisms that fall under it, including the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the General Assembly. As has been previously mentioned by many delegations in the Committee, the current global context has shown the need for innovative and enhanced dialogue and commitment towards the goal of disarmament. It therefore remains a disappointment that we observe the persistent inability of the Conference on Disarmament to attain consensus on its programme of work, and in

particular on nuclear disarmament. Equally regrettable is the fact that the Disarmament Commission has not submitted any substantive recommendations to the General Assembly in recent years.

It is our fervent hope that, within the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, delegations will work steadfastly in a transparent and inclusive manner to overcome the paralysis that has prevented the conclusion of agreement in key areas of disarmament deliberations. In that regard, CARICOM welcomes the upcoming fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and extends its appreciation to the Open-ended Working Group for its diligent efforts to arrive at consensus on the objectives and agenda of the special session.

At this juncture, the Caribbean Community expresses its appreciation to Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and, to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for the invaluable role the Office plays as coordinator of regional and global disarmament initiatives. CARICOM also notes with appreciation the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, which promotes greater understanding of the functioning of the United Nations disarmament machinery and of the other institutions working in the areas of international security, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

There can be no sustainable development without security, justice, good governance and peace. CARICOM attaches tremendous importance to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in the context of disarmament, to Sustainable Development Goal 16, which calls for peace, justice and strong institutions. CARICOM strongly believes that disarmament is a fundamental link between peace and sustainable development. Regional and global disarmament approaches are mutually complementary and must be pursued simultaneously.

CARICOM commends the stellar contributions of the regional centres for peace and disarmament, which provide capacity-building and a range of training opportunities to Member States upon their request. We wish to highlight our appreciation for the work of the Peru-based United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), which has over the past

year undertaken more than 60 substantive activities to support States in their implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the International Tracing Instrument, the Arms Trade Treaty and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). We also welcome UNLIREC initiatives that seek to promote the involvement of young people in disarmament affairs, particularly with regard to the use of firearms. Accordingly, CARICOM notes with appreciation, the consecutive voluntary contributions to UNLIREC from the Governments of Canada, Germany, the United States, Peru, Mexico and Guyana over the latest financial reporting period.

Similarly, CARICOM applauds the leading role taken by the International Atomic Energy Agency through its robust verification and monitoring mechanisms, as well as its contribution to radioactive security. We also wish to commend the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for its independent research on disarmament affairs. Such research provides an invaluable forum for the dissemination and promotion of disarmament-related information.

The Caribbean Community underscores the critical importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones as confidence-building instruments that ensure peace and security, strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and advance nuclear disarmament. We therefore commend existing nuclear-weapon-free zones in their efforts to attain those goals. In that connection, CARICOM countries are proud States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which will observe its fiftieth anniversary this year.

CARICOM calls on States to renew efforts to address obligations under relevant disarmament conventions, resolutions and international legal frameworks, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/51/218, annex) and resolution 71/56, on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

Recent activities on the Korean peninsula and other regions reinforce the threat weapons of mass destruction pose globally, not least of all to innocent civilians. In that regard, CARICOM welcomes the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and hopes that, along with others, the Treaty

will foster workable, humanitarian-based approaches that advance disarmament objectives.

Moreover, as non-nuclear-weapon States, the States of the CARICOM subregion consider small arms, light weapons and unexploded devices to be the proverbial weapons of mass destruction in their part of the world. The proliferation and misuse of conventional weapons continue to cause devastating and lasting impacts in our countries. It is against that backdrop that CARICOM lends its full support to the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and relevant outcome documents pertaining to the same. CARICOM looks forward to active participation in the 2018 Review Conference of the Programme of Action.

CARICOM also recognizes the vital contributions of civil society to the maintenance of peace and security, in particular those of non-governmental organizations and the private sector. With the onset of emerging technological innovations and the potential risks such innovations may pose to security, including cybersecurity, their involvement is more crucial than ever.

In conclusion, CARICOM wishes to reiterate its congratulations to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons on being awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Such an accomplishment demonstrates not only the important work that has been done, but the work that remains to be done. The disarmament machinery represents our collective will to achieve total disarmament. We must remain cognizant of why it connects us to one another and what is at stake if we fail.

**The Acting Chair:** I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Ms. Kőrömi (European Union):** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has a long-standing tradition of promoting an effective international system based on sustained and strong multilateral cooperation, the rule of law and good global governance. We consider

it important to seek multilateral solutions to global challenges and threats to international peace and security, including those arising from new technological developments, in particular within the framework of the United Nations. In that context, the EU would like to reiterate its support for the United Nations disarmament machinery, created in 1978 by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and its three mutually reinforcing forums, which remain central and irreplaceable, namely, the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). They must be utilized more effectively to fulfil their respective roles in the field of disarmament and reach results in line with their agreed mandates.

The First Committee serves as an important forum to discuss and address non-proliferation and disarmament issues in the presence of all States Members of the United Nations, international and regional organizations and civil society. We all share responsibility for enhancing its effectiveness and efficiency. The First Committee should be capable of holding more focused and topical debates on contemporary security challenges and challenges to our collective security. It should also be capable of developing concrete measures to address them, rather than simply updating previously adopted resolutions. Practical steps can be contemplated with a view to improving practices and working methods, such as biennializing or triennializing resolutions and refraining from requesting unnecessary reports from the Secretariat.

The Conference on Disarmament remains the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, and it should fulfil its crucial role in accordance with its mandate. It should negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties and could elaborate instruments and norms such as guidelines and codes of conduct. Broader international security issues related to disarmament are also discussed within the CD. The CD's continued relevance is of the utmost importance for the EU. Its protracted stalemate therefore remains deeply troubling. Collective creative thinking will be required to revitalize the CD.

The EU remains deeply committed to effective multilateralism and attaches the utmost importance to the proper functioning of multilateral institutions. We acknowledge the genuine efforts of the Presidents of former sessions of the CD in trying this year to break the deadlock and reach agreement on a programme of

work. However, the long-awaited breakthrough was again not achieved. Renewed efforts will be required to reach agreement, which will in turn continue to require sustained political will and engagement from all CD members, as well as Presidents of future CD sessions, who must fully perform their duties.

The EU appreciates the substantive discussions that were held in the CD Working Group on the Way Ahead. The technical nature of those exchanges proved useful to gain a better understanding of various positions and concerns with the aim of building common ground for substantive work on all core items. Regrettably, due to divergent views, the exchanges did not lead to consensual recommendations. Nevertheless, we hope that the substance of those discussions can be used as a basis for future work in the CD.

In that context, we would like to reiterate EU member States' long-standing commitment to the enlargement of the CD. We underline the importance of further substantive consultations on the expansion of its membership and strongly support the appointment of a special coordinator in that respect.

We also encourage enhanced interaction between civil society and the CD, and we hope that further steps can be taken towards broadened contributions by non-governmental organizations, academia and research institutions. We welcome the intention of Secretary-General Michael Møller to organize the next civil society forum in 2018.

For the EU, the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the CD of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein, remains a clear priority. We call on all CD members to start negotiations on such a treaty without delay and to begin work on the other issues on the agenda in line with the adopted programme of work contained in document CD/1864.

We welcome the ongoing work of the High-Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group, whose mandate is to make recommendations on substantial elements of a treaty, without prejudice to national positions in future negotiations. The EU is considering how it can contribute to United Nations efforts to support States in the African, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions to participate in the Preparatory Group's consultative work. In the meantime, we call on

all States possessing nuclear weapons that have not done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices.

The EU stresses the important role that the UNDC is designed to play as a deliberative body of the General Assembly on disarmament matters. We support the efforts aimed at improving its working methods and enabling more constructive and focused deliberations. In that context, the EU welcomes the adoption by consensus in April this year of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons — for the first time since 1999. We are hopeful that that progress will allow the UNDC to take up new topics of high relevance during the next cycle, which begins in 2018. The reaching of consensus on recommendations for the objectives and the agenda of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is also indicative that, despite differences, Member States can work constructively together and achieve progress, even on divisive issues.

The EU highly values the work carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) as a stand-alone, autonomous institution within the disarmament machinery. UNIDIR's independent research on disarmament and security benefits all stakeholders. The EU and its member States support its activities, including financially.

The United Nations disarmament machinery and its various instruments cannot function properly without Member States honouring their financial obligations. We therefore call on all States that have not yet done so to pay their contributions in full and on time and to settle their arrears without delay. Moreover, we believe additional efforts should be made towards improving the efficiency of the contribution process, discouraging non-payments and reducing the costs of meetings.

**Ms. Dallafior** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We welcome the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) has concluded its three-year cycle in a positive manner, adopting substantive recommendations for the first time in 18 years. We hope that the UNDC will be able to build on that momentum, in particular to reach an early agreement on the issues to be addressed in the next cycle. However, that should not obscure the considerable difficulties affecting disarmament processes.



Significant financial problems affect the proper functioning of several United Nations-administered disarmament treaties. The consequences of those difficulties have worsened this year. Formal sessions have had to be cancelled, many savings measures have had to be implemented and the stability of the support units for those conventions has been seriously affected. Those financial problems are primarily due to the late payment of mandatory contributions, and we call on all the States concerned to pay their arrears as soon as possible.

The issue of managing cash flow also poses major challenges. The adoption in the short term of measures to improve the financial stability of those conventions is now necessary. Several measures are needed, in particular to discourage non-payment and to be able to rely on financial processes that generate the greatest stability and predictability possible. We expect that the upcoming meetings of the States parties of the affected conventions will fully address this issue and take the necessary measures.

The deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is also of particular concern, especially as the CD occupies a central place in the machinery established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The Conference has now been paralysed for more than 20 years, and there is a growing trend towards the establishment of alternative processes to the CD.

*The Chair took the Chair.*

A revitalization of the CD is more urgent than ever. That will not only require overcoming the deep-seated political impasse affecting the CD, but it will also necessitate addressing other issues. The CD suffers from anachronistic working methods — for example, those concerning the participation of civil society. Its limited membership also raises important questions in view of the global reach of the issues it addresses.

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research is also facing significant challenges, including those of a financial nature. At its seventieth session, the General Assembly adopted several measures to meet those challenges, including providing additional resources from the United Nations regular budget for the 2018-2019 biennium. The implementation of the measures to be agreed in the Fifth Committee later this year, which are based on the Secretary-General's

proposals, is essential to ensuring the sustainability of the Institute.

While substantive work on the disarmament machinery is needed, we would like to welcome the fact that the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament has concluded its work in a positive manner. We wish to note in particular that the agenda adopted underscores that the special session should be based on consensus. We are fully prepared to continue consultations on the next steps towards convening a special session.

In addition, I would like to extend special thanks to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her commitment on these issues. We find many of her remarks relevant, and we hope that the debate she initiated earlier in the work of the Committee on potential options for improving the functioning of the groups of governmental experts will be explored in greater depth.

**Mr. Hajnoczi** (Austria): Austria of course fully aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the observer of the European Union, but we would like to make some additional remarks.

Security and disarmament are intrinsically interlinked. Quantitative and qualitative improvements in armaments increase the risks and challenges to global security. It is precisely because of the current challenging security environment that disarmament needs urgent attention and a functioning and, above all, operational disarmament machinery — a machinery that is fit for purpose, effective and efficient.

The international community came to an agreement in 1978 on how to structure the disarmament machinery. Each and every of the three forums established was assigned a particular role and mandate. Unfortunately, some elements of the machinery have not only failed to live up to expectations, but also have not produced any results in decades.

We welcome improvements in the working methods of the First Committee and applaud the Bureau of last year's session for its efforts. We welcome the use of the new electronic sponsorship and speaker's list system, but insist that sponsoring must also remain possible in the Conference Room. We also encourage exploring further ways to include civil society more deeply in our

deliberations. The added value of strong inclusion has been shown time and again.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) managed to partially break its near 20-year deadlock by agreeing recommendations on voluntary confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons. While we welcome that breakthrough under the able leadership of Chair Lachezara Stoeva, we hope that the UNDC will now to be able to also make progress in the area of nuclear weapons, as well as finally take up a further topic and agree swiftly to recommendations thereon. The broken deadlock in the UNDC inspires hope that stalemates can indeed be overcome if we do not lose sight of our purpose.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD), as the permanent negotiating body of the United Nations disarmament machinery, is mandated to negotiate disarmament and arms control issues of great importance to international peace and security. Yet the CD has not fulfilled its mandate for 21 years. It remains stuck at the preliminary stage of not even agreeing on a mere programme of work. Discussions or exchanges of views cannot substitute the substantive work the CD was mandated to tackle and which is its *raison d'être*. We need to go below the surface and have an honest look at the underlying reasons for this state of affairs.

The Conference does not exist in a vacuum and urgently needs to adapt to today's realities rather than be stuck in time. Owing to the CD's working methods, too much time has already been lost and many pressing issues have had to be addressed outside the CD. Austria has been a consistent supporter of the CD, but it is up to all of its members to ensure the Conference's continued relevance.

Austria firmly encourages the CD to become a more inclusive forum. Opening ears and doors to all interested stakeholders would not only enhance its relevance and credibility but, more important, would bring in new approaches to progress, namely, achieving results.

The ongoing standstill in the Conference on Disarmament and the partial progress in the Disarmament Commission after 17 years show how urgently we need reform of the disarmament machinery. After the agreement reached during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, attempts to improve the machinery

have not led to agreement. Encouragingly, under the able leadership of Chair Fernando Luque Márquez, a compromise was reached on the holding of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, including a comprehensive review of the disarmament machinery.

We thank the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries for submitting a draft resolution on the further path ahead (A/C.1/72/L.33). We encourage swift progress and will actively engage in consultations on that path. All States must take this opportunity to bring the disarmament machinery into the twenty-first century and eliminate the procedural and structural roadblocks that have held up progress for far too long.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): The United States strongly supports the United Nations existing multilateral disarmament machinery. Starting in 1945, at the founding of the United Nations, the United States has welcomed engagement with nations from around the world on the important international security matters discussed in the First Committee of the General Assembly. We have also negotiated and deliberated in good faith in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-IV). We have actively participated in the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and have sent our young diplomats into the Disarmament Fellowship Programme for specialized training in this field.

The existing disarmament machinery, as established and endorsed by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978, is based on two elements that are essential for any hope of tangible progress on disarmament: a clear recognition of the prevailing international security environment and a culture of consensus-building and decision-making.

Sovereign nations, if they wish to remain sovereign for long, have always based their national security decisions on a realistic appraisal of present or future geopolitical threats to themselves and their allies. That is not a new idea. What is new is that, in recent years, some have decided that majority rule on multilateral disarmament issues should override the sovereign equality of other States. They wrongly argue that the culture of consensus, which has been the foundation of

all of our work in this field for the past 70 years, is passé, a relic of a bygone era.

For the sake of our own security, and indeed global order, we disagree with that approach. Certainly, the United Nations disarmament machinery, and the United Nations itself, is the product of very realistic and pragmatic men and women from around the world who endured the horrors of the Second World War and sought ways to prevent such a conflict from ever happening again. The concept of collective security on which the United Nations is founded requires that sovereign Governments avoid, to the maximum extent possible, circumstances where a State or a group of States seek to impose their will on others. Consensus-building is and has always been the coin of the realm of the United Nations. Certainly, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and First Committee allow for voting but, on matters affecting national and international security, such a practice should always be a last resort, not the first.

This year, the United States played its part in achieving modest successes involving two elements of the machinery. In April, the UNDC agreed by consensus to recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. The last time the Commission agreed to consensus recommendations on any topic was in 1999. In June, the Open-Ended Working Group on SSOD-IV agreed, also by consensus, to the objectives and agenda for an SSOD-IV — an effort that goes back many years. While the United States remains deeply sceptical of the value added of an SSOD-IV even now, we decided to support that consensus-based effort as a sign of our commitment to the United Nations consensus-based multilateral disarmament institutions.

Regarding the CD, the United States remains deeply concerned that this year one CD member State, during its tenure as President of the Conference, refused to convene any plenary meetings. That decision was taken without consulting other CD participating States and is not consistent with the CD's rules of procedure or the responsibilities of the Office of the President of the Conference. That unwarranted action deprived the international community of a forum to address security challenges, such as North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, and it is unacceptable.

Finally, with regard to the First Committee's thematic discussion, we are dismayed about how the

composition of the 11 October high-level panel was handled this year. We know that you, Mr. Chair, did your best to find a consensus way forward on this issue, as did my delegation and others, but our appeals for compromise were rejected by certain other delegations. That is regrettable, and we do not consider it to be a precedent for future procedural questions on which consensus and basic fairness should be our objective.

**Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan):** It is no secret that the United Nations disarmament triad — the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — has experienced some difficulties in recent years. As is known, the United Nations Disarmament Commission was created as a deliberative body by decision of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) with the function of making recommendations on various issues in the field of disarmament. The same decision established the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral forum for negotiations on disarmament. The body that completes the disarmament triad is the First Committee, which annually produces draft resolutions in the field of disarmament.

We note with deep regret that these bodies do not fulfil their mandates. Although the relationship between the triad was accurately harmonized, now we have lost that balance. The Disarmament Commission has not prepared its recommendations and the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to adopt a programme of work for decades. It is therefore heartening to note that in April 2017, after period of inaction, the Disarmament Commission displayed an example of collective approach by adopting recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. However, Working Group I did not experience the same success, which is evidence of the fracture on nuclear issues.

The First Committee, which has great opportunities for manoeuvring, is also far from being an example of unity. Despite the general statements of all delegations on their commitment to nuclear disarmament, none of the nuclear disarmament resolutions of the First Committee, except for the recognition of nuclear-weapon-free zones, has been adopted by consensus.

We would also like to touch upon the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Kazakhstan views the CD as the only multilateral forum for negotiations on

disarmament. Nearly all existing international treaties in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation were drafted in the CD. Despite having such strong capabilities, the Conference has been deadlocked. Issues pertaining to key agenda items of the CD are discussed at other venues. It depends only on the CD member States themselves as to which future they will choose for the Conference: the continuous fading of the negotiations spirit or the triumph of compromise and consensus for the beginning of substantive work. The current state of play in the Conference needs and deserves attention at the level of Heads of State and Government, and more of such political will should be forthcoming.

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters seamlessly complement the disarmament triad. UNIDIR's experience is especially important in preparing thematic documents that help us study disarmament issues in a comprehensive and objective way. Kazakhstan supports the activities of the Institute and makes voluntary contributions to it. We therefore encourage Member States to continue their financial and political contributions to the institutional budget and concrete projects of UNIDIR. The Advisory Board has also proven to be a valuable incubator of ideas and recommendations on how to address disarmament education and the challenges posed by emerging technologies.

Civil society organizations also have proven to be key contributors to the disarmament process. That was acknowledged by the fact that this year the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. We need to enhance the engagement of the expert community and civil society in discussing all issues of disarmament, non-proliferation and emerging technologies.

**Mr. Hansen** (Australia): Like others who have spoken before us, Australia would like to see the United Nations disarmament machinery function in the manner in which it was intended to function. While we recognize that multilateral outcomes require political will, such outcomes also require a disarmament architecture that facilitates rather than impedes our capacity to meet those objectives.

The First Committee is an important forum in setting the agenda on non-proliferation and

disarmament. In 2016, Australia was pleased to support resolutions on the establishment of a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, as well as a group of governmental experts on nuclear disarmament verification. Progress on those two initiatives is currently under way, and we applaud that. Those were two examples where the disarmament machinery served as an enabler, not a disabler.

A further example was the consensus outcome in this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), breaking a near two-decade-long impasse. That, together with the consensus outcome of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, gives us real hope that Member States can rally together and deliver tangible outcomes in our shared interests.

Less positive has been the ongoing struggle of the Conference on Disarmament to navigate a way forward on a programme of work, now approaching two decades of blockage, although this year we welcomed substantive discussions in the Working Group on the Way Ahead, chaired by Myanmar. We support building on that work to bring us closer to a programme of work next year.

Australia underlines the need for more dialogue and bridge-building at this critical juncture as we progress our agendas in Geneva, Vienna and New York. As one specific example, we would like to see the relationship between the Disarmament Commission in New York and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva strengthened. The Disarmament Commission is the deliberative body of the United Nations disarmament machinery, and it should be presenting recommendations to the Conference on Disarmament to take forward.

Clearly, that is not happening. Delivering consensus recommendations reached in the UNDC to the Conference on Disarmament could assist building agreement on a constructive programme of work for both bodies. In proceeding down that path, we would need to ensure the responsible use of the consensus principle in disarmament bodies to ensure our efforts are not stymied unnecessarily.

Australia will also be looking to work cross-regionally on ideas to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons review process, including working with our colleagues within the



Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative to move this agenda forward.

Australia is disappointed that a number of meetings under the disarmament conventions have been shortened or cancelled over the past year due to funding shortfalls. We encourage all States to pay their assessed contributions in a timely manner in order to avoid further impacts on our work and to support the development of new financial measures to prevent the reoccurrence of that problem. Sustainable funding is critical to keeping workable disarmament machinery.

Finally, Australia is particularly pleased to co-chair with Mexico the newly established Vienna-based Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear. The Group aims to increase the representation of women in the International Atomic Energy Agency's secretariat, particularly in technical and senior management, by supporting practical initiatives in recruitment and career advancement to help encourage an organizational culture that favours gender equality. Attaining gender parity is not only the right thing to do; it is also the intelligent thing to do to improve the functioning of the disarmament machinery. We hope that that initiative will resonate in other disarmament forums as well.

**Mrs. Ledesma Hernández** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament created the current disarmament machinery of the United Nations system, in which each of its components plays a fundamental role and performs specific functions that must be preserved.

Cuba attaches great importance to the promotion of multilateralism as a basic principle of disarmament negotiations and to the need for concrete progress, giving the highest priority to nuclear disarmament. In that regard, the adoption and opening for signature this year of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons — which codified in international law the illegitimacy and illegality of nuclear weapons, outlawing the existence, use and threat of use of such weapons and all forms of nuclear testing — is encouraging. As a signatory of the Treaty, we support its early entry into force.

Furthermore, we hope that the agreements reached on the objectives and agenda of a fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament and the recommendations on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons adopted in the Disarmament Commission will contribute to reversing

the stalemate that has confronted the disarmament machinery and will encourage progress on other issues.

The Conference on Disarmament has an indisputable and essential role to play as the sole multilateral forum for negotiating disarmament treaties. We regret that the paralysis at the Conference, which has now lasted two decades, is affecting its mandate and the smooth functioning of our disarmament machinery in such a negative way. While we are open to optimizing the working methods of the Conference, the modification of those working methods and rules of procedure is not the key to moving negotiations forward in that forum. The existing situation in the Conference on Disarmament is the result of the lack of political will on the part of some of its member States that seek to maintain the status quo. The Conference is prepared to negotiate several issues on its agenda simultaneously, if the will of all prevails.

Cuba reiterates its concern at the growing tendency to establish expert groups with limited membership to analyse highly sensitive issues on the disarmament and arms control agenda that are of interest to all Member States. The establishment of such groups should be the exception rather than the rule. Their functioning should be based on the principle of transparency and allow Member States to participate on an equal footing.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that, on the initiative of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which convened the high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament in 2013, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament will be held in 2018 to review progress in that regard. We hope that that conference will be successful and supported by all those committed to nuclear disarmament and peace.

**Mr. Naidu** (India): India aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

India remains committed to the ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and to multilateralism in pursuit of those ideals. This is truly the age of interdependence. Enduring solutions to our common problems of peace and security can be found only through the pursuit of genuine multilateralism.

The United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. In our view, the disarmament machinery established at the

first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament almost four decades ago — consisting of the triad of the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — remains both valid and relevant today.

For all the difficulties the Conference on Disarmament faces today, its significance for my country remains undiminished. It brings together its member States in sovereign equality and in full responsibility to craft legally binding instruments for the promotion of international peace and security. It is the right place for pursuing nuclear disarmament in all its essential elements, as it has the mandate, the membership and the rules for embarking on that path.

The fact that the CD, despite the well-intentioned efforts of many, has been blocked by the security exclusivism of some, or a confidence deficit in others, is very unfortunate, just as it is unworthy of its noble mandate. The CD has proven its usefulness in the past and can no doubt demonstrate its credibility again. India, for its part, remains committed to the founding principles and objectives of the CD. We support all efforts aimed at the CD reaching consensus on its programme of work so as to commence early substantive work and deliver on its negotiating mandate. While we share the disappointment that the CD has yet again been prevented from adopting a programme of work this year, we value the progress made in the Working Group on the Way Ahead, chaired by Ambassador Htin Lynn of Myanmar.

India attaches importance to the UNDC as a universal deliberative forum for building consensus on disarmament and international security issues. We welcome the adoption by consensus, after a hiatus of 17 years, of the recommendations of its Working Group II on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. We also welcome the successful convening in 2016 and 2017 of the three sessions of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-IV), which concluded its work by adopting, again by consensus, its recommendations on the objectives and agenda of SSOD-IV. We look forward to the convening of SSOD-IV, which we believe can be an invaluable opportunity to assess progress made in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

It is very important for the triad of the disarmament machinery, as well as the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, to function as a composite whole, so that ideas can flow and so that the progress made in one institution can be leveraged in the other, with a view to attaining our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We believe that UNIDIR needs to be fully enabled with resources to realize its potential. While India has made its voluntary contribution this year, we believe that the Institute deserves greater support from the regular budget of the United Nations to maintain its autonomy and independence and to fulfil its role of providing in-depth research on disarmament issues.

There is an impression among some that our failure to address substantive disarmament and international security issues is due to procedural flaws and inherent inefficiency in the disarmament machinery. We must remind ourselves that a bad worker often quarrels with his or her tools. In pursuit of our collective security in an increasingly interdependent world, we have no alternative other than to strengthen the multilateral ideal and the institutions it engenders.

**Mr. Mati (Italy):** Italy aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

We firmly believe that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial to effective and long-term results in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. The current security situation adds a new sense of urgency to our efforts to take forward our disarmament goals. In particular, we are aware that we should act to protect and strengthen the United Nations disarmament machinery and its three mutually reinforcing forums: the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

We are deeply satisfied with the adoption of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional disarmament by the Disarmament Commission earlier this year. With that substantive outcome, the UNDC was able to overcome its long-standing stalemate. We hope that that positive result can serve as a source of inspiration for our future efforts aimed at relaunching the crucial role of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral

disarmament negotiating forum. My country is strongly committed to the goal of allowing the CD to resume its substantive work after a deadlock of more than two decades, which we consider unacceptable. We call on all the members of the Conference to redouble their efforts to reach that objective.

The immediate commencement of negotiations within the CD on a treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices remains our key priority. We also support further efforts by the Conference on negative security assurances with a view to elaborating recommendations dealing with all their aspects, not excluding an internationally legally binding instrument. Both those initiatives would represent concrete steps towards the attainment of our shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They therefore stand high in our agenda.

However, Italy has always supported any constructive proposal aimed at putting the CD back on track. Throughout the years, we have consistently expressed our willingness to join consensus — or not to stand in the way of an emerging consensus — on any concrete and realistic attempt to find a way forward for the Conference. During the 2017 session, we greatly appreciated the rich and productive discussions we had in the framework of the Working Group on the Way Ahead, and we were ready to support the recommendations elaborated by the Chair. We are disappointed by the fact that those recommendations were not adopted, but we hope that they will represent a good basis for deliberations in the next CD session.

Before concluding, I would like to mention the current difficult situation of several Geneva-based disarmament conventions that has resulted from the fact that a number of States parties have not met their financial obligations. That situation is negatively affecting the proper functioning of those conventions. We remain constructively engaged in the ongoing discussions on ways to ensure the financial sustainability of all of those conventions.

**Mr. Carrillo Gómez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*):** I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Paraguay.

The Republic of Paraguay reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law,

international humanitarian law and human rights. They are the framework for strengthening and expanding the disarmament machinery in all its aspects, through inclusive, transparent and good-faith negotiations under the auspices of the General Assembly, which constitutes the highest democratic expression of the peoples whom it represents, on the basis of sovereign equality among States.

The delegation of Paraguay welcomes the recent adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the adoption by the United Nations Disarmament Commission of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional disarmament, and the identification of objectives and the agenda for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It is clear that that progress will contribute to the strengthening of the disarmament machinery.

The universalization of the commitments on disarmament, non-proliferation and international security, which constitute the existing disarmament machinery, is fundamental to its strengthening. To that end, the delegation of Paraguay urged the delegations of Member States to ratify or accede to, above all, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It also calls on all Member States to refrain from any act contrary to the objectives and provisions of those treaties and reiterates its repudiation of the recent nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which were in violation of international law.

The delegation of Paraguay favours the expansion of the disarmament machinery in all its aspects, and in particular the elaboration of a programme of work that progressively extends the declared nuclear-weapon-free zones and achieves the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East; the drafting of an international convention to provide non-nuclear-weapon States with assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, without exception or discrimination; the adoption of a complementary framework for the Arms Trade Treaty that addresses the production of conventional arms and the reduction of those already in existence; the equalization of munitions and explosives to small arms and light weapons in frameworks for

their regulation and implementation; the regulation of the production and commercialization of the different ballistic calibres; and the adoption in the multilateral sphere of rules regulating advances in information and telecommunications in the context of international security, which provide, inter alia, for the reduction of the technological gap between developed countries and developing countries.

The Paraguayan delegation strives to promote international cooperation for disarmament, non-proliferation and international security, favours greater participation by women in those areas and values the contributions of civil society in strengthening the disarmament machinery.

Lastly, the delegation of Paraguay stresses that reform of the disarmament machinery should take into account the need to eliminate poverty and achieve sustainable development in the world. Accordingly, it urges delegations to make every effort to transfer the resources allocated to modernizing their arsenals to initiatives aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Mrs. Yildirim Yanilmaz** (Turkey): In view of the security challenges facing the international community today, enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery must be our shared goal and priority.

The problems that hamper progress in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) are not created by its procedures or internal dynamics. The CD does not operate in a void, and we need to refrain from assessing its work in the abstract, separate from all other disarmament efforts. The 2017 session of the CD was another year that its members worked extensively to put the CD back on track. Unfortunately, those efforts did not bring about any concrete results.

The resumption of substantive work in the CD with the consent of all its members will contribute to the strengthening of international efforts for nuclear disarmament. Turkey is convinced that the CD possesses the mandate, rules of procedure and membership to discharge its duties. As we all know, the disarmament machinery has a clear division of tasks among various international forums. Naturally, different bodies have different working methods and memberships. Turkey's priority is to move the CD forward by having it resume its fundamental task: negotiating legally binding international treaties.

Another important pillar of the United Nations disarmament machinery — one that has just recently reminded us of its value — is the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). As a member of the Bureau of the UNDC this year, Turkey made substantive efforts to reach a consensus outcome in both of the Commission's working groups. We welcome the agreed recommendations on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. By achieving consensus in the UNDC on recommendations, we have broken a deadlock of almost two decades, which is progress that also reminds us that proceeding by consensus in disarmament is indeed possible.

Last but not least, I wish to reiterate Turkey's determination to continue to make contributions to the work of the First Committee, which it regards as an important pillar of the disarmament machinery.

**Mr. Hassan** (Egypt): Egypt fully associates itself with the statements made on this cluster earlier by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and by the representative of Yemen, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and wishes to make the following remarks.

Egypt accords great importance to the issues pertaining to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and considers inclusive multilateral diplomacy as the only way of pursuing the agreed objectives in that regard. We reiterate our full support for the United Nations disarmament machinery as established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). Egypt reaffirms its long-standing commitment to advocating for the objective of nuclear disarmament, including through the relevant contributions and initiatives of the League of Arab States, the African Union, the Non-Aligned Movement and the New Agenda Coalition. We also recognize the important role of non-governmental organizations and civil society in the field of nuclear disarmament.

While the Conference on Disarmament (CD) remains the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, the absence of the necessary political will continues to prevent the CD from adopting a balanced and comprehensive programme of work. Egypt has always contributed to any credible effort towards achieving that goal. We continue to welcome any collective action aimed at revitalizing the work of the CD, as long as such efforts are in line with the CD's rules of procedure and the agreed priorities.



Nuclear disarmament continues to be the top priority in the area of disarmament and international security. That was a clear outcome of SSOD-I and was a concern expressed in the very first resolution of the General Assembly, in 1946 (resolution 1 (I)). We call on all States Members of the United Nations to allow the CD to undertake its duties and responsibilities in that regard by launching serious negotiations on effective and non-discriminatory measures on nuclear disarmament leading to a universal prohibition of nuclear weapons and their total and comprehensive elimination, in implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Egypt also believes that there is a need for similar efforts to revitalize the United Nations Disarmament Commission, an integral part of the established disarmament machinery, especially since it has recently proved once again its potential for substantively contributing to that machinery. Furthermore, Egypt has always supported the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as an impartial and independent entity that continues to generate new ideas and promote practical actions on disarmament and international security. Egypt also looks forward to the continuing contributions of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Egypt's firm belief that the First Committee continues to be the most effective venue for bridging the gaps and creating new momentum and guidance for the disarmament machinery. Succeeding in that task requires a constructive spirit and a consensual approach by all Member States. We assure you, Mr. Chair, of our full cooperation as we strive to reach a satisfactory outcome during this session.

**Mr. Jadoon (Pakistan):** The United Nations has a recognized array of disarmament machinery for negotiating legally binding treaties dealing with arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. The General Assembly established it by consensus in 1978 at its first special session devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). The key principle set forth by SSOD-I in the context of that machinery is as follows:

“The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner so as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or

group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage.” (*resolution S-10/2, para. 29*)

The fulfilment of that cardinal objective requires that any legally binding measure be considered and agreed strictly on the basis of consensus, with the participation of all stakeholders, allowing all States to safeguard their vital national security interests. Working on that basis, the United Nations disarmament machinery has produced significant treaties, including those that have comprehensively prohibited two entire categories of weapons of mass destruction.

However, since 1996, the United Nations disarmament machinery has not been able to produce a legally binding instrument, which is squarely a consequence of the competing priorities of different Member States. Some States oppose the commencement of negotiations on new treaties simply because they clash with their strategic calculus aimed at perpetuating their military advantage and preferential positions. Other States reject certain instruments that, because of their inherent discriminatory nature, would negatively affect those States' security disproportionately. At the same time, there are some States that want progress at any cost, regardless of the impact that it would have on international and regional peace and security and regardless of whether it would lead to equal and undiminished, if not increased, security for all.

The interplay of those factors has resulted in deadlock in the disarmament machinery. Pakistan shares the disappointment and frustration felt by many over this state of affairs. However, we do not blame the disarmament machinery itself for the situation. Simply condemning the machinery or trying to find ways around it amounts only to addressing the symptoms without tackling the root causes. In our view, the present situation is a result of the prevailing strategic realities. It has nothing to do with procedures and methods of work. After all, the same disarmament machinery has produced landmark treaties in the past.

The lack of progress on nuclear disarmament — the *raison d'être* of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — is the principal reason behind the criticism of the disarmament machinery. There is no consensus on the start of negotiations on any issue on the CD's agenda. Among the four core issues, while the vast majority supports substantive work on the overripe issues of nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race

in outer space, certain countries are only prepared to advance a partial non-proliferation measure in the form of a fissile-material cut-off treaty that, without addressing existing stocks, will make no contribution to nuclear disarmament.

The challenges confronting the disarmament machinery are not exclusive to the CD. The First Committee and the Disarmament Commission face a similar situation, notwithstanding the significant breakthrough on the conventional-weapons-related agenda item at the Commission this year, which we welcome as a demonstration of progress when requisite political will exists.

The solution to the impasse of the disarmament machinery cannot be found by seeking action outside established forums, especially when pursued on a non-consensus basis and without the participation of all stakeholders. Nor can it be found by reorienting a security-centric discourse into a humanitarian or ethical issue. It is only in the CD that all militarily significant States participate on an equal footing and are able to protect their vital security interests under the consensus rule.

Instead of selective, piecemeal and partial solutions, Pakistan calls for evolving a new consensus. My delegation was highly pleased with the successful outcome of the Open-ended Working Group mandated to agree on the agenda and objectives of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV), under our Ecuadorean colleague's sterling leadership. A successful SSOD-IV would be an important step towards the revival of the global consensus on general and complete disarmament, while taking into account the security concerns of all States.

The real challenge is how to deal with the political dynamics and developments outside United Nations conference rooms. As long as the quest for attaining equal security is trumped by hegemonic designs at the regional and global levels, real headway will continue to elude us. Discriminatory revisionism of the global nuclear order, the exercise of double standards, and the carving out of waivers and exceptions driven by strategic and economic motivations will continue to stand in the way of progress. We have to return to consensus-based, cooperative and non-discriminatory approaches that lead to equal and undiminished security for all.

**Mr. Ait Abdeslam (Algeria):** Algeria fully associates itself with the statements delivered earlier by the representatives of Indonesia and Yemen on behalf of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries and the Group of Arab States, respectively. However, we would like to make the following comments.

Algeria reaffirms the importance and relevance of the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, which is composed of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament; the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), a universal deliberative body and subsidiary organ of the General Assembly; and the First Committee. My delegation emphasizes the significance of preserving and further strengthening the nature, role and purpose of each of those three components of the disarmament machinery. While those three components are confronting similar challenges to improving their efficiency, although to differing degrees, it has become obvious that the main obstacle lies in some States' lack of trust and political will to achieve progress and concrete results, particularly on nuclear disarmament.

Like many other States, Algeria is deeply concerned that the CD remains unable to reach consensus on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. That intolerable state of affairs, which has existed in the CD for some 20 years and which continues to prevail today, has had particularly harmful effects on non-nuclear-weapon States. Algeria believes that this impasse cannot be attributed to any failing of the CD and is not inherent in the Conference's mode of operation, or to its agenda, its methods of work or its rules of procedure, including the rule of consensus. Indeed, the consensus rule is a way of promoting common ground with the view to protecting the national security interests of all member States, and not just of those possessing nuclear weapons.

We should not ignore the fact that that machinery has made valuable contributions to multilateral disarmament. We therefore strongly believe that the CD cannot fulfil its negotiating mandate unless its member States demonstrate the necessary political will to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that facilitates moving forward on the issue of global nuclear disarmament. In that connection, my delegation would like to recall that decision CD/1864, which was adopted by consensus under Algeria's presidency in 2009 and which established a programme of work, remains the logical basis for engaging in the search for a

solution to the dilemma. We therefore call upon the CD to resume its substantive work without further delay.

As we all know, the CD is not the only component of the disarmament machinery that faces a lack of progress in disarmament today. In fact, we have also long been concerned that, for almost two decades, the United Nations Disarmament Commission has not been able to agree on substantive recommendations pertinent to its agenda. Despite that state of affairs, we witnessed this year at the UNDC that Member States can work together and reach a consensual outcome by demonstrating their political will even over divisive issues. We therefore welcome, for the first time since 1996, the adoption by consensus of the report of Working Group II, which contains substantive recommendations on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. In the light of that encouraging development, my delegation shares with other delegations the strong desire that similar success be achieved on the agenda item on nuclear disarmament as the UNDC begins its next cycle.

Like many delegations, we underscore the importance of convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV) in order to review thoroughly all disarmament issues. We welcome the successful convening in 2016 and 2017 of substantive sessions of the Open-ended Working Group, which successfully adopted by consensus the objectives and agenda for the SSOD-IV.

Finally, we view the First Committee as an essential component of the United Nations disarmament machinery, and remain strongly engaged and committed to working actively and constructively on the United Nations disarmament agenda as well as on the ways and means of revitalizing and strengthening the disarmament machinery.

**Mr. Kazi** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Bangladesh continues to voice its concern over the protracted impasse in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, over the past two decades. We take positive note of the substantive deliberations held in the CD this year and continue to urge all CD member States to demonstrate the necessary political will so that the CD can fulfil its negotiating mandate. We urge the High

Representative for Disarmament Affairs to keep that issue high on her agenda and to redouble her efforts to garner the needed political will, especially among nuclear-weapon States and those States with a strategic interest in nuclear weapons.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), the other key pillar of the multilateral disarmament machinery, has been allowed to demonstrate its potential after a long hiatus. We welcome the adoption by consensus of the recommendations of UNDC Working Group II, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons". We look forward to similar progress in the other Working Group, which is dealing with recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We reaffirm our support for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV) at an early date. We believe that SSOD-IV would give Member States a renewed opportunity to demonstrate our collective will and capacity to infuse dynamism into the overall disarmament machinery with a view to achieving meaningful and far-reaching outcomes. We thank the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group on SSOD-IV for efficiently steering our work towards the adoption of the objectives and agenda for the special session.

Bangladesh underscores the importance of further expanding disarmament education and research and mobilizing the use of social media tools to bring disarmament education and awareness to the wider public, including students at different levels. We recognize the useful learning resources developed by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and underscore the importance of facilitating enhanced interoperability of such resources with national education curriculums online, as appropriate. We wish to put on record our appreciation for the continued useful work being done by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and stress the need to ensure enhanced and predictable resources for the Institute to deliver on its mandates and thus help expand and manage its knowledge base for the general consumption of all Member States.

Bangladesh remains an ardent proponent of multilateralism in the pursuit of general and complete disarmament. We continue to emphasize the need

to reinvigorate the United Nations disarmament machinery to add further impetus to intergovernmental negotiations on outstanding disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

**Mr. Mahomed** (South Africa): South Africa welcomes the modest advances made during the past year in efforts to strengthen the disarmament machinery, in particular the agreement by consensus on the recommendations on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. However, the prolonged stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the lack of agreement on nuclear disarmament in the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) are still impacting negatively on the multilateral system. That results in States searching for alternative forums in which to deliberate pressing international security matters. A case in point is the successful Open-ended Working Group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations that resulted in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

South Africa welcomes the recommendations for practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons by the 2017 substantive session of the UNDC. However, that body needs to be revitalized to match the current international security needs, or it will run the risk of becoming redundant. South Africa commends all the Presidents of the 2017 CD session for their efforts to develop a programme of work. Nevertheless, we are disappointed that the CD could again not reach consensus so as to resume substantive work, raising questions about its effectiveness as the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. At the heart of the problem lies the continued resistance by a small number of States to implementing their disarmament obligations and to subjecting themselves to the international rule of law. As a country committed to the resumption of substantive work in the CD, we have always exercised the greatest level of flexibility.

We remain ready to consider any proposals that would genuinely assist in breaking the impasse in the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery. Negotiations are essential if we are to strengthen the international rule of law, which is key to promoting peace and security, where all countries are able to play by the same rules. South Africa will remain actively and constructively engaged in the multilateral disarmament forums with a view to seeking solutions.

**Mr. Pucarinho** (Portugal): My brief statement on behalf of Portugal is fully aligned with the one delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union on this cluster.

The United Nations integrated structure of bodies aimed at pursuing multilateral international efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control remains crucial and irreplaceable. The complex security challenges, actual and emerging, require effective and inclusive United Nations disarmament machinery. In that regard, the General Assembly's First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) should work in mutually reinforcing ways.

It is regrettable that in the past decades the United Nations disarmament machinery has been unable to deliver as it should and is failing to fulfil its mandate. The long-standing deadlock remains, and it can be overcome only with political will. Seventeen years have passed since the last enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. Since then, the door has remained closed to the admission of new member States such as mine, which throughout the years have consistently reaffirmed their interest in becoming full parties to the Conference. The CD's agenda encompasses global concerns that should be dealt with by a United Nations membership wider than the current 65 members, which we do not consider to be sufficiently representative.

Portugal once again urges all States to address the issue of the membership of the CD as a decisive step towards its revitalization, thereby contributing to overcoming the Conference's agonizing stalemate. Modalities for enlarging the CD should be promptly examined. Portugal strongly supports the appointment of a special coordinator for continuing consultations on the expansion of its membership.

With regard to the Disarmament Commission, the General Assembly's crucial deliberative body on disarmament, we welcome the adoption at this year's session of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. That represented an important breakthrough, ending a stalemate that had lasted for the past 18 years. Regrettably, the Working Group on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was once again unable to reach a consensus.

Portugal reiterates its call for the immediate start of negotiations on a verifiable and non-discriminatory



treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Portugal welcomes the ongoing work of the High-level Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty Expert Preparatory Group. In the meantime, a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons should be observed.

Taking concrete steps to preserve the leading role of the United Nations disarmament machinery, including by enlarging the Conference on Disarmament, would substantially contribute to addressing the challenges we face and provide fresh impetus to disarmament diplomacy. That should be the path we follow.

**Mr. Broilo** (Poland): Poland shares the views presented in the statement of the European Union. In addition, I would like to provide the First Committee with some remarks in our national capacity.

It would be very trivial to state only that disarmament is a very complex issue, but indeed, that must be a point of departure for pondering the status quo and perspectives on and ways and means of possible further disarmament. In our view, in order to reach the ultimate goal, we must have well-designed confidence- and security-building measures and arms control mechanisms. Therefore, we treat them as a part of disarmament processes.

In order to address this issue objectively, one needs to separate, then analyse and ultimately synthesize the conclusions on the three major pillars of the disarmament patchwork, which are the institutional arrangements, the main challenges of international security policy, and the political will and ability of individual Member States of the United Nations community to politically engage and contribute to disarmament arrangements. A cohesive approach to those three elements is an indispensable precondition for effective action in order to make at least minimal progress. We are very keen to address this problem in precisely this way, because Poland is truly concerned about the future of disarmament and non-proliferation processes, including nuclear disarmament.

We have all agreed that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. It was recognized as such by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It must be understood that our common efforts should be aimed at strengthening that instrument and enabling it to fulfil its task. The role

of the CD presidency and the coordinating mechanism of the six Presidents of each session are fundamental in that context. Together with the First Committee and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, it constitutes a solid foundation to initiate and conduct disarmament processes.

Of course, the functionality of international institutional forums is never disconnected from the realities. The evolution of the geopolitical situation is the first and foremost premise that should be taken into consideration. Several protracted regional security crises significantly influence, in a negative way, the readiness not only to progress on disarmament, but also to finalize or fully implement existing international agreements.

The widespread and increasing awareness of public opinion is an immanent element of modern societies, and it is the public's right to expect further steps towards disarmament, including towards nuclear disarmament. However, it is the responsibility of State Governments to break the long-lasting stalemate in a responsible, systematic and visionary manner through, *inter alia*, well-designed confidence- and security-building measures and arms control mechanisms. Any shortcut initiatives are not a good answer to our common expectations.

Let me repeat one sentence from our statement of 2016:

“From our perspective, one thing is fundamental. The disarmament machinery must remain a system that is logical, consistent, based on realistic premises and well settled in the international legal regime.” (*A/C.1/71/PV.21, p. 19*)

All attempts to build parallel legal tracks run counter to those assumptions. That is why a permanent debate on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation is so important. It can, and should, take place in each disarmament centre — New York, Vienna and Geneva — if the common goal is to work out the productive process. Creating artificial divisions in that context does not serve that goal.

At the current stage, political engagement is the most crucial factor. Of course, the degree of that engagement is not equal, just as the political role and significance of individual States are not equal. Let me refer to the view of the ancient Pericles on politics: “Just because you do not take an interest in politics

does not mean politics will not take an interest in you.” In real terms, we cannot wait for political and social developments, but we must rather try to be one step ahead of them.

We believe that the current United Nations reforms will bring new impetus efforts to build peace and security, including the disarmament component. Poland will spare no effort in supporting that process as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and as Chair of the second Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We encourage all our partners to positively engage in that process, as well as in other disarmament forums. What we need is qualitative progress. No way out is not an option.

**Mr. Weisz** (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. Allow me to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

France wishes to reaffirm its full support for the legitimate disarmament forums, known as the disarmament machinery. Its architecture, which was established at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978, remains relevant and must be preserved. It provides the multilateral framework by which States can make progress towards disarmament through dialogue and respect for each individual position. That inclusive approach, which respects the interests of each State, has proven its worth. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty are proof of that. The high degree of universality of those instruments also shows us that the demanding rule of consensus enables us to take into account the positions of as many States as possible. That is the necessary foundation for building confidence among all actors in the international community, including civil society, and for guaranteeing the effectiveness of the measures taken.

Contrariwise, initiatives that tend to polarize debate or stigmatize some countries, as we see today in the field of nuclear disarmament, do not enable us to work towards shared objectives. My country is deeply concerned by that dynamic, which is turning its back on the spirit of the disarmament machinery. Those approaches can only move us away from effective

multilateralism, which relies, among other things, on full respect for the rule of law. In that connection, we regret that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) was not able to meet for four weeks.

This year, the disarmament machinery has been the source of several encouraging developments. First, the Conference on Disarmament decided by consensus in February 2017 to set up the Working Group on the Way Ahead. That allowed for in-depth technical discussions to be held on the issues on the agenda of the CD. Those discussions helped to bring the parties' positions closer together, and in doing so they set the stage for launching negotiations, which remain at the heart of the CD's mandate.

France remains convinced that only by achieving a shared understanding of the challenges of the various elements of the disarmament process can we overcome political divisions and pave the way for progress. The CD therefore remains a unique forum in which all the necessary expertise can be mobilized in order to make progress together. In that regard, I would like to stress the importance of enabling the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, an integral part of the machinery, to fully contribute to bringing countries together, thanks to its expertise.

Secondly, in New York, the disarmament machinery has made encouraging progress over the past year. In late April for the first time since 1999, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) reached an agreement on recommendations for practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Furthermore, the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-IV) reached consensus in June on recommendations to the General Assembly as to the objectives and the agenda recommended for that event. Those various advances show that the disarmament machinery can regain its full effectiveness.

With a view to moving forward, my country will remain focused on strengthening the capacity of the CD to coherently address all disarmament issues, while taking full account of the current security challenges. In that regard, my country considers it essential that the CD remain seized of the follow-up of the serious proliferation crises that we are facing today, in particular with regard to North Korea.

I would also like to recall that France continues to consider the fissile material cut-off treaty to be the topic that is most ripe for negotiations in the CD, in accordance with document CD/1299 and the mandate it contains. My country also remains open to discussing other issues that could be included in a balanced programme of work for the CD that would build consensus.

The financial difficulties of several existing conventions are worrisome. We must act so that, in future, the meetings of the CD can be held under satisfactory conditions, with respect for multilingualism. We also need to improve the employment prospects for dedicated staff who provide outstanding expertise and support. France associates itself with the efforts made by the High Representative and the officials of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to identify sustainable solutions to those problems.

At the same time, we remain open to considering any realistic and mutually acceptable proposal to improve the functioning of the machinery. In that regard, we will ensure that any development, including within the framework of SSOD-IV, but also within the framework of the UNDC or the CD, fully respects the rule of consensus.

It is everyone's responsibility to relaunch the disarmament machinery. France remains fully committed to playing its part.

**Mrs. Claringbould** (Netherlands): The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to make additional remarks in its national capacity.

After general elections earlier this year in the Netherlands, our new Government is ready to start its work this week on the basis of a multiparty coalition agreement. In its foreign affairs chapter, the agreement states that the world has never been so prosperous and developed as it is today. However, further progress is at stake. International cooperation is under pressure. With that in mind, the Netherlands will continue its staunch support for the rules-based global order, with a focus on proven partnerships, including with the United Nations. In today's geopolitical and security environment, sound global governance, and therefore sound disarmament machinery, are key.

The First Committee serves as an important annual forum to provide guidance to our work on disarmament

and international security. The presence of all States Members of the United Nations and other international and regional organizations and the active participation of civil society are required for its legitimacy. Apart from providing a platform for Member States to voice their national positions, it is important that dialogue be facilitated in order to create space to listen to each other's arguments, to bring positions closer and to build bridges effectively. That is a first step in revitalizing the disarmament machinery.

The Conference on Disarmament remains the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament, as the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) in 1978 intended for the predecessor of the Conference. In our attempts to revitalize the disarmament machinery, the Netherlands believes that we do not need to change that aspect. However, as new technologies — or the so-called frontier issues — impact on peace and security, we need to adapt the machinery so it is fit to deal with those new potential threats. That means flexibility with regard to the scope of, first, the outcome of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and, secondly, the issues that are addressed.

SSOD-I does not mention legally binding treaties as the ultimate outcome. It refers to disarmament measures. In view of technological developments that have a dual-use nature, such as those in cyberspace and outer space, and the impact of artificial intelligence on weapon systems, we should be flexible, in the broadest sense of the word, when considering measures such as developing norms, principles, guidelines or codes of conduct to govern multilateral disarmament and security issues. We need to further broaden the involvement of different stakeholders so as to adjust to today's world. That means universalization and involving civil society. The Netherlands therefore welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Michael Møller, to convene the next Civil Society Forum in 2018. In the context of the revitalization of the disarmament machinery, the Netherlands is keen to see such issues addressed more fundamentally at the fourth special of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Netherlands does not share the view of those who believe that, because of the impasse in the Conference of Disarmament, work in that forum should be ceased. The Netherlands saw merit in the substantive discussions that took place in the Working Group

on the Way Ahead, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Lynn of Myanmar. The Netherlands would also like to thank the facilitators for their efforts. We were approaching agreement on the recommendations for a programme of work. In particular, we welcome the flexibility shown by some States with regard to the commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The Netherlands continues to attach great importance to such a treaty as an important step toward disarmament, the negotiation of which can, and should, commence without delay. The work of the High-level Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty Expert Preparatory Group, which the Netherlands proudly co-sponsors with Canada and Germany, will help to further prepare the ground for negotiations.

The Netherlands and many other States have been flexible on other core agenda items of the Conference of Disarmament. We call on all States to show the utmost flexibility in moving that forum towards negotiations. The question on the table is what they can offer, not what they want, as Ambassador Lynn rightly put it. The Netherlands is encouraged to see the Disarmament Commission agree this year on recommendations in the field of conventional disarmament. We are keen to see such a positive development extended to the other agenda items of that body.

Our full statement, which includes paragraphs on the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and on financial issues regarding the Geneva-based conventions, is available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea is strongly committed to multilateral disarmament efforts through the current disarmament machinery that would create the conditions for a safer and more secure world. Yet it is true that many years of stalemate in the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament have influenced our expectations and approaches. In that regard, it is worth noting that we saw some positive signs this year amid the long-standing stalemate.

As we all know, in April, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, the first adoption since 1999. That welcome, valuable achievement was made possible through the joint efforts of all Member States, which shows that agreement on long-protracted issues

is possible. That can-do spirit is what matters and is important.

From next year, the Republic of Korea looks forward to discussing new agenda items, such as transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, at the Disarmament Commission with renewed impetus. We also hope to see the positive momentum of the Disarmament Commission continued into other multilateral disarmament forums and at the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the only agreed single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. During the 2017 session, the Conference agreed to establish a working group on the way ahead to

“take stock of the progress [made thus far], identify issues for substantive work ... identify common ground for a programme of work with a negotiating mandate, and consider steps for the way ahead”.

In fact, the broad mandate of the working group fully encompassed, and therefore showed, that we are all well aware of the groundwork that needs to be done to restart negotiations.

Yet despite extensive efforts, in particular by the Chair and the facilitators, we do not have agreed recommendations from the working group. That leads us to feel that an artificial dichotomy separating pre-negotiation work from actual negotiations does not contribute to the effective and efficient work of the Conference on Disarmament. It will be up to the members of the Conference, including us, to learn from past failings and to build on its achievements.

While the long stalemate calls for redoubling our best efforts for cooperation and for mustering collective political will, it is regrettable that, for the first time in the history of the Conference on Disarmament, and probably the United Nations, Member States were denied an opportunity to put forward their views and to discuss a programme of work, which must be drawn up and presented specifically by the President. A Conference session shortened by four weeks is a serious issue that will not be repeated.

My delegation sincerely hopes that all States members of the Conference on Disarmament can immediately start to inject renewed impetus into its work. That is the only way that the Conference can meet



the expectations of the international community, fulfil its long-established mandate and prove once again its relevance to the disarmament machinery.

**The Chair:** We have heard from the last speaker on the cluster “Disarmament machinery” for this meeting. We will hear the remaining speakers tomorrow before taking action on the draft proposals before the Committee.

I shall now call on speakers who have requested the floor in the exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I would like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention to five minutes.

**Mr. Ri In Il** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): My delegation totally rejects the groundless remarks just made by the representative of the United States with regard to the nuclear tests and launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which seek to mislead the world.

The very reason that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has to possess a nuclear weapon is because of the United States. We had to strengthen and develop our nuclear force to the current level in order to deal with the United States. That country is the first to produce nuclear weapons and the only one to actually use them, massacring thousands of innocent civilians. The root cause of the nuclear issue of the world and of the Korean peninsula therefore has its origin in the nuclear threats of the United States. To all intents and purposes, our national nuclear force seeks to put an end to the nuclear threats of the United States and to prevent its military invasion. Our ultimate goal is to establish a balance of power with the United States.

If the United States is so afraid of our nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles, the world’s greatest nuclear Power should dismantle all nuclear weapons and join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear State. All issues connected with the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula and in the world would be easily and properly resolved.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I take the floor once again to exercise my right of reply to respond to the ridiculous comments made once again by the representative of the Pyongyang regime. We have heard such comments over the past four weeks.

Nothing changes. I have to sit here and respond to the ludicrous charges.

The United States does not pose a threat to North Korea. North Korea knows that. Its provocative actions, threatening behaviour, missile launches and missile tests are a concern to the world. It will continue to try to paint this as a conflict between the United States and North Korea. I remind the representative that it is not. It is a conflict between the international community and North Korea. It needs to comply with its obligations and stop such provocative threats and actions.

As I have said many times, if it ever wants to return to the good graces of the international community, it knows what it needs to do. However, it must stop such provocative threats and actions. It only brings further isolation to the regime and its people. I therefore call on the representative to end the constant diatribe against the United States and to face up to the reality that it and its regime are a threat to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and beyond.

**Mr. Ri In Il** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): I have just heard such groundless remarks from the Washington regime. I would like to make it clear that the real reason that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea possesses a nuclear weapon is because of the United States. We therefore have to strengthen and develop our nuclear force to the current level to deal with the United States.

The United States is trying to turn the entire issue of the United States and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea into an international matter. It is trying to mislead the world. As I said before, if the United States were to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear State, all matters and issues would be resolved clearly and properly.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I will be very brief.

First of all, we will not recognize North Korea as a nuclear-weapon State. I want to be very clear about that. Secondly, I remind the representative of the regime that the United States will defend the interests of its people and its allies. That commitment is iron-clad and should in no way be questioned.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea): I will be very brief. I did not want to interrupt today’s proceedings. We are talking about the disarmament machinery — the Disarmament Commission here

in New York, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and so on. With regard to the Disarmament Commission, for the record, I would like to say that at least one third of the remarks from the floor were about North Korea's provocation.

I would like to conclude by saying that the sky is blue. It does not change its colour even though North Korea has claimed a million times that it is not blue. I urge anyone who makes such comments to stop.

**The Chair:** As I noted earlier, the award ceremony for the 2017 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates is scheduled to begin in a few minutes in this conference room. As is customary, the High

Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, will address the graduating fellows. For that purpose, and in accordance with established practice, I shall suspend the meeting at this point. I kindly ask all delegations to remain in their seats for the ceremony in order to congratulate and encourage our junior colleagues.

*The meeting was suspended at 5.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.45 p.m.*

**The Chair:** We have exhausted the time available for this meeting.

*The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.*