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First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Rattray (Jamaica)

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

Agenda items 87 to 104 (continued)

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

The Chair: We will begin by listening to the remaining speakers on the list for the cluster “Other weapons of mass destruction”, followed by the list for the cluster “Regional disarmament and security”.

I should say, at the outset, that if we keep to the allotted time limits, by our calculations, by the end of the second meeting today, that is, by 6 p.m., we should have exhausted the list of speakers under cluster 2. We have 19 speakers for cluster 2. We should have by then moved to cluster 6, “Regional disarmament and security”, and finished the 27 speakers for that cluster. Then we would have transitioned into cluster 3, “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”. We have 23 speakers for that cluster and, by my calculations, if everything goes according to plan, we would have heard 21 of the 23 speakers. Therefore, we would have only two speakers remaining under cluster 3.

In that regard, let us make a concerted effort to get through as much as we can as we move through the clusters. I therefore reiterate my strong appeal to all delegations to kindly observe the time limits governing this segment of our work — five minutes for speaking

in a national capacity and seven minutes for statements on behalf of several delegations.

Mr. Biontino (Germany): Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.16). Allow me, however, to make some remarks in my national capacity.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is the cornerstone of our efforts to achieve a world free of chemical weapons. Therefore, we cannot remain silent when chemical weapons are being used to harm and kill human beings. Silence would serve to question our unequivocal commitment to the credibility of the Convention. This holds true wherever and by whomever chemical weapons are used. Within the United Nations, as a collective body, we have to make clear again and again that we strongly condemn any use of chemicals as weapons, be it by non-State actors, such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or by States.

Having said that, I feel compelled to state clearly that the text of draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.63, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”, falls short of what Germany believes should have been addressed by such a draft resolution. However, as a sign of our staunch support for the Chemical Weapons Convention and the excellent work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), we will not stand in the way of consensus on this text.

Germany remains especially concerned about the findings of the report of the fact-finding mission of the

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OPCW that confirms the systematic and repeated use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Syria — a clear breach of the Convention and of international law. In particular, we note that the report of the fact-finding mission mentions the use of helicopters. Only the Syrian Government possesses the capability to use helicopters. Moreover, Germany is deeply concerned about ongoing media reports that point to the continued use of chemical weapons. Other causes for concern are the questions raised by the gaps and inconsistencies in Syria's declaration on its chemical weapons programme under the Chemical Weapons Convention. As recently confirmed by the OPCW, the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic was not accurate. These issues give rise to the concern that Syria may not have fully abandoned its chemical weapons programme.

Both issues pose a fundamental challenge to the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is therefore necessary that the international community pay serious attention to all open questions and that the Syrian Arab Republic provide the international community with credible evidence to support its claim that it has fully abandoned its chemical weapons programme.

Please allow me to also say some words on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC). The threat emanating from the misuse of biological materials as weapons continues to pose substantial challenges to international peace and security. Therefore, it is crucial that all States not yet parties to the Convention join the BWC.

The confidence-building measures that have been politically agreed upon in order to increase transparency among States parties continue to be of great importance. Germany has continuously demonstrated its commitment to further adapting and developing this very important tool.

The BWC is first and foremost a disarmament and non-proliferation treaty that is clearly embedded in the international security architecture. Nevertheless, facilitating the exchange of biological sciences and technology, including equipment and material for peaceful purposes, is a legitimate goal under the BWC. Germany values the importance of article 10 of the Convention and undertakes a wide range of activities in that regard.

We are convinced that every disarmament and non-proliferation regime is in need of effective tools that allow States parties to demonstrate compliance with the Convention. In general, Germany supports the idea of working towards identifying fresh and concrete options to strengthen the BWC. Nevertheless, all efforts in that regard must be inclusive, which would allow all State parties to participate in such a process. We should work on interim solutions as, at the moment, consensus on how to strengthen the BWC has not been achieved.

Germany supports draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.6.

Mr. Ammar (Pakistan): I will deliver an abridged version of my statement, the complete text of which will be distributed and uploaded to the First Committee web portal, QuickFirst.

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) continue to serve as key constituents of the international security architecture. Together, the Conventions have also strongly reinforced their roles as the international norm and a bulwark against the use of such weapons. Accordingly, these instruments have made an important contribution to the goal of general and complete disarmament.

Pakistan shares concerns that, beyond the threat of the possible production, acquisition and use of chemical and biological weapons by States, the international community also faces the same danger from non-State actors. Realizing the Convention's full potential for international peace and security requires that possessor States eliminate their remaining stockpiles as soon as possible. The deplorable use of chemical weapons in Syria has highlighted such concerns.

While advances in biology offer a range of new tools for addressing diseases, they have also heightened anxieties about the possibility of non-State actors' misuse of biological toxins, agents and related materials. Pakistan believes that the only credible and sustainable method of strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention is through multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a non-discriminatory, legally binding agreement, including agreement on verification provisions, that deals with all the articles of the Convention in a balanced and comprehensive

manner. The full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Conventions, including export-control measures, national physical protection and international assistance, as well as capacity-building, are key tools for preventing non-State actors from acquiring, producing or using such weapons.

Pakistan fully supported the Security Council's endorsement of the decision by the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on chemical disarmament in Syria. The adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) has helped to map out the way forward, including on the political track. Syria's decision to become a party to the CWC and its cooperation with the OPCW are also positive developments. With the accession of Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic, the OPCW membership has grown to 190 States parties. However, the goals of the Convention can be fully realized only when it attains universality. We therefore call once again on States that are not party to the Convention to accede to it without further delay or preconditions.

The provisions of the Convention relating to international cooperation and assistance are essential to keeping the large number of States that have no chemical industry engaged in the OPCW's work. Cooperation in the area of assistance and protection provides a large number of developing countries with a platform for improving their capacities for combating the use or threat of use of chemical weapons.

Pakistan continues to believe that sensitive technologies and materials must be adequately controlled to ensure that they are used for peaceful purposes alone. However, that objective cannot justify practices and cartels that hinder legitimate trade in chemicals, equipment and technology among States parties for demonstrably peaceful purposes. It is vital that we restore balance and evenhandedness in the Convention's implementation.

Pakistan ratified the BWC in 1974 as a non-possessor State, and remains fully committed to implementing all its provisions. We have instituted comprehensive legislative, regulatory and administrative measures regulating the life sciences in Pakistan and strengthening our export-control systems on biological agents and toxins, bringing them to a level on a par with the best international standards. We attach special importance to the decision of the seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention

to include cooperation and assistance as a standing agenda item, with a particular focus on strengthening the implementation of article X. We are hopeful that together we can find practical ways to fully implement it. Pakistan views confidence-building measures as a tool for increasing transparency and building trust and confidence among States parties in implementing the Convention. They cannot, however, be used as a tool for assessing compliance by States parties, for which the only method should be a legally binding mechanism with verification provisions.

Pakistan believes in the need to improve the capacity of developing States that are party to the Convention with a view to strengthening their existing institutions, through cooperation and assistance from developed States and the relevant international and regional organizations in terms of materials, equipment, financial resources, technology and human-resource development. This can better equip them for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious diseases, biological-weapons attacks or other challenges that may arise in the context of the BWC, including those involving their preparedness, response, crisis-management and mitigation capabilities. In that regard, Pakistan would like to recall paragraph 40, concerning article VII of the Convention, of the seventh Review Conference's Final Declaration, which clearly outlines the responsibility of all States parties to the Convention for the provision of timely and effective assistance, irrespective of whether a disease outbreak occurred naturally or was caused deliberately, and that such timely and effective assistance should also cover diseases and toxins that may harm humans, animals, plants or the environment.

Mr. Špokauskas (Lithuania): Lithuania aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.16). I would now like to elaborate on some matters of particular importance to Lithuania.

Chemical weapons have been outlawed for almost a century, and their use is a serious violation of international law, a war crime and a crime against humanity. Lithuania condemns in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons in Syria and commends the efforts of the international community to ensure that such attacks can never happen again. In that context, the staff of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Mission for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme

of the Syrian Arab Republic, and of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), deserve our special gratitude for their devoted, tireless and often very dangerous work. The efforts to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons programme, including removing its declared chemical-weapons stockpile and completely destroying category 1 chemical materials, are a considerable step forward. It is important to acknowledge that the operation, which has now entered its second year, came at a substantial cost to donor countries, and their commitment is truly appreciated. At the same time, substantial work remains to be done. We call on the Syrian Arab Republic to fully comply with Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and the relevant OPCW Executive Council decisions, and to cooperate with the OPCW and the United Nations, particularly in ensuring prompt destruction of the remaining chemical-weapons production facilities and rectifying omissions and discrepancies in the initial chemical-weapons declaration.

Furthermore, Lithuania is deeply concerned about Syria's systematic and repeated use of the toxic chemical chlorine as a weapon, as confirmed by the second report of the OPCW's fact-finding mission. Any use of toxic chemicals as a weapon is a clear violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and of resolution 2118 (2013), and those responsible must be held accountable. The report reproduces consistent accounts by witnesses that chemicals were dropped from helicopters. They constitute significant proof of responsibility for the attacks, since only the Syrian Government possesses air assets. New reports of chlorine attacks have continued to appear, some as recently as August, and the fact-finding mission should continue to look into the allegations.

Lithuania continues to emphasize the need to address challenges resulting from sea-dumped chemical munitions. On 20 December 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/208, on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. The consensus text was negotiated in the Second Committee and is a follow-up and a significant addition to the first resolution adopted on the subject in 2010 (resolution 65/149). It encourages outreach efforts to assess and increase awareness of the issue, promotes the voluntary sharing of information and invites Member States to consider providing assistance and sharing expertise. The resolution also

invites the Secretary-General to continue to seek views on issues related to the environmental effects of chemical weapons dumped at sea, particularly with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database of voluntarily shared information. We believe that such a framework would substantially reinforce current regional efforts, and we look forward to further discussions in that regard.

The potential misuse of the life sciences and the risk posed by the potential development of biological weapons are a major challenge to the international community. Lithuania is committed to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) as a key component of the international non-proliferation and disarmament framework. We actively support the universalization and national implementation of the Convention and countries' full compliance with it. Lithuania remains committed to working to develop measures to effectively verify such compliance. A working paper on BWC compliance submitted by a number of countries, including Lithuania, outlines the key questions on what constitutes compliance with the Convention and how States parties can better demonstrate it. Lithuania was also one of the first countries to join the BWC compliance assessment programme and invites other States parties to join.

Mr. Syrymbet (Kazakhstan): With regard to this important cluster, I would like to say that Kazakhstan, as a responsible party to the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, is of the view that Member States need to honour their commitments for the full and effective implementation of these legally binding documents. Recognizing the growing global threats posed by the spread of these particularly dangerous weapons, we attach great importance to international cooperation as the only way to combat them.

With regard to biological weapons, Kazakhstan plans to build a central reference laboratory on its territory, which, in future, will serve as a major centre for the development of methodologies and tools to respond to and prevent the spread of highly dangerous human and animal diseases. We are exploring new areas of international collaboration with Member States and scientific institutes to set up biological weapons proliferation prevention projects through research programmes, and are securing dangerous pathogens and strains by strengthening biosafety and biosecurity at facilities. Measures are also being taken to consolidate

deadly carriers in secure central repositories, and to eliminate equipment and infrastructure used to making biological weapons prior to independence. Our aim is to strengthen an infectious-disease surveillance system to improve Kazakhstan's ability to detect, diagnose and respond to natural and bioterrorism infectious-disease outbreaks. In addition, efforts are under way to develop and test new molecular diagnostics and therapies to cure diseases endemic to Central Asia.

Kazakhstan signed the Chemical Weapons Convention on 14 January 1993 and ratified it on 24 June 1999. Even though we possess no chemical weapons, much work has been done in the field of the non-proliferation of chemical weapons and chemical safety. We are collaborating with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to implement targeted activities and projects, including by enacting appropriate legislation and building national capacity to protect against chemical weapons, and to ensure that they are secure and registered. We would like to express our gratitude for the ongoing and invaluable technical assistance received from OPCW.

We note with satisfaction the completion of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, and call on all countries to comply with their obligations under the Convention, including the destruction of all existing chemical weapons stockpiles by the agreed time.

Kazakhstan recently adopted a long-term socioeconomic development plan — Strategy 2050 — which provides a concrete path to peace through disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The Strategy supports all advanced international initiatives and contributes to global security.

In conclusion, Kazakhstan has demonstrated an extraordinary degree of openness and transparency, and, along with others, has been a leader in setting a positive example for other countries.

Mr. Wensley (South Africa): Recent events in the Syrian Arab Republic have once again reminded us of the importance of the international instruments that govern weapons of mass destruction, and the devastating humanitarian consequences associated with the use of such weapons. No cause could ever justify the use of weapons of mass destruction by any actor under any circumstances. To my delegation, it is

clear that the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction should remain one of our key priorities. That includes achieving the universality and full and non-discriminatory implementation of all the provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), as well as transparent, irreversible and verifiable progress towards nuclear disarmament.

In the area of chemical weapons, we welcome the significant progress made towards the elimination of the chemical weapons programme in the Syrian Arab Republic, consistent with its obligations under the CWC and the relevant decisions of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations Security Council. In that regard, we appreciate the contributions made by States parties that enabled the total removal of all chemical materials and equipment by the Syrian Arab Republic from its territory before the 30 June 2014 deadline. We look forward to the early completion of the destruction of the chemical-weapons production facilities. We encourage all States in a position to do so to assist Syria in that endeavour.

South Africa was pleased by the successful outcome of the third CWC Review Conference. We call on the OPCW and States parties to work together with a view to implementing the recommendations arising from the Conference. The challenge of achieving universal membership to the Convention remains. We call on States parties to redouble their efforts to encourage States not party to the Convention to join without further delay. In that context, South Africa extends its congratulations to Somalia on joining the Convention.

South Africa also calls for the full and non-discriminatory implementation of all articles of the Convention in order to ensure that it remains relevant to all of its States parties. We continue to encourage international cooperation and assistance. In that regard, we call on the organization to assist the States parties that have never possessed chemical weapons and do not have declarable chemical activities to develop their chemical capacity and industry.

South Africa remains committed to strengthening the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention to ensure that we achieve our common goal of preventing the threat posed by biological weapons. My delegation remains concerned about the threat posed by naturally occurring organisms, as well as by those that could be

deliberately manufactured and manipulated for use as weapons of mass destruction. It is critical to achieve our common goal of eliminating the threat posed by biological weapons.

The intersessional process agreed to during the seventh BWC Review Conference provides an opportunity for States parties to strengthen the implementation of the Convention in some important areas. It remains our hope that States parties will fully utilize the intersessional process and measures agreed upon during the Review Conference to advance the aims of the Convention.

In conclusion, the universalization of the BWC and the CWC is crucial to the effective eradication of all biological and chemical weapons. We therefore call upon those States not yet party to those Conventions to join without further delay.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): Let me begin by expressing Nigeria's continued commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which obliges Member States to refrain from making weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems accessible to non-State actors. The visit to Nigeria in 2010 by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) affirmed that Nigeria had been in general compliance with that important resolution.

At the third Nuclear Security Summit, held in The Hague early this year, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan assured the international community that the country would continue to accord high priority to all global efforts aimed at ending the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. To that end, since the most recent Nuclear Security Summit, held in Seoul in 2012, Nigeria has strengthened its legal framework for fighting terrorism through the adoption, in 2013, of an amendment to the terrorism prevention act, thus ensuring the implementation of more robust counter-terrorism measures in the country.

We recognize the need for the Security Council and those States in a position to do so to enhance the capacity of many developing countries, especially those in Africa, to enable them to establish appropriate domestic controls to prevent any act of illicit trafficking in weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) or related materials on their territories, in line with the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004).

With specific respect to chemical weapons, Nigeria remains committed to the complete elimination of chemical weapons under strict and effective international control. We are also pleased to note that, in the just 17 years since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), States parties have made substantial progress towards achieving the ultimate goal of a world free of chemical weapons. We note in particular that the Convention currently includes approximately 190 States parties, which represents some 98 per cent of the global population. It is also noteworthy that 86 per cent of the world's 72,524 metric tons of declared chemical-agent stockpiles have been destroyed. In addition, 5,545 inspections have been carried out by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at 265 chemical-related sites and at 2,024 industrial sites on the territory of 86 States parties since the April 1997 entry into force of the Convention. In short, the OPCW conducts an average of about 241 inspections per year.

The CWC remains the only legally binding international treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under international verification. As such, it serves as a model in the field of disarmament and the non-proliferation of WMDs. I need not mention the fact that the Convention also has a provision for challenge inspections to guard against the possibility of any of its members covertly engaging in banned activities.

Our celebration of the successes of the CWC was overshadowed in the recent past by a cloud of gloom on account of the use of chemical weapons against the letter and spirit of the 1925 Geneva Protocol as well as the 1997 CWC. Nigeria remains strongly opposed to the use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone under any circumstance. There cannot be any justification for the use of such weapons.

Similarly, the remarkable success of the CWC in attaining near-universality still leaves some States vulnerable to chemical attack, since the complete elimination of the threat of chemical weapons cannot be achieved until the six States that still remain outside the Convention become parties. We therefore urge those States to accede to the Convention as soon as possible and without preconditions.

Along the same lines, we note that the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012 for the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles was not met by some possessor

States. We note with satisfaction, however, that the States concerned have made commitments to ensure the total destruction of their remaining stockpiles in the shortest possible time. We therefore urge those States to continue to honour their commitments and to continue to report to the Executive Council of the OPCW and the annual Conference of States Parties to the CWC on the progress made in the destruction programmes.

Nigeria remains faithful to its obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and will continue to do so. Nigeria hosted a regional workshop for West and Central African States on national implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Abuja from 25 to 27 October 2010. We take this opportunity to call for the strengthening of the BWC through the adoption of a robust verification mechanism. We advocate for the universality of the BWC and urge those States that still remain outside the Convention to join it promptly.

Mr. Siah (Singapore): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, and the Bureau on your elections. My delegation looks forward to working with you and all other representatives.

Singapore supports disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Efforts towards nuclear disarmament, global and regional non-proliferation initiatives, and confidence-building measures complement one another, and should, as far as possible, be pursued simultaneously.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC), and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC), Singapore was the first country in South-East Asia to put in place a stringent export-control regime. It regulates the flow of strategic goods and safeguards against the illicit movement of goods and technology to do with the development, production and use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, missiles capable of delivering such weapons, and conventional arms and military equipment.

We therefore welcome the completion of the mandate and operations of the Organization for the Prohibition

of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and United Nations Joint Mission on the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons on 30 September 2014, and acknowledge the efforts made by all parties involved.

We see a greater urgency to address the threat of non-State actors acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction, given the brutal aggression and ambition of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, in the Middle East. Singapore has consistently sponsored General Assembly draft resolutions on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, and will continue to do so.

As a small, highly globalized State, Singapore is aware that the international security challenges that we face today cannot be resolved through unilateral action. Singapore is therefore active in the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ARF), which was established in 1994 as a platform for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to intensify its external dialogues on political and security matters, build cooperative ties with States in the Asia-Pacific region, and foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues. The ARF is composed of 27 member States today. It provides a platform for confidence-building measures and multilateral cooperation on non-proliferation and disarmament issues, through capacity-building programmes and open discussions to coordinate efforts and build common understanding. The ARF hopes to institutionalize the discussion on non-proliferation and disarmament issues around the three central pillars of the global non-proliferation regime: preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, namely, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear; promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology; and advancing global disarmament efforts.

As a strategically located global transshipment hub, Singapore recognizes that we have an important role to play in preventing the proliferation of WMDs, their delivery systems and related materials. Our strategic goods-control act regulates the flow of such goods and safeguards against the illicit movement of goods and technology that relate to the development, production and use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. It is expanded and updated annually to ensure that it remains robust and consistent with international best practices. Singapore actively participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative, which encourages international cooperation in the interdiction of WMD-

related material shipments, in accordance with the relevant international law and national legislation.

Singapore welcomes the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), which aims to prevent and suppress the recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping of foreign terrorist fighters who plan to commit terrorist acts in other States. Singapore co-sponsored the resolution, as it believes that foreign terrorist fighters are a clear threat to international peace and security. Singapore firmly supports all international and regional cooperation to combat terrorism, including the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and all Security Council resolutions related to counter-terrorism. We will play our part to counter the threat of global terrorism.

With the continuation of armed conflict in Ukraine and unrest in the Middle East, we, as members of the international community, need to demonstrate our commitment to disarmament. In this era of increasing interdependence, Singapore calls upon the international community to implement effective and useful disarmament and non-proliferation regimes and to continue to work together to achieve a more peaceful global environment for us, our children and our children's children.

Mr. Schmid (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Chemical and biological weapons pose a serious threat to international and human security. It is absolutely vital that the universal norm against these types of weapons be fully upheld and that all States that have not yet done so accede as soon as possible to both the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

Switzerland welcomes the progress made in the dismantling of the declared Syrian chemical weapons programme and commends the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations for their impressive achievement to that end. Syria must now do its utmost to fully comply with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. The remaining chemical-weapons production facilities must be destroyed as soon as possible. Furthermore, the incompleteness and inconsistencies of Syria's initial declaration must be clarified once and for all.

Unfortunately, our satisfaction over the progress achieved is seriously undermined by the unacceptable use of chemical weapons in Syria, which remains

ongoing, as clearly indicated in the conclusions of the second report of the OPCW's fact-finding mission. This state of affairs is a tragic reminder that the international community needs to stay vigilant and that much remains to be done. Switzerland hopes that the current investigation will shed more light on the recent chlorine gas attack in Syria. Furthermore, I would like to express my country's full support for this important mission. The use of chemical weapons is a serious violation of international law. It continues to be of the utmost importance to take consistent action to ensure accountability and bring those responsible on all sides of the conflict to justice.

The challenges that we collectively face in implementing and strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention remain extensive and will require significant additional efforts up to and at the upcoming eighth Review Conference. In order to pave the way for 2016, it is now important that we move towards effective action in the framework of the ongoing intersessional programme. In that regard, we are encouraged by this year's discussions on article VII of the BWC, which have shown that potential for concrete action exists in certain areas.

Progress is more necessary now than ever, particularly with regard to the ability of BWC States parties to mutually demonstrate and assess compliance with the treaty obligations. Switzerland is of the view that the Convention is in need of stronger mechanisms for resolving concerns about the implementation, of and compliance with, those provisions. In line with general Swiss disarmament policy, we are in principle favourable to the establishment of a multilateral legally binding compliance framework in support of the implementation of the Convention. The development of such a framework is certainly a challenge, as it needs to be based on a careful identification and thorough evaluation of practicable approaches in terms of both their technical feasibility and their effective capacity to address challenges of modern-day biology.

We will have many opportunities to act and gradually achieve that ambitious goal between now and the next Review Conference. I am thinking, *inter alia*, of efforts to strengthen confidence-building measures and identify ways to evaluate the information they contain. I am also thinking of finding innovative approaches such as the compliance assessment initiative or the peer review mechanism that should be developed further and strengthened. We are convinced that such tools

and initiatives could not only strengthen assurances of compliance, but also to identify and facilitate the implementation of stricter measures and mechanisms.

In addition, compliance with the BWC will be achieved through the systematic review of advances in biology and biotechnology. Although Switzerland welcomes the discussions on science and technology in the context of the current intersessional programme, we believe that, given the complexity of the scientific issues facing us, more effective and more sustainable approaches should be considered. The eighth Review Conference will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss the design and development of a structure that would more systematically consider scientific and technological developments and their impact on the BWC.

The convergence of biology, chemistry and other sciences is a scientific and technological step forward with enormous potential, but it also presents the BWC and the CWC with significant challenges. In early October, Switzerland organized a first workshop, entitled "Spiez Convergence", as part of a series of events dedicated to this theme. The workshop brought together scientists and policymakers for discussions on the advantages and challenges of this convergence, allowing for a closer and critical interaction between actors of the BWC and the CWC.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Switzerland is honoured to be entrusted this year with the presidency of the BWC. I will make every effort to ensure that the 2014 intersessional is successful.

Mr. Herráiz España (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain fully supports the statement made by the representative of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

The use and risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction constitute a threat to peace and security. The international community must respond collectively to that global threat. Unfortunately, the recent events in Syria demonstrate that practices that we had thought banished can still occur, thereby calling into question the very concepts of humanity and civilization that should govern relations at the international and national levels. It is precisely those events that highlight the need to intensify our efforts in that area. Given that the matter is global in nature and threatens the most basic of human rights, the role and leadership of the United Nations in that area are of paramount importance.

Two multilateral instruments are particularly relevant to the topic under discussion: the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. The Chemical Weapons Convention, which succeeded the 1925 Geneva Protocol, is one of the great multilateral achievements in the area of disarmament, and has so many States parties that it enjoys near-universal membership. Spain calls upon those States that have not yet acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible.

Spain reiterates its support for the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for their successful elimination of these weapons and for urging, in the relevant forums, those who decide to use chemical weapons to do so responsibly. In that regard, the crimes committed in the Syrian war require a firm response from the international community. Spain welcomes the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons and hopes that Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), adopted by consensus, will be implemented within the prescribed time frame. Syria's transparent and open cooperation with the inspection teams with respect to its chemical weapons and progress in disarmament would facilitate the process and allow the team to complete its objectives within the prescribed time frame.

Syria's accession to the Convention is one of the pending questions on our path towards the creation of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We support and welcome the efforts made in that regard by the facilitator of the conference to be held on this issue, Ambassador Laajava, and call on all parties in the region to participate in the process, taking a pragmatic approach with a view to gradually achieving the goals of a realistic agenda. I take this opportunity to recall that, at the Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention this year, many of us insisted that the OPCW should continue to focus on disarmament and non-proliferation, as it has the tools necessary to achieve those goals. The case of Syria shows that this approach will remain valid in the future.

The Biological Weapons Convention is at the centre of the efforts to eradicate the threat of the proliferation and offensive use of pathogens. Spain believes that the universalization of the Convention, which has not been achieved, and the establishment of an effective verification system are two clear objectives within the Convention's purview. We need to strengthen the

ethical foundations of scientific research in the areas of medicine, biology and biochemistry and their legitimate commercial use as constituent elements of a preventive policy in the area of disarmament.

Within the framework of the Convention, Spain has elaborated a working document sponsored by Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Italy. The document proposes a code of conduct for scientists, of general application in the relevant natural, social, veterinary and agricultural sciences, medicine, agriculture, mathematics and engineering. We are convinced that a common ethical code of conduct, balanced and agreed by consensus of all involved, would certainly promote a more harmonious professional development and offer a useful tool for national security.

Lastly, it is necessary to take precautions in order to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorist groups. We stress the importance of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which is essential to the development of effective mechanisms to eliminate and counter the proliferation to non-State actors, with terrorist purposes, of substances and technologies that could be used to produce weapons of mass destruction. We wish to continue working actively to develop collaborative projects within the multilateral, regional and bilateral frameworks.

We must continue the forward momentum created in that area by such significant initiatives as the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, which Spain joined last year, and various export-control regimes for dual-use items, such as the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, among others. Furthermore, at the multilateral level, among various events, my country organized, in collaboration with Mexico, a workshop on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), held on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution, in which more than 10 Latin American countries participated. We also underscore the European Union Centres of Excellence, in which Spain participates actively through various projects at the multilateral level. At the bilateral level, we also note the various activities undertaken by our country centred on cooperation with other countries, focused in particular on building capacities to address these threats.

Ms. Tsang (Canada): The past year has been marked by extraordinary events that have put chemical

and biological weapons at the forefront of international concern. The large-scale chemical weapons attack by the Al-Assad regime on 21 August 2013 in eastern Damascus sparked international outrage. Although the international community may have been prevented from acting in other areas concerning Syria, we came together in a united front to destroy Syria's stockpile of chemical weapons.

The joint mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations deserves much praise for its vital contribution and the extraordinary work it has done, especially in such volatile circumstances. Canada contributed \$2 million to the OPCW, both to support the organization's conduct of the investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, and to carry out a thorough exercise of lessons learned. Canada also contributed an additional \$10 million to the OPCW Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons, and \$5 million to the United States Department of Defense to support the destruction of chemical weapons aboard the *MV Cape Ray*. Much work has been done, but more is necessary.

The Al-Assad regime must come clean. It must continue to work with the OPCW to clarify all ambiguities in its initial declaration if it is to meet all of its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and those under Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). It must proceed without further delay with the destruction of all remaining chemical weapon production facilities. But most urgently, it must cease, immediately and forever, to use chemicals against its population.

The second report of the OPCW fact-finding mission concluded that there is compelling confirmation that a toxic chemical was used as a weapon, systematically and repeatedly, in three opposition-held villages in northern Syria. The report further concludes, with a high degree of confidence, that chlorine, either pure or in mixture, is the toxic chemical in question, and notes that witnesses invariably described the attacks as being carried out by helicopters — a capability that only the Syrian Government possesses. Any toxic chemical, irrespective of whether it is contained in the schedules of chemicals, is a chemical weapon unless it is used for purposes not prohibited by the CWC. Therefore, the use of chlorine or any other toxic chemical as a weapon constitutes a violation of the Convention.

With Syria now a State party to the CWC, there are only six States remaining outside the Convention. Canada strongly supports the universalization of the Convention, and we urge those States to ratify or accede to the Convention and begin the immediate implementation of the CWC. After this extraordinary year, we fully appreciate that a world free of chemical weapons is an achievable and attainable goal.

The threat of the use of biological weapons, particularly by non-State actors, is a growing concern, as more and increasingly virulent pathogens are collected and cultivated for valid medical and research purposes. In regions affected by dangerous pathogens with insufficient biosafety and biosecurity capacities, such as West Africa and the current Ebola outbreak, there is an increasing risk that these pathogens, in the form of infected lab samples or pathogen collections, could disappear and end up being used as weapons of bioterrorism. Furthermore, although advances in technology help improve the human condition, they can also be misused to recreate extinct pathogens or render existing ones more virulent. The decreasing cost of many lab tools and the wide Internet accessibility of scientific information mean that anyone with minimal knowledge, such as non-State actors, has some capacity to create a bioweapon with some measure of success. It is essential that all countries use the tools at our disposal to ensure the security of biological materials and prevent biological weapons from being developed, produced, acquired or used.

(spoke in French)

In recent weeks we have clearly seen that the spread of diseases knows no borders and no one is safe from them. Therefore, we must work collectively and constructively to establish a regime pursuant to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) that is adapted to the twenty-first century. In doing so, we can strengthen our capacity to respond to deliberate outbreaks of disease and build the capacity of States to better respond to naturally occurring crises, such as the aforementioned Ebola outbreak.

Canada believes that States parties need to demonstrate compliance with the BWC in a pragmatic and realistic manner. We encourage them to develop of mechanisms for improving confidence in effective

national implementation, such as compliance assessment and peer review mechanisms. We encourage all States parties to submit their confidence-building measures. Canada will be happy to offer assistance in this regard. We have prepared a step-by-step guide on how to seek the relevant information necessary for States parties to be able to prepare their annual confidence-building measures. The guide contains real examples taken from Canada's experience in this area. We hope that State parties to the BWC will be able to reach real and concrete common understandings and promote effective measures at the upcoming meeting of States parties, in advance of eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention to be held in 2016. Finally, we call on all countries that have not yet done so to ratify and accede to the BWC.

Ms. O'Brien (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (EU) (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

Weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery represent one of the most pressing global threats to the security of humankind in our time. Last year, my delegation, along with the overwhelming majority of States in this Committee, condemned as utterly reprehensible the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We still recall the horrific images of children gasping for breath after ingesting sarin in August 2013 near Damascus, which propelled the international community into action.

Ireland welcomes the effective and cooperative work of the international community to destroy Syria's chemical-weapons stockpile, as well as Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). We call on Syria to demonstrate full compliance with the CWC and to address further queries transparently and completely. We welcome the progress made by the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic since autumn 2013, and we are encouraged that work has now begun on destroying facilities. Ireland was pleased to make a financial contribution to this important work.

It is, however, with the gravest concern that we note the most recent report of the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which found compelling confirmation that chlorine had been used systematically and repeatedly

as a weapon in Syria this year. Ireland has called for the referral of war crimes in Syria to the International Criminal Court, and we reiterate that call now.

It is completely and utterly unacceptable that, 100 years after their first use in the First World War, our world should once again see the use of chemical weapons. Next year, an event will be held in Ypres, Belgium, to commemorate the centenary of the first large-scale chemical-weapons use in 1915. My delegation sees this commemoration as an opportunity to increase momentum towards a future free of chemical weapons. Ireland again calls on those last remaining States to ratify or accede to the Treaty without delay and for States parties to meet their commitments, in particular in relation to destruction.

Ireland continues to give high priority to the further strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC). As the world seeks ways to handle and mitigate the tragic effects of the current Ebola crisis, we are reminded of the truly deadly impact that biological pathogens can have and the necessity of a strong, effective and universal BWC. As we begin our preparations for the 2016 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, we will in particular study how the Convention can be made more effective and how we can ensure compliance with its provisions. My delegation looks forward to further discussion and consideration of these matters at the upcoming meeting of States parties in December with a view to a strong and successful outcome for the 2016 Review Conference.

As Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) reached its tenth anniversary this year, the importance of that resolution — which obliges States, *inter alia*, to refrain from supporting by any means non-State actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems — cannot be denied. This year the world has borne witness to unspeakable acts of violence and inhumanity by groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. One thing is clear — we must do everything we can to ensure these groups can never attain weapons of mass destruction.

Ireland wishes to reaffirm its support for this and subsequent Security Council resolutions. The full implementation of the steps identified therein help

not only to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist groups, but also to effectively implement the obligations under both the BWC and the CWC.

The proliferation of ballistic missiles represents a threat to international peace and security both in its own right and as potential means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction. The Hague Code of Conduct is the only multilateral transparency and confidence-building instrument concerning the spread of ballistic missiles, and Ireland is proud to adhere to the Code along with 136 other States. We encourage all States to adhere to this Code.

Effective export controls are an essential element for preventing missile proliferation and, in this context, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) plays an important role. My delegation looks forward to continued discussions within the MTCR on strengthening its effectiveness and strongly supports enlargement to all EU member States.

Finally, my delegation regrets that despite reaffirmations of the resolutions on the Middle East adopted in 1995, 2000 and 2010, and despite the agreement on practical next steps reached in 2010, which Ireland was pleased to have helped broker, no conference on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs has taken place. Recalling our general statement last week (see A/C.1/69/PV.4), my delegation wishes to reiterate our support for the tireless efforts of Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Security Policy Jaakko Laajava of Finland and all the stakeholders involved in discussions to convene a conference on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs.

We strongly hope the conference will take place soon as an important contribution towards the full implementation of the 1995 resolution. The tragedy of events in Syria this year demonstrates that as long as these weapons of mass destruction exist, we can never be truly certain that attacks using these abhorrent weapons will not repeat themselves in the future. And so it is up to us, the international community, to redouble our efforts to ensure history does not repeat itself again in Syria or elsewhere. We owe this to our citizens and to all humankind.

Mr. Gutulo (Ethiopia): I would like at the outset to state that my delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia

on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1./69/PV.16). I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for the reports presented to us on the subject under discussion.

My delegation believes that the agenda item before us remains an important aspect of disarmament, particularly in addressing the continued concerns of the international community over the destructive nature of weapons of mass destruction. We are convinced that the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which affirms that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery constitutes a threat to international peace and security, is of key importance. In particular, we recognize the importance of countering nuclear, chemical and biological weapons threats in the context of that resolution and, more importantly, the necessity of preventing non-State actors from gaining access to these weapons. It is imperative that we ensure that this does not happen, and therefore there must be cooperation and a coordinated effort among all stakeholders. Obviously, the negative effects of the possession by non-State actors of these devastating and indiscriminate chemical and biological weapons are not limited to a specific country or region, but are in fact far-reaching.

We recall that, in their 2010 Review Conference, the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons reached a consensus expressing their deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and called on all States in the event of armed conflict at all times and wherever they occur to comply with international humanitarian law. It is in this context that Ethiopia welcomes the international conferences held in Oslo and Nayarit, Mexico, as well as the upcoming conference to take place in Vienna in December. These conferences concretely demonstrate the unanimous position of the international community on curbing the already proven damage caused by nuclear, chemical and biological weapons as well as the perceived use or threat of use of these destructive weapons.

It is our firm conviction that the pursuit of universal membership in and full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention and the negotiations of other treaties to limit conventional arms should not be considered to be optional for States, but are obligations of the Conventions' States parties to work towards on an

urgent basis. Individual States and multilateral entities therefore have to work closely and in partnership to bring about significant, effective and negotiated solutions through compromise, with a view to saving the lives of humans and other forms of life on our planet.

Finally, we wish to stress the fact that our global fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles is still far from over, and the ongoing crises in many regions of the world remind us that our continued engagement and action in this regard is needed more than ever before. It is therefore incumbent upon all States not only to hold a constructive discussion during the Vienna conference, but also to ensure the conference's success so that it serves as a good step forward in addressing the challenges of the humanitarian impact of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Accordingly, we hope that the nuclear-weapon States will lead these efforts by recognizing their own nuclear disarmament obligations.

Mr. McConville (Australia): Events this year have reminded us once again of the very real threat to global and regional peace and security posed by weapons of mass destruction. We have been reminded why the international community must remain steadfast in countering the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons and why we must remain resolute that there are no circumstances justifying the use of such weapons.

Australia is committed to working with others to uphold the strength and integrity of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). As a current member of the Security Council, Australia is seeking to hold States to account for non-compliance with the CWC. Australia has stood with many other countries in expressing our deep concern and alarm over the abhorrent use of chemical weapons in Syria. The system of international law embodied in the Charter of the United Nations must work to ensure such calamities do not happen again and that perpetrators of such attacks do not escape justice.

The latest report by the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) again confirms that a toxic chemical was used as a weapon, systemically and repeatedly, in Syria. Having investigated the attacks that occurred in northern Syria in April, May and August, the OPCW finds in its report, with a high degree of confidence, that chlorine was used against innocent civilians. The findings that chlorine bombs were deployed by

helicopters, which are used only by the Syrian regime in the current conflict, highlights Damascus's culpability.

The Australian Government is deeply disturbed by these findings, which reveal a breach of both the CWC and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). We must confront this matter head on to uphold the credibility of the treaty and the Security Council. The Australian Government has provided \$2 million towards the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons and remaining production facilities as a concrete example of our commitment to rid the world of all chemical-weapon programmes.

Australia joins our international partners in condemning the Syrian regime's brutality towards its own citizens and its disregard for international disarmament and international humanitarian and human rights law. We have contributed \$130 million in humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people.

Turning to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), that important instrument not only underpins the international norms against biological weapons, but also facilitates global efforts to promote the peaceful use of the life sciences. Rapid advances in bioscience and biotechnology continue to make the pursuit of a biological weapons programme ever more feasible for a growing number of countries, if they were to decide on such a regrettable course.

Against that background, Australia, as chair of the Group of Western European and other States, remains committed to strengthening the Convention, including by building up common understandings and effective action in relation to the intersessional programme. We also remain committed to working to achieve a successful Review Conference of the Parties to the BWC in 2016.

Regional exchanges and cooperative efforts make an increasingly important contribution to multilateral efforts to counter the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons. In that regard, Australia plays a particularly active role in the Asia-Pacific region. During 2013 and 2014, we were pleased to join regional partners participating in workshops organized by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. These workshops aimed at building the capacity of regional countries to respond to major chemical incidents and strengthen the implementation of the

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC).

We chair the Australia Group, a cooperative and voluntary group that strengthens global security by making it harder and more expensive for would-be proliferators to obtain the dual-use materials, equipment and technology they seek to develop chemical or biological weapons. The Australia Group common guidelines and export-control lists provide an international benchmark to help all Member States fulfil their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and other related resolutions. That resolution remains paramount to efforts for combating the proliferation weapons of mass destruction. Full implementation by Member States of resolution 1540 (2004) remains an enduring international security priority.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Poland to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.63.

Mr. Radomski (Poland): I would like to assure you, Mr. Chair, of Poland's full support for your leadership of the First Committee.

It is an honour and pleasure for me to introduce, on behalf of the delegation of Poland, draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.63, on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC). Our ongoing leadership as the sole sponsor of the draft resolution on CWC implementation is Poland's contribution to a world free of chemical weapons.

The draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention underlines the exceptional role of the CWC in the area of disarmament, prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons, international cooperation and protection against chemical weapons. This draft resolution, which has been adopted without a vote for many years, is a visible expression of the unequivocal support for the implementation of the CWC and the prohibition of chemical weapons.

This year once again, the draft resolution has been discussed and submitted under extraordinary circumstances related to the prohibition of chemical weapons. The accession of the Syrian Arab Republic to the CWC in 2013 enabled significant progress to be

achieved in the elimination of its chemical-weapons programme. That presented a challenge without precedent in the entire history of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and mobilized most of its resources. Despite the challenging circumstances, States parties to the CWC were able to maintain a consensus-based approach to this issue in The Hague. It has not been an easy task, because the dynamic process of chemical disarmament in Syria is not yet finished.

Poland, as the sole sponsor of the draft resolution, has faced the challenge of preserving consensus on the issue of chemical weapons in Syria in the First Committee. We sought to reflect in the draft resolution the expectations of all partners participating in the chemical-disarmament process in Syria without going beyond what has been discussed and agreed in the OPCW.

Poland is of the opinion that preserving the consensus on this issue in the United Nations context is of utmost importance for securing a political environment conducive to the success of the remaining work of the OPCW in Syria. Therefore, the proposed paragraphs represent the only consensus-based language available and were negotiated by all States parties to the Convention in The Hague. The draft resolution takes stock of the successful removal of all declared chemical materials from Syria and at the same time points to the tasks that still need to be accomplished. The language also expresses support to the OPCW fact-finding mission in Syria and condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances. The wording on chemical disarmament in Syria will be under review in future versions of the draft resolution.

In its operative part, the draft resolution notes with concern the danger posed by the production, acquisition and use of chemical weapons by non-State actors, including terrorists. That paragraph has been retained from the 2013 version of the resolution, but its validity is greater than a year ago. The structure of the draft resolution is based on last year's text. A few paragraphs have been deleted in order to re-establish the balance present in past versions of the document and make it more concise. Poland wishes to thank all delegations for their cooperation in this task.

During consultations on the text, both in The Hague and in New York, we discussed several proposals

to be reflected in this year's draft resolution. We found, however, that there is no universal support for introducing those new proposals. During the extensive bilateral and open-ended informal consultations, which were attended by many delegations, we received support and witnessed willingness to join consensus on the proposed draft resolution. Let me express our gratitude to all the delegations participating in our extensive consultations on this year's draft resolution. Those consultations confirmed the existence of broad political support in all regions for the implementation of all pillars of the Convention. The draft resolution presented today is an expression of that support.

The delegation of Poland requests the adoption of the draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention without a vote.

Mr. Ceylan (Turkey): Turkey strongly believes that weapons of mass destruction do not guarantee the security of any country, but rather increase insecurity and instability worldwide. Their mere existence is a threat to international peace. Therefore, they must be ultimately eliminated so that they are never used again.

Turkey's clear position on and strong support for nuclear disarmament have already been expressed in this room during the relevant thematic meeting, and I would now like to take the opportunity to elaborate on my country's stance vis-à-vis two particular categories of weapons of mass destruction, namely, chemical and biological/toxin weapons.

Turkey is party to the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), which are important components of the global system against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and, in full observance of its international commitments, does not possess or develop any such weapons nor conduct any research on them. Turkey also reiterates its call for wider adherence to and an effective implementation of those Conventions. We will continue to actively support efforts aimed at promoting the implementation and universalization of those instruments.

The existence of chemical weapons in the world, and especially in the Middle East, has been a major concern for Turkey, but also for the region itself and the international community as a whole. Unfortunately, chemical weapons have been used three times in our immediate neighbourhood in the past three decades. The most recent situation, which was revealed in Syria in 2013, remains far from resolved.

The second report of the Fact-Finding Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), dated 10 September 2014, confirmed that chlorine had been used systematically and repeatedly as a chemical weapon in northern Syria. The report also mentioned that there were new allegations, some as recent as August 2014, about the use of chemical weapons in Syria. That substantive information has been submitted to the Secretary-General by the Director-General of the OPCW as part of his twelfth monthly report, and the Security Council members were subsequently informed of it. Given the grim conclusions of the second report of the fact-finding mission, we believe we are at a critical juncture. Moreover, the use of helicopters in such attacks, as the Fact-Finding Mission unveiled, based on the testimonies of the victims, is a clear indication of the Syrian regime's involvement in such attacks.

Those findings are clearly in contrast to the initial optimism about the Syrian regime's cooperation with the international community. Bearing in mind the appalling images of the victims of chemical-weapon attacks in Syria since last year, Turkey wishes to underline the fact that the job has not yet been accomplished, and there must be additional efforts to completely dismantle the Syrian regime's remaining chemical-weapons stockpile and weapon-production facilities. A premature sense of achievement will certainly mislead the international community.

Turkey associates itself with the declaration made by a number of countries following the most recent Executive Council meeting of the OPCW, held on 10 October, and now reiterates its call upon the international community that due attention must be paid and action taken in order to prevent further use of chemical weapons in Syria, which is a clear breach of the CWC and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). In that regard, Turkey supports the intention of the Director-General of the OPCW to enable the Fact-Finding Mission to continue its work and remain determined to sanction those responsible for those horrific acts.

The Syrian regime must fully comply with its obligations under the CWC, the OPCW Executive Council decision of 27 September 2013 and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and demonstrate to the international community that it has fully abandoned its chemical-weapons programme. That cannot be achieved while its use of chemical weapons continues and new allegations continue to be made.

Turkey also joins the international community in commending the work done by the OPCW in the process of eliminating chemical weapons in Syria. Under life-threatening conditions, the United Nations and OPCW personnel have made extraordinary efforts to eliminate Syria's declared chemical stockpiles. That has been a stark reminder of the importance of the universalization and effective implementation of the CWC, the key role that the OPCW plays and its efficiency. Bearing in mind that the CWC is the only comprehensive multilateral treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, Turkey will continue to cooperate with the OPCW.

Turkey also attaches great importance to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and its universalization and full implementation. The spread and transfer of dual-use goods and technology that can be used to produce biological weapons and the possibility of them falling into the hands of terrorists are major concerns for the international community. The fact that those agents, coupled with other weapons of mass destruction, are so easy to obtain has made such concerns all the more significant.

Confidence-building measures remain an important instrument to promote the purposes of the BWC. Although considerably improved, the submission of reports has not increased to a desirable level. Reports on confidence-building measures are valuable tools for mutual understanding and transparency. We should strive to make tangible use of that source of information.

The international community must continue to do its best to prevent the acquisition of biological and chemical warfare agents by terrorists, other unauthorized actors or even irresponsible States and for their stockpiles to be destroyed. In that context, the universalization and effective implementation of both the CWC and the BWC must be a priority. We call on all countries to ratify and implement those two important instruments. We also support the strengthening of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), which is a

key instrument to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

In that context, regional approaches that pave the way for eventual universalization should be utilized. Turkey has been actively promoting the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We would like to once again express our disappointment that the 2012 conference could not be held and our expectation for it to be convened as soon as possible. We urge all States of the region to participate in it in a spirit of cooperation and flexibility.

Ms. Benhabouche (Algeria): At the outset, allow me to thank you, Mr. Chair, for making our meetings more effective and engaging.

Algeria associates itself with the statements delivered respectively by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

My delegation would like to express its serious concern with regard to the threat to humankind posed by the existence of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and underline the need for their total elimination. Furthermore, the need to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction is becoming increasingly acute. We therefore agree with the need to monitor the situation and trigger international action as required.

Algeria recognizes the important role played by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) in the prevention of proliferation and destruction of chemical weapons and calls on those States that have not yet done so to join the Convention and be part of the effort aimed at building a world free of chemical weapons.

Algeria considers that all provisions of the Convention are equally important and complementary. The total destruction of chemical weapons is one of the fundamental pillars of the Convention and the primary focus of its provisions. Verification of the destruction of all the remaining chemical-weapons stockpiles will continue to be one of the highest priorities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In that regard, my delegation is deeply concerned by the fact that certain possessor States parties did not comply with their obligations regarding the total destruction

of their chemical weapons within the established deadlines.

Algeria would like to emphasize the importance of international cooperation, in accordance with article XI of the CWC, in the field of chemical activities for purposes that are not prohibited under the Convention and, accordingly, calls on the developed countries to promote international cooperation for the benefit of developing States parties. International cooperation is a critical element in strengthening the implementation of the Convention and an important contribution to the economic development and scientific progress of developing countries. In that context, Algeria calls for a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention.

Algeria considers that the implementation of article X of the CWC on assistance and protection against chemical weapons is crucial to countering the threat of the use of chemical weapons. We wish to stress the importance of achieving and maintaining a high level of readiness within the OPCW to provide timely and needed assistance and protection against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons, including assistance to the victims of chemical weapons. Algeria strongly believes in the relevance of the Convention in the framework of the global fight against terrorism, in particular in the field of prevention, but also in its reaction capacity against a chemical attack.

Algeria considers the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) to be an important component of the international legal architecture related to weapons of mass destruction, and therefore a fundamental pillar for international peace and security. Despite its imperfections, it constitutes the bulwark in the fight to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons. Algeria stresses the need for an integral, effective and balanced implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and for full compliance with its provisions at a universal level in order to achieve its objectives.

Algeria reaffirms its commitment to the BWC, and considers it necessary to strengthen the Convention through a verification mechanism to ensure the effective implementation of all its provisions, as well as the transparency of biological activities and programmes. While emphasizing that the lack of a verification system continues to pose a challenge to the effectiveness of the

Convention, we call for the resumption of multilateral negotiations to conclude a non-discriminatory legally binding protocol, dealing with all articles of the Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner so as to sustainably strengthen the Convention, including through verification measures. Algeria emphasizes the need to enhance, without restrictions, international cooperation, assistance and exchanges in toxins, biological agents, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes without any discrimination, in conformity with the Convention.

Algeria hosts the regional office for North Africa of the European Union Centre of Excellence for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear threat reduction. The regional Centre is involved in the coordination of several cooperation projects in the area, in particular in capacity-building.

Ten years ago, the legal framework of the non-proliferation regime was strengthened by the adoption, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Affirming that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery constitute a threat to international peace and security, the resolution obliges States to refrain from supporting non-State actors in developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using them, and to adopt and enforce effective laws and establish domestic controls.

Undoubtedly, resolution 1540 (2004) was adopted at the right time in order to face the threat of the dangerous nexus between weapons of mass destruction and global terrorism. Increased potential access to weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors that are part of terrorist networks would have dangerous implications for any State or group of States and constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Hungary to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.6.

Mr. Hetesy (Hungary): Hungary, following the practice of previous years, has the honour to introduce, under agenda item 103, draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.6, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction".

The draft resolution was submitted for the Committee's consideration on 8 October. The text of the draft resolution is based on the previous resolution 68/69 that was adopted in 2013, and it is updated to reflect the latest developments. Before submitting the draft resolution, our delegation held informal discussions where Member States quickly managed to come to a common position on the text. The consultations also reflected the firm commitment of Member States to the Convention, as well as the attention the Convention continues to receive. Let me express gratitude, at this juncture, for the outstanding cooperation and support that we have received from all delegations.

This year's draft resolution retains all the important elements of the resolution that was adopted by consensus in 2013, but also contains substantive changes. Let me go through them quickly. In the second preambular paragraph, there is a new emphasis on the continued need to achieve the universalization of the Convention. Paragraph 4 calls on States parties to efficiently utilize the time allotted to consider article VII of the Convention, the new biennial agenda item for 2014 and 2015. Also in line with previous decisions of the review conferences, paragraph 5 enhances the language on confidence-building measures. Paragraph 9 streamlines the language on the role of the Implementation Support Unit. Other more logistical changes involve paragraphs 4 and 10, in which the reference is updated on the intersessional meetings held and on the ones to be organized. The change in operative paragraph 11 ensures that the agenda item will appear on the agenda of the seventieth session of the First Committee.

Hungary wishes to remain the sole sponsor of the draft resolution, and it is the hope of my delegation that, as in the past, this year it will be adopted by the Committee by consensus.

Mr. Robotjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) under the regional disarmament and security cluster (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

The international community has made historic progress towards the elimination of the chemical-weapons threat. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has been in force for 18 years, providing an effective framework for the verifiable destruction of the declared chemical-weapons stockpiles, as well as the establishment and reinforcement of a strong

international norm against the development and use of such weapons. But much remains to be fulfilled. The full implementation of the obligation to destroy the declared chemical-weapons stockpiles of the possessor States parties to the CWC has yet to be done. To ensure universal participation in the Convention, sustained effort and commitment are required, particularly in the region of the Middle East.

The full implementation and universality of the CWC are of the utmost importance to the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is not only because we desire to fully enjoy the security and economic benefits of the membership in the Convention, but also because of our experience as a victim of the use of chemical weapons. As a result of more than 400 attacks with chemical weapons by Saddam's regime, more than 100,000 Iranian citizens were either killed or injured. Just in the case of Sardasht, a small city in north-western Iran, as a result of the deployment of heavy chemical weapons, large numbers of civilians, including women and children, were chemically killed or wounded. The deployment of chemical weapons against Sardasht was the first documented large-scale chemical attack against a residential area in the world.

Saddam's chemical weapons were manufactured with the material and technical assistance of certain western countries. For instance, French companies played a substantial role in this regard. France's proliferation activities in the Middle East region were not limited to its assistance to the Israeli regime to acquire nuclear weapons. France was one of the key providers of chemical warfare agents and their means of delivery to Saddam's regime. Remembering those who were killed in chemical weapons attacks and those who are still suffering as a result of those attacks is the least the international community can do. We must do everything to ensure the full implementation and universality of the Convention in order to prevent any use of chemical weapons in the future.

On Syria, we welcome the progress achieved on the elimination of the Syrian chemical-weapons programme a year after the country's accession to the Convention. This achievement could not have been realized without the full commitment and sustained cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic, the joint endeavours of the international community, and the professional efforts of the Director-General and the staff of the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). This significant progress

has brought us to a stage in which moving towards a normal mode on this issue is now warranted.

The declared chemical-weapons stockpiles of the possessor State parties continue to exist. Total destruction of all the declared chemical-weapons stockpiles is a fundamental pillar of the CWC and remains the key objective of the Convention and the top priority of the OPCW. Major possessor States parties shall comply with their obligations and redouble their efforts within the framework of the Convention and its verification regime to destroy all chemical-weapons stockpiles as soon as possible.

With respect to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), we emphasize the need for the full, comprehensive and effective implementation of the Convention and its universalization, which have not taken place in the 40 years since its entry into force. To ensure the universality of the Convention, as the seventh Review Conference decided, States parties should take action to persuade non-parties to accede to the Convention without delay. In this context, we call upon all States parties to remain fully committed to their obligations not to transfer to non-parties equipment, materials, including biological agents and toxins, or scientific and technological information. In this regard, the cooperation in the biological sphere between some States parties with non-parties to the Convention, particularly the Canadian and Israeli regimes, is regrettable.

Needless to say, the introduction of disincentives for non-parties to the Convention and the cessation of cooperation with them would encourage and facilitate the realization of the universality of the instrument. In addition, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention, including the adoption of concrete measures to prohibit the transfer to non-parties of any material and technology that could be used in development of biological weapons, would further strengthen the role and enhance the relevance and credibility of the BWC.

We strongly support NAM's position on the importance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding Protocol. We continue to believe that this very important issue should be addressed in order to explore the ways and means for responding to the international community's wish for the early conclusion of such an instrument. Furthermore, we underline that, as the best way to

strengthen the Convention, international cooperation as provided for in article X should be promoted, the arbitrary and politically motivated denials in meetings of States parties should cease, and an action plan consisting of practical and concrete measures to facilitate the implementation of the said article should be worked up.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to once again to thank you, Sir, for your wise management of the work of the First Committee at this session.

We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

From the outset of the crisis in my country, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has repeatedly spoken out about the dangers involved in the use of chemical weapons in Syria by terrorist groups, some associated with Al-Qaida. The Syrian Government expressed its serious fears that some regimes that support terrorism and terrorists could provide chemical weapons to terrorist groups and claim later that the Syrian Government was the party that had used them. On 8 December 2012, my Government sent a letter to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly in which we warned that

“the terrorist groups could use [chemical] weapons against the Syrian people, It regrets that the international community has not taken action to address these developments and hold the terrorist groups’ supporters accountable under the relevant Security Council resolutions” (A/67/628, p. 2).

Furthermore, we stated that a chemical-weapons facility east of Aleppo, which contained tons of toxic chlorine, had recently been seized by terrorists.

That letter was sent by my country two years ago and it proved to be accurate in its reading of the future. Today we hear biased claims by a number of countries that sponsor terrorism in Syria in which they baselessly and falsely accuse the Syrian Government of using chemical weapons. Some of these countries have provided terrorists with chemical weapons and toxic gases to be used against the Syrian army and Syrian civilians in order to cause acts of military aggression to be undertaken against Syria. Undoubtedly, members of the Committee remember the atmosphere that was widespread in the region when the President of the

United States threatened to bomb Syria on the basis of these false allegations.

My delegation asks that countries that sponsor terrorism be held accountable because they repeatedly provide terrorists with toxic chemical materials to be used against civilians and members of the Syrian military. Despite the fact that this scandal has been clearly brought to light, the so-called international community stands silent and acts as a mere bystander while the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) and similar organizations use toxic chemical substances as weapons against civilians in both Syria and Iraq. The most recent such event happened in the Syrian town of Ain Al-Arab, when ISIS used artillery missiles and other burning materials to inflict harm on dozens of people. We provided the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) with pictures and information of this heinous crime.

This danger, which threatens all of us in the region and the world because terrorist groups, which have no moral compass or sense of legal responsibility to deter them, have been able to use such weapons of mass destruction. It is very strange that none of this seems to be enough to awaken all those Governments to the facts. Their eyes and ears have been closed for more than four years, having ignored all warnings issued by the Syrian Government. Some of these countries have tried hard to hide the truth and accuse Syria in order to demonize its sitting Government. The intention of those States and Governments to mislead constitutes a flagrant violation of all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolution 1540 (2004).

In that respect, I would like to mention a book recently published by the French writers Georges Malbrunot and Christian Chesnot, entitled *Les Chemins de Damas — The Roads to Damascus* — which refers to orders given by the current President of France with regard to a classified report on the chemical attack that took place in August in the suburb of Ghouta, outside Damascus, in 2013. The book shows that the monitoring exercised by the Minister of Defence, Jean-Yves Le Drian, over the summary of the joint report actually hampered the investigators, who had not come to any conclusive results about the incident.

The investigators reasoned that the presence of sarin gas may have been due to bombardment by the Syrian army of secret laboratories of the armed opposition groups. The book goes on to say that the summary was

simply eliminated from the final text of the report. Why was it eliminated? Because it shows that there was sarin gas in the secret laboratories of the so-called armed opposition. It seems that we have yet to learn the dangers posed by the promotion of baseless claims and unjust accusations by international intelligence apparatuses seeking to justify the use of terrorism to destroy nations. Have we forgotten the scandal of the so-called weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and the decisions and catastrophes that that led to, not only in Iraq, but throughout the region?

In spite of the difficulties, which Ms. Sigrid Kaag has witnessed, Syria has fulfilled its commitments emanating from its accession to the Convention. Syria, as a State party to the Convention, is fully committed to enforcing the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. That, however, cannot be done unless Israel, as the only party yet to do so, is obliged to accede to the relevant international conventions.

The Syrian Arab Republic has welcomed the initiative of the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with regard to the alleged use of toxic chemicals, which were determined to be chlorine gas, in some parts of Syria. It has emphasized that the Syrian Arab army has never used chlorine gas or any other toxic material in any events or operations conducted in Syria against terrorists since the beginning of the crisis until now. The second report issued by the Fact-Finding Mission about the alleged use of chlorine in Syria, which my Government has condemned strongly, is an interim report with inconclusive results upon which no claims can be based. The report is a technical one that should be addressed within the OPCW framework; however, a small number of States have attempted to use it against Syria, which does not serve the credibility of the OPCW. We truly hope this report will not be politicized so that the OPCW does not lose credibility.

I call on colleagues to look more deeply into the covert work of international intelligence agencies working against Syria before they repeat accusations. They do not know how dangerous they are to the security and safety of the Syrian, Egyptian and Iraqi peoples, indeed all the peoples in the region and the world.

The Chair: We have now heard the last speaker on this cluster on weapons of mass destructions.

The Committee will now take up the list of speakers for the regional disarmament and security cluster.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). NAM States party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) reiterate their serious concern over the almost two-decade delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and urge the sponsors of the resolution to take all measures necessary to fully implement it without further delay. NAM States parties to the NPT express their profound disappointment that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, which was to have been held in 2012, has not yet been convened despite the consensus decision reached at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The continuing delay in implementing the 2010 action plan runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution. It also violates the collective agreement reached at the 2010 Review Conference. The parties stress that the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are the bases for establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. They strongly reject the alleged impediments to implementation of the 2010 Action Plan and 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and call for their immediate, speedy and full implementation so as to avoid any further potentially negative repercussions for the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime as a whole, including the effectiveness and credibility of the NPT and the 2015 review process.

NAM strongly supports the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Pending its establishment, NAM demands that Israel, the only country in the region that has neither joined the NPT nor declared its intention to do so, renounce any possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without precondition or further delay, and promptly place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency full-scope safeguards. The Movement also calls for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information,

material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear-related scientific or technological fields to Israel.

The establishment of the nuclear-weapon zones created by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba, the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as Mongolia's nuclear-weapon free status, are positive steps and important measures toward strengthening global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

NAM reiterates that, in the context of nuclear-weapon-free zones, it is essential that nuclear-weapon States provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zone. NAM urges States to conclude agreements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned with a view to establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones in the regions where they do not exist, in accordance with the provisions of the final document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) and the principles and guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1999. NAM calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to ratify related protocols to all treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations incompatible with their object and purpose, and respect the denuclearization status of these zones.

NAM would also like to emphasize the importance of the United Nations activities at the regional level to increase the stability and security of its Member States, which could be promoted in a substantive manner by the maintenance and revitalization of the three regional centres for peace and disarmament.

Ms. Young (Belize): I thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor to address the Committee on the regional disarmament cluster. As this is the first time Belize is taking the floor, allow me to congratulate Jamaica on assuming the chairmanship of this Committee.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The States members of CARICOM continue to take a practical and innovative approach at the regional and subregional levels in order to tackle the various security threats posed to the region, including from transnational organized crime and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. CARICOM also remains

committed to play its part in the global efforts to maintain our collective security by implementing our international obligations. CARICOM, having formally included security as the fourth pillar of our regional integration, continues to engage in collective action and forge partnerships that demonstrate its commitment to confronting the illicit trade in firearms, as well as shaping a framework for regional action. We take this opportunity to highlight some of our efforts towards regional disarmament.

The project Promoting Firearms Marking in Latin America and the Caribbean continues to benefit CARICOM countries and others in the wider CARICOM region. With the support of our neighbours in the region, we recognize that our collective ability to mark and control firearms in order to counter the violence and crime carried out with such weapons will be strengthened. This project has also assisted countries that have signed the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Tracking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials to meet their obligations.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) continues to be an important partner for CARICOM in its efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition. The Regional Centre has assisted CARICOM member States in enhancing the capacity of our law-enforcement and judicial personnel; improving our stockpile management capabilities; and aligning our national legislation with global and regional instruments. More than 10 countries of our region have benefited from UNLIREC's programme and have gained a greater capacity to manage and secure national stockpile facilities as a means of preventing diversion or leakage into the illicit market.

The results achieved by the partnership between the region and UNLIREC deserves notable mention. The region saw the destruction of more than 50,000 weapons and 62 tons of small arms and light weapons ammunitions. Thirteen States of the region have benefited from the putting into place of permanent and sustainable technical capacity to conduct independent weapons and ammunition destruction. This CARICOM stockpile management and small arms destruction assistance package has resulted in the training of almost 1,000 security sector officials on various

relevant measures to combat illicit arms trafficking and to mitigate diversion in the region.

To highlight a few concrete examples, UNLIREC conducted an armoury management course in Trinidad and Tobago, in November 2013. Thirteen security-sector officials from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago were trained in keeping with internationally accepted norms to manage, store, secure, inspect, maintain, repair and destroy small arms and their ammunition over the two-week period.

In February, Guyana benefited from UNLIREC's technical assistance, which included hands-on training of officials from the Guyana Police Force and the Guyana Defence Force, the entity responsible for leading the destruction efforts. The training included the use and maintenance of destruction equipment, as well as technical know-how on managing stockpiles and destroying weapons according to internationally accepted best practices and guidelines. There was subsequently a destruction of over 4,000 weapons and 3 tons of ammunition during a mission to Guyana.

In Belize in March, UNLIREC, as part of its firearms destruction and stockpile assistance package for Caribbean States, conducted a specialized training course on combating the illicit traffic in firearms, ammunitions and explosives for legal practitioners in Belize. The organization also carried out a legal seminar in which it presented the findings of UNLIREC's legal study, entitled "Norms and Legal Instruments on Firearms, Ammunition and Explosives".

CARICOM also commends UNLIREC for its efforts in the areas of armed violence prevention and for mainstreaming gender perspectives in the various disarmament projects being carried out throughout the region. CARICOM assures the United Nations of its commitment to the full implementation of the CARICOM Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) implementation programme. We acknowledge the announcement by UNLIREC of the launch of a new programme, in collaboration with the CARICOM resolution 1540 (2004) coordinator, to boost implementation of the resolution by Caribbean States. We recognize our role in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and its link to the economic

viability of our economies, which are demonstrably susceptible to external shocks.

Finally, CARICOM welcomes the United Nations Office for Drug Control (UNODC) regional programme 2014-2016. The programme serves as an overarching policy framework for UNODC's technical assistance to the Caribbean region and also supports the CARICOM crime and security strategy. The programme was developed in close collaboration with the CARICOM secretariat and the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security and many other regional partners. We look forward to working alongside UNODC as we strive to achieve the strategic goals aimed at strengthening the region's capacity to combat transnational organized crime and its manifestations.

Our region continues to face the challenge of limited resources with which to confront the various complex security issues we face. However, we are cognizant of the fact that the promotion of security is best assured through a broad network of partner relationships and by assisting each other in providing the necessary financial, technical and other resources needed in the region to achieve our strategic goals.

Mrs. Sweeb (Suriname): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

All UNASUR States are parties to the main international disarmament instruments, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. We constitute, therefore, a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

Since August 2009, at a special meeting held in Bariloche, Argentina, the Heads of State and Government of UNASUR decided to strengthen South America as a zone of peace. They committed to the establishment of a mechanism of mutual confidence in the field of security and defence and upheld their decision to refrain from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity of another UNASUR State.

Following the Bariloche decision, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and of Defence of UNASUR established a mechanism of confidence- and security-building measures that includes concrete measures for implementation and assurances. The Heads of

State of the South American continent emphasized that determination at their seventh meeting, held in Paramaribo on 30 August 2013. They also noted that the South American Defence Council was the ideal place for moving forward in the development of strategic thinking. Since its establishment, in 2008, the Council has adopted its statute and biennial plans of action, which underline actions on defence policies, military cooperation, humanitarian actions and peace operations, the defence industry and technology, and education and training.

A decision was also taken in 2013 to establish the Centre for Strategic Studies on Defence as an institution for generating knowledge and disseminating South American strategic thinking on defence and security matters. In that connection, *inter alia*, I should like to mention the following measures.

First, with regard to the exchange of information and to transparency related to defence systems and military expenditures, in May 2012 UNASUR launched the South American Register on Defence Expenditures, which for the first time compiles official information provided by the 12 UNASUR member States, based on a common agreed methodology developed to that effect.

Secondly, there are early notifications of military deployments or exercises in border areas, and invitations are issued for observers to participate in international exercises. Communication mechanisms in the field of regional and extraregional military activities have also been established.

Thirdly, there are measures in the field of security with regard to border surveillance, preventing and deterring illegally armed groups and acts of terrorism, and strengthening democracy and human rights.

Fourthly, there are measures in the area of assurances, such as the proscription of the use or threat of use of force in South America; the establishment of South America as a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the framework of the Treaty of Tlatelolco; and promoting respect for the principles of international law in cooperation treaties for defence purposes.

Fifthly, there are measures in the field of compliance and verifiability.

Every year, the General Assembly reiterates its strong support for the role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) in the

promotion of United Nations activities at the regional and subregional levels to strengthen peace, disarmament, stability, security and development among its member States. UNASUR highlights the fact that UNLIREC has succeeded in implementing programmes of work that are characterized by their interdisciplinary approach and a high level of coordination with different actors in the region, including other United Nations bodies, national Governments, provincial and municipal authorities and civil-society representatives.

We stress the importance of the Centre's programme of activities being devised and implemented in accordance with the priorities of the States of the region. In that context, I wish to draw particular attention to the initiatives undertaken by UNLIREC in response to requests by States in Latin America and the Caribbean for assistance in implementing the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). In that regard, UNASUR refers to the practical training course on ATT implementation, which complements the resources provided by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Finally, UNASUR States thank Governments, within and outside the region, for the financial support they have offered with a view to develop and implement the Regional Centre's activities. We encourage the international community to continue to provide support for the Centre's activities.

Mr. Mažeiks (Latvia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Latvia.

We highly value the importance of developing best practices and the exchange of information among countries in the fields of maritime and air traffic. We believe such efforts greatly complement the relevant international law and provide a significant contribution to the building of mutual understanding and confidence. We feel that is especially the case with regard to military vessels and aircraft. We also believe that, when operating outside national waters and airspace in peace time, military vessels and aircraft should apply procedures to ensure transparency and the safety of civil aviation and civil maritime activities.

Against that background and with that understanding, we would like to draw on existing best practices and propose to further improve transparency and the overall climate of trust among countries, in particular in the Baltic Sea region. First, route plans for both air and maritime traffic could be shared in advance with the countries concerned when military activity is

taking place in the exclusive economic zone of another country or in the international airspace in the immediate proximity to the borders of other countries. Secondly, countries could demonstrate their goodwill by ensuring that their armed forces make use of the on-board transponders and, in the aforementioned circumstances, respond to requests to contact ground control. Such practices would allow countries to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and false interpretations of military activities. Overall, they would promote confidence and transparency in international maritime and air traffic.

Mr. Ruiz Blanco (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia firmly believes that general and complete disarmament should be the next goal of the international community in terms of disarmament, and that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, in addition to contributing to global peace and security, constitutes an effective means of moving towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. As a State party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, my country reiterates the importance of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not currently exist, in accordance with the principles and guidelines set out by the Disarmament Commission in its 1999 report (A/54/42).

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are crucial to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, primarily for the following reasons. First, they ensure the absence of nuclear weapons, which enhances the security of each State in the zone. Secondly, they reduce the chances of nuclear weapons being used in conflicts involving States in that region or zone. Thirdly, they represent a confidence-building measure among the States in the zone, particularly with a view to promoting transparency in nuclear matters. Fourthly, they promote cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Fifthly, they strengthen the non-proliferation and disarmament regime through the treaty establishing the nuclear-weapon-free zone. In addition, nuclear-weapon-free zones are in turn reinforced by negative security assurances, through which nuclear States agree not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States in the zone. Sixthly, they demonstrate the commitment by States in the zone to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Allow me to point out that article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

enshrines the importance of regional disarmament and security agreements in the following terms:

“Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories.”

In conclusion, it is important to remember that, in accordance with the decision adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, it was agreed to convene a conference in 2012 at which all Middle Eastern States would participate to address the issue of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in that region. In that regard, I note that Colombia supports the convening of that conference and deems it appropriate to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): The General Assembly has long recognized that global peace and security depend, in large measure, on stability at the regional and subregional levels. It is because of that inseparable relationship between regional stability and international peace that the United Nations Charter itself recognizes and provides for regional arrangements to ensure global peace and security. In the post-Cold War era, most threats to peace and security arise mainly between States located in the same region or subregion. International and bilateral efforts towards disarmament and arms control are therefore reinforced and complemented by regional approaches to that end.

In the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution A/S-10/2), the proceedings of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee's draft resolutions, the United Nations has repeatedly reaffirmed the need for a simultaneous pursuit of regional and global approaches, including agreements in the area of disarmament and arms limitation. Through those mechanisms and normative frameworks, the international community has endorsed two well-recognized and tested tools, that is, conventional arms control and confidence-building measures (CBMs), particularly at the regional and subregional levels.

The resources freed up by disarmament in general, and by regional disarmament in particular, can be devoted to economic and social development and to the protection of the environment for the benefit of all peoples, in particular those of developing countries.

Several regions of the world have benefited from the application of principles and guidelines in the areas of conventional arms control and CBMs that have evolved and been agreed upon at the United Nations. It is important to recall and reiterate some of those principles, including the preservation of balance in the defence capabilities of States at the lowest level of armaments and military forces; the special responsibility of militarily significant States and States with larger military capabilities in promoting agreements for regional security; undiminished security; and the pursuit of disarmament measures in an equitable and balanced manner.

Regional arrangements for disarmament and arms limitation should accord priority to addressing the most destabilizing military capabilities and imbalances in both the conventional and non-conventional fields. In regions marked by tense environments and disputes, achieving a stable balance of conventional forces and weapons through cooperative regional initiatives is all the more relevant and important.

Confidence-building measures have proved their efficacy over the years at the regional and subregional levels, especially in the area of arms control and disarmament. They also have a positive correlation with international peace and security. CBMs should be pursued in conjunction with sincere efforts towards the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. They can significantly contribute to a global political environment conducive to promoting international agreements on disarmament and arms limitation.

Pakistan feels privileged to have spearheaded initiatives on regional disarmament, conventional arms control and CBMs at the United Nations for several years now. A practical expression of Pakistan's commitment to promoting those globally agreed goals is reflected in the draft resolutions that we introduce every year in the First Committee. Those draft resolutions cover subjects that include, first, regional disarmament; secondly, confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context; and, thirdly, conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels.

As in previous years, the delegation of Pakistan has introduced draft resolutions on regional disarmament (A/C.1/69/L.28), confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context (A/C.1/69/L.29) and conventional arms control at the regional and subregional

levels (A/C.1/69/L.30). The draft resolutions recognize the significance of regional approaches to arms control, disarmament and confidence-building for international peace and stability, as well as the complementarity between regional and global approaches. We look forward to the continued support of Member States in the adoption of those draft resolutions this year as well.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): As a reflection of our enduring interest in promoting international peace and prosperity, the United States is strongly committed to strengthening partnerships and cooperation with regional and other intergovernmental organizations. Years of experience have confirmed that non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives at the global and regional levels are mutually reinforcing.

The United States sees great value in collaborative approaches across the entire spectrum of non-proliferation and arms-control initiatives. For example, in East Asia, the regional non-proliferation and disarmament architecture has steadily developed and matured to address the challenges to the global regime. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum just finished its second round of intersessional meetings on non-proliferation and disarmament, and the East Asia Summit has emerged as a premier forum for discussing regional security and non-proliferation issues. Both forums have opened opportunities for workshops devoted to building national capacity and establishing and strengthening regional cooperation.

In the western hemisphere, the member States of the Organization of American States are using workshops and exercises to enhance their bioincident readiness and response capabilities. Those activities serve to strengthen coordination between Government officials and representatives from a number of agencies involved with emergency response. Developing partnerships between regions and international organizations is also key, and organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and others deserve a great deal of praise for ongoing and collaborative efforts to address many development challenges at the regional level.

We know from history that strong partnerships require sustained effort. Unfortunately, Russia's deliberate and repeated violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine have undermined the security structure in Europe that all of us have worked to develop following the Cold War. While arms

control agreements cannot substitute for adherence to international law and responsible behaviour in the international community, in the face of today's security challenges we are committed to finding a way forward to preserve, strengthen and modernize conventional arms control based on key principles and commitments.

We have other challenges. Many delegations have mentioned proliferation crises in the Middle East and North-East Asia. We must seek to ensure that the international verification of obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains effective and robust and that parties uphold the integrity of the Treaty by addressing non-compliance. Together, we can ensure that the IAEA has the authority and resources needed to implement safeguards that meet our common expectations. The United States is committed to working to bring parties together for the goal of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, and we will continue working intensively to convene the relevant conference as soon as the arrangements can be agreed by the regional parties. There is no substitute for direct dialogue among the States in the region. We remain optimistic that such a consensus can be achieved. In every State in the Middle East, there are diplomats with vision, creativity and determination, and we will not stop in our efforts to work with them in pursuit of that goal.

As we face global challenges together, we should not forget that relationships and interconnections shape our collective work and activities. We commend regional efforts by States to demonstrate their commitment to all three of the NPT pillars, including through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, South-East Asia, Central Asia and the South Pacific. Those zones facilitate regional cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, enhance global and regional peace and security, strengthen the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and contribute to the goal of nuclear disarmament. Also, consistent with our shared objective of a world free of nuclear weapons, we continue to work towards the goal of seeing South Asia become free of nuclear weapons. To further that goal, the United States has regular ongoing senior-level dialogues with officials in the region, which cover a range of issues that include non-proliferation, disarmament and regional stability.

As noted in our previous statements, the United States is firmly committed to fulfilling our obligations

and working with the international community. It is important that nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States see non-proliferation and disarmament not as competing goals but as mutually reinforcing efforts towards the common goal of reducing nuclear threats. All States benefit from those efforts, and we have a common obligation to continue making progress in that direction, step by step.

Mrs. Del Sol Dominguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, my delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

Cuba is committed to multilateralism as a basic principle of negotiations on disarmament and arms control. We also stress the importance of regional and subregional initiatives in this area.

Regional disarmament efforts should duly take into account the characteristics of each region. There can be no prescriptions imposed upon or actions that jeopardize the security of any State of the region concerned.

Confidence-building measures and global and regional disarmament approaches complement each other and, as far as possible, must be applied simultaneously. The implementation of regional confidence-building measures that have the consent and participation of all States of the region in question helps prevent conflict and unintended or accidental outbreaks of hostilities.

States with greater military capabilities have an important responsibility with respect to regional and international security. In that context, it is crucial that respect be guaranteed for regional and subregional decisions and treaties aimed at achieving peace and security.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world are an effective contribution to strengthening regional and global peace and security and must be respected. Cuba belongs to the first densely populated area of the world to have established a nuclear-weapon-free zone, namely, via the Treaty of Tlatelolco. In addition, we are proud to belong to the region whose leaders, in a historic and unprecedented act, formally proclaimed it a zone of peace at the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana on 29 January, with a view to forever banning the use or threat of use of force in our region.

Cuba believes that the failure to hold a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is unjustifiable and damaging. The establishment of such a zone would represent a major step in the Middle East peace process. We urge that the conference be held as soon as possible before the end of this year.

In conclusion, allow me to emphasize the importance that Cuba attributes to the work of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, including the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. We believe that the resources currently reserved for such centres are limited and insufficient. We hope that the role of the centres will continue to be strengthened, to the benefit of regional disarmament, security and development.

Mr. AlAjmi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, Mr. Chair, on behalf of the State of Kuwait, I would like to convey to you our best wishes for the success of the work of the First Committee. We are convinced that, thanks to your extensive diplomatic experience, positive momentum will be given to the work of the Committee to realize the disarmament and international security aspirations of the peoples of the world.

My delegation also endorses the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

No one doubts the dangers posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in different parts of the world, or by the high probability of a nuclear, radioactive or chemical disaster, which would have very negative, widescale consequences for human beings and threaten life around the globe. International efforts are therefore required in order to create a world free of such deadly weapons.

The international community is deeply convinced that peace and humankind's survival depend upon completely ridding the world of weapons of mass destruction. The international community has for many decades sought to achieve that noble goal through treaties and conventions banning such weapons, proscribing their testing and calling for their elimination. We in Kuwait, like other people of the world, dream that our region will be rid of these deadly weapons, which have such massive destructive potential and kill indiscriminately. The Middle East region itself has been beset by instability and numerous

conflicts and wars for decades, and we must therefore rid the region of such weapons.

We urge the international community to work to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. That goal will be achieved only through the commitment of all the parties in the region, in accordance with the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was reaffirmed at the 2010 Review Conference. The hope for a more secure world has become more remote since the international community was unable to hold a conference on that subject in Helsinki in 2012. That should have been a historic occasion for disarmament: the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Those hopes were dashed when Israel refused to join in that international effort on the basis of baseless pretexts, part of a number of repeated attempts to retreat from its commitments under international law. The international community should therefore insist that Israel become a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the principal cornerstone of disarmament, place all its nuclear installations under the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and respect the relevant international resolutions, which reflect the widely shared desire of the rest of the world to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, since Israel is the only country in the region that possesses them.

As to the broader region, with regard to the Iranian nuclear programme, Kuwait hopes the issue can be settled by peaceful means while guaranteeing Iran's and every other State's right to use nuclear power for peaceful purposes under IAEA verification and supervision. It is vital that we arrive at an international agreement on Iran's nuclear programme, which can be achieved only through Iran's full commitment to cooperating with the IAEA and implementing the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the highest security and safety standards for its nuclear installations.

Mr. Alwan (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): As this is the first time that I take the floor, I would like to congratulate you and your friendly country, Sir, on your chairing of the First Committee, and the other members of the Bureau on their work.

I would like to take this opportunity to align myself with the statements made previously by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Egypt, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

The Government of Iraq supports non-proliferation and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in particular, in view of the fact that nuclear weapons ensure no one's security and can lead only to a regional arms race. We stress the importance of peaceful solutions and multilateral diplomatic efforts in reducing tensions and conflicts. Furthermore, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones supports the cause of regional and international non-proliferation, peace and security and nuclear disarmament processes and measures in general.

Iraq also believes that establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is vital to ensuring effective collaboration among the various parties so as to eliminate the dangers of such weapons and improve security for all. Although we consider the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction all over the world to be important, that is particularly the case in the Middle East, as a number of other speakers have mentioned. Much time has passed since the first call came for establishing such a zone, and efforts to do so have met with what in our view are unacceptable pretexts and obstacles. We should recall that the resolutions of the General Assembly and of the NPT Review Conferences, as well as other relevant resolutions, require that nuclear States provide the cooperation necessary for the speedy establishment of such a zone in the Middle East.

Moreover, acting on its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should take the necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons without any selective treatment, and in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone does not mean that the international community should abandon its responsibilities when creating such a zone, which requires the free consent of the States in the region, in accordance with paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and the resolution on the Middle East adopted in 1995 at the fifth NPT Review Conference, the 2000 Review Conference and the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference.

Based on those facts, Iraq believes that all efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East should incorporate various important phases, which include Israel's nuclear disarmament, its accession to the NPT and its placing of its nuclear installations under the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981). Those stages are essential preconditions for reducing tensions in the Middle East. The Israeli nuclear installations designed for military capability and goals are not safeguarded or verifiable, unlike those everywhere else.

As long as the resolution on the Middle East goes unimplemented, instability and tension in the region are perpetuated and the implementation of other agreements is hindered, which jeopardizes non-proliferation and undermines the credibility of the Treaty and its universalization. We therefore express our regret at the failure of international efforts to hold a conference on the Middle East in Helsinki in 2012 — another example of the non-implementation of the relevant international resolutions and the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Conference, which weakens the Treaty and the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Postponing the Helsinki conference indefinitely is unacceptable and inexcusable, and we urge all the parties to assume their responsibilities in that regard.

Mr. Al Nehayan (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): With regard to the issue of regional disarmament, we would like to associate ourselves with the statements made by the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on behalf of the League of Arab States, and the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.16).

Despite the progress that has been made in establishing zones free of nuclear weapons in some parts of the world, based on existing treaties, the United Arab Emirates is very concerned about the international community's inability to achieve any tangible progress or results regarding disarmament in the Middle East and establishing it as a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In that context, my delegation emphasizes the vital importance of eliminating all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East as a major priority, owing to the destructive humanitarian, social and economic implications of such weapons, which transcend regional boundaries. That also requires the

speedy implementation of all the commitments relating to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) undertaken in 1995, the measures adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the 2010 action plan.

We would also like to express once again our disappointment at the fact that the 2012 conference called for in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference has still not taken place, and we ask that it be held as soon as possible. We also reiterate that the United Arab Emirates will continue to consult closely with the conference facilitator, Ambassador Laajava, and with other parties to that end. In that regard, we call on the international community to work quickly and effectively with the aim of implementing its commitments and achieving concrete results before the holding of the next NPT Review Conference, in 2015.

Lastly, we call on Israel to accede to the NPT, since it is the only State in the region that has not yet done so.

Programme of work

The Chair: We have now exhausted the time available for this meeting. Before adjourning the meeting, I should say that we have 10 speakers remaining under cluster 6, "Regional disarmament and security". We can fit them neatly into 50 minutes, so when we reconvene at 3 p.m. today we will deal with those 10 speakers with dispatch, followed by the 23 speakers I have on my list for the next cluster, which is cluster 3, "Outer space". Practically speaking, we can hear 23 speakers in two hours and three minutes, which will take us until 5.53 p.m. That means that tomorrow morning and afternoon we can tackle cluster 5, for which we have 21 speakers. That will take one hour and 53 minutes and still leave an hour and seven minutes for non-governmental organizations. We will then have finished our work for this segment and can start action on the draft resolutions on Wednesday afternoon. Without missing a beat, everything can be done and tied up on schedule, with the Committee's cooperation. That is the schedule.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.