



General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

First Committee

15th meeting

Wednesday, 20 October 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Koterec (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 88 to 104, and 162 (continued)

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

The Chair: The Committee will now continue its thematic discussion on conventional weapons.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): In deference, Sir, to your call for brevity, I will distribute the complete text of my statement and deliver here an abbreviated version.

The real parents of egregious spending on armaments are unresolved conflict and strategic asymmetry. Asymmetries in conventional armaments in conflict areas promote insecurity and increase military spending. Strategically or commercially motivated arms supplies to tense or conflict-ridden regions disrupt delicate strategic balance, enhancing the quest for balanced conventional capabilities or, in case of an unmanageable differential, the compulsion to acquire nuclear weapons and missile capabilities. Besides addressing the root causes of insecurity, conventional arms control must ensure that proclamations about balanced reductions in conventional arms are translated into action.

Global zero should be pursued in tandem with conventional disarmament. The elimination of nuclear weapons should not give way to an unworkable

conventional imbalance. The final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly calls for

“balanced reduction of armed forces and of conventional armaments, based on the principle of undiminished security of the parties with a view to promoting or enhancing stability at a lower military level, taking into account the need of all States to protect their security” (*S-10/2, para. 22*).

Pakistan firmly believes that confidence-building and arms reduction in the regional and subregional contexts is of paramount importance. Out of our traditional First Committee resolutions, three relate to regional disarmament and conventional arms control and confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional contexts. Earlier this year, our delegation to the Conference on Disarmament proposed addition of an item, “Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional level”, in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

A further complicating factor is the development of advanced conventional weapons with lethality approaching that of weapons of mass destruction, without the public relations fallout. The United Nations disarmament machinery must address this dimension promptly. In its own region, Pakistan has proposed a three-pronged strategic restraint regime. Pakistan looks forward to a successful outcome of the Fourth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

10-59432 (E)



Please recycle

We also support continued negotiations in the CCW to achieve consensus on cluster munitions.

In the context of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, we look forward to a productive Meeting of Governmental Experts in May 2011. We believe that the consensual Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons should be strengthened rather than being supplanted by parallel instruments.

In regard to a potential arms trade treaty, we are in favour of an inclusive, step-by-step, consensual, objective and United Nations Charter-compliant approach. State primacy in decision-making should be respected and preserved. Micromanagement should be avoided and, in any case, arms transactions between two sovereign States that are not subject to any United Nations arms embargo should not be second-guessed.

Mrs. Dibaco (Ethiopia): Since this is the first time I am speaking in this Committee, allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Committee and to assure you of my delegation's full support in the performance of your duties. We are confident that your leadership will steer our deliberations to a successful outcome.

As was indicated by my delegation in its statement delivered in the general debate of this session, we believe that the proliferation of weapons poses great danger in any part of the globe. Its net adverse effects are manifold for the developing world, and particularly for the least developed countries. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to pose a major challenge not only to the maintenance of peace and security of countries in our region, but also to their political, economic and social advancement.

Ethiopia welcomes the adoption by consensus in June of the Outcome Document of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3). We are committed to the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

The Government of Ethiopia has been working closely with partners in the region and beyond to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to

Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In line with that, States members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development have undertaken measures to improve the coordinating mechanisms that would facilitate the smoother implementation of the Programme of Action.

As a member of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, established under the Nairobi Protocol, Ethiopia has been working actively with neighbouring countries. The Government established a national policing plan at the federal and regional levels to more closely coordinate its efforts to strengthen border controls and stop the illicit import and transfer of firearms.

Ethiopia has established a national focal point on small arms and light weapons. Civil society is also represented by three non-governmental organizations in the national focal point. The national focal point is responsible for the development of national policy and for the implementation of the programme on small arms as per the requirements of the Programme of Action, the Bamako Declaration, the Nairobi Declaration and Protocol, and other initiatives and agreements on small arms. In the recent past, a total of more than 24,000 arms and 100,000 rounds of ammunition have been collected and destroyed. So far, Ethiopia has been sufficiently forthcoming in taking proactive measures to curb the problem.

Turning to the issue of anti-personnel mines, Ethiopia firmly believes that all States must join hands to put an end to the indiscriminate casualties and horrible suffering caused by such mines. At present, anti-personnel mines are severely affecting a considerable number of people, mostly innocent and defenceless civilians, in particular children, and obstructing economic development and reconstruction endeavours. Ethiopia was among the first countries that joined the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which it signed in 1997 and to which it has been a State party since June 2005.

Under the 2007-2009 mine action programme, humanitarian demining operations have been continuing in the Afar, Tigray and Somali regions. Under the programme, a total of 16 square kilometres of cleared land was released through integrated humanitarian demining operations to 131,300 people.

Combined with indirect beneficiaries, it is estimated that a total of 1.2 million people have benefited from those mine clearance operations.

The Government is providing gender- and culture-sensitive mine-risk education in locations around mine-affected areas and demining project sites. Those programmes have benefited some 440,978 inhabitants since 2002, of which 173,187 are women and 267,791 are men.

Through the different structures and links, including the survey teams in the community liaison offices in the field, local communities and the local authorities have always been involved at various activity levels, including prioritization, planning and the handover of cleared mine areas. As a result of that participation, the community provides pertinent information, including reports on the number of anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines and unexploded ordnance found by community members. That joint participation has also enhanced the utilization of cleared areas in different development and productive sectors. Ethiopia is planning to fully address that problem just before the deadline set under article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

My country has implemented clearance activities from the outset with its own resources, funding from development partners and a loan from the World Bank. At this juncture, my delegation would like to emphasize that international cooperation and funding assistance are critically needed to carry out the clearance work and to meet the deadline set under the Convention.

In conclusion, being well aware that the increased proliferation of conventional arms, particularly small arms and light weapons, is having a devastating impact on the daily lives of millions of people around the world, our country calls on the international community to join hands to curb those dangers.

Ms. Bolaños-Pérez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first time we are taking the floor, we wish to congratulate you, Sir, on having assumed the chairmanship of the First Committee. My delegation also wishes to recognize the other members of the Bureau.

On the subject of conventional weapons, we wish to refer first to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms

and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its follow-up mechanisms. The Programme of Action is a strategic tool for effectively addressing the multidimensional problem created by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and by the proliferation of munitions and their components. It is important for the attention given to that issue to go beyond arms reduction and control measures, in view of the relationship between security, armed violence, crime, trade and development, among other things.

In that regard, my delegation welcomes the convening of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in June, and recognizes the work of Ambassador Pablo Macedo of Mexico and his facilitators. The Outcome Document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3), approved by consensus, is a useful tool in efforts to continue effectively addressing a range of issues, such as efforts to prevent and combat the illicit trade in arms across borders, international cooperation and assistance, and the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Also of great importance to my delegation are the issues of ammunition, civilian possession of weapons and the participation of private security providers. It is important that we move forward in our discussions on those issues. We look forward with interest to the May 2011 meeting of experts, which will be chaired by Ambassador Jim McLay of New Zealand.

Armed violence is an ongoing threat to hemispheric security. We therefore believe it essential to continue designing strategies to prevent and reduce armed violence, address the factors that increase its frequency, and promote the development of public policies and political commitments based on human security and community capacity-building. In that spirit, in 2006 Guatemala signed the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, in which it participates along with a large group of countries. Since 2007, it has been part of the core group responsible for implementing and publicizing the Declaration.

Guatemala recognizes the close link between armed violence and development, which impedes efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. That is why we also welcome the convening of the

Oslo Conference on Armed Violence in May 2010, which culminated with the adoption of the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence. My country assumed those commitments and views them as a contribution to efforts to prevent and reduce the scourge of armed violence so that it is no longer a serious obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Guatemala is aware that the lack of common international regulations governing the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons has a devastating effect on our societies. That is why we support initiatives to promote an arms trade treaty. We recognize the need to address problems related to the unregulated trade in conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market. It is a danger that can exacerbate instability, international terrorism and transnational organized crime.

We fully support the launch of negotiations on an arms trade treaty that would establish clear, objective and non-discriminatory criteria to regulate international arms transfers. The arms trade treaty should cover all types of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, and contain provisions for mechanisms to prevent the irresponsible transfer of weapons and parameters to ensure respect for international humanitarian law and human rights and prevent the diversion of arms to illicit markets.

In that regard, we welcome the convening in 2012 of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which is charged with drafting a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms. We will continue to play an active role in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina.

As a country that does not produce, use or store cluster munitions, and aware of the serious humanitarian consequences of these types of weapons for the civilian population, Guatemala welcomed the entry into force in August of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Convention prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of such munitions and establishes a framework for cooperation and assistance for victims of cluster munitions, their families and communities, the clearance of contaminated areas and the destruction of stockpiles.

We welcome the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, to be held in November in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which will establish the foundations for the implementation of the Convention, the first international accord on disarmament in a decade. My country is pleased to announce that it is in the final stage of the Convention's domestic ratification process, and we hope to ratify it in the next few weeks.

Guatemala recognizes the efforts undertaken by the Group of Governmental Experts of the high contracting parties to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects to implement an instrument that deals comprehensively with the consequences of cluster munitions. We hope that the results produced will be in the spirit of the Convention itself.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the delegation of Brazil on behalf of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and associated States.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is an issue that has attracted particular attention from the international community in recent years, given the negative impact of that illegal activity on States, especially those affected by internal conflict. This is why we call for efforts based on international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate this illicit activity, while always respecting the rules and principles of international law, and the State's primary responsibility for implementing the appropriate measures to combat such crimes, based on the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its support for the Programme of Action as a primary political instrument for channelling international cooperation and assistance. It was in that spirit of commitment that our delegation attended in June the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action. The Meeting once again emphasized the importance of international cooperation to effectively addressing this

illegal activity and supporting the public policies being implemented by the respective Governments.

We are convinced that strengthening the Programme of Action requires the support of the international community for efforts aimed at strengthening cooperation among States as a complement to national efforts. We reiterate our call for such cooperation to be offered without political conditions and in full respect for the sovereign right of States to determine their own priorities and needs.

The negotiation and adoption of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons as a legally binding commitment will facilitate the identification of the producers of illicit weapons and thereby help to determine their provenance, as well as the routes and incidence of the crime of illicit trafficking.

What is needed is identification controls for weapons, not just for importing purposes but from the very moment they are manufactured, which can be achieved by setting up automated registry systems and promoting cooperation in tracing legally transferred weapons. In this regard, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela emphasizes that, in addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, responsibility falls to States that have public or private businesses manufacturing such weapons. Those States should establish strict controls to ensure, or help to ensure, that such weapons are prevented from being diverted to illegal trading. The responsibility of States with factories that produce such weapons cannot be equivalent to that of States that do not. That difference should be taken into account when dealing with the issue in order to avoid adopting unfair and useless international measures attempting to remedy illicit trafficking.

Allow me now to discuss the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. Venezuela reaffirms its conviction that this process must necessarily be developed in a gradual, transparent, balanced and non-discriminatory manner. This issue must be considered in depth, since it has a direct impact on the security of States. The spirit in which the instrument is to be developed cannot and should not undermine or prejudice the sovereign right of States to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain the conventional arms they need to meet the

requirements of internal and external security, as a function of every State's right to security and self-defence.

At the regional level, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela meets the standards established by the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials, ratified in April 2005. At the subregional level, we have participated in the Working Group on Firearms of MERCOSUR and Associated States. Venezuela also actively supports the development and implementation of the confidence- and security-building measures agreed on by the Union of South American Nations. Among these is the development and updating of national systems for identifying and tracing weapons, as well as active cooperation among member States in exchanging information and efforts on cases of the diversion, smuggling or illegal use of weapons in their custody or originating in their territories.

At the national level, Venezuela has been strengthening its efforts in this area. This year, the National Assembly intends to pass a disarmament act as part of our comprehensive State policy aimed at combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The bill will include legislation to protect and control arsenals, arms caches and ammunition. The Venezuelan penal code also establishes prison sentences of five to eight years for intermediaries who market, import or transfer illegal firearms. Under that legislation, seizures and confiscations of illegal weapons continue. Some 43 tons of these weapons have been destroyed at public events.

On 19 April 2005, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela deposited its instrument of accession to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, as well as its Protocols I, II, III and IV.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has been participating actively in a number of international initiatives aimed at strengthening the norms of international humanitarian law. On the basis of this commitment, our country has supported initiatives to address the humanitarian impact of the use of cluster munitions in armed conflicts.

In this context, our country participated in the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, held in Geneva in 2007, where we gave clear support to the formation of a Group of Governmental Experts mandated to negotiate a legally binding international instrument banning the production, storage, use and transfer of cluster munitions, given their negative effects on civilian populations in the short, medium and long terms. Venezuela believes that such a universal disarmament tool would make a significant positive and immediate contribution to strengthening the rules and principles of international humanitarian law.

I will finish my remarks reaffirming Venezuela's full commitment to promoting a safer and more peaceful world and respect for the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Hoffmann (Germany): My delegation has the honour to introduce on behalf of the sponsors draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.36, entitled "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures". We express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on this topic (A/65/153), as well as to Member States that have sponsored analogous resolutions in the past and to those who are doing so this year. Germany has submitted this draft resolution biannually since 1996. It has always enjoyed considerable support, leading to its adoption by consensus in 2008.

The concept of practical disarmament goes back to former Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali and his "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277). It has since been given increasing attention by the international community. Its basic idea is to focus the attention of the First Committee in a more integrated manner on the relevance of practical disarmament measures for the consolidation of peace in conflict and post-conflict environments. As experience has shown, measures such as the control of small arms and light weapons, including their ammunition, or the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants have become integral parts of effective conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. Practical disarmament and arms control measures have led to results with a direct impact on the lives of people in countries affected by conflict.

A concrete expression of the draft resolution's intent is the work of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures. The Group has been meeting since 1998 in an effort to strengthen international cooperation and to promote concrete practical disarmament and arms control projects. It is open to States, international or regional organizations and non-governmental organizations with an interest in its activities. In recent years, the Group of Interested States has been focusing on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and on challenges and opportunities to enhance its implementation, including lessons learned and best practices.

At the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, States underlined the central role of the Programme of Action Implementation Support System as a comprehensive tool for facilitating cooperation and assistance in the implementation of practical disarmament measures, including the matching of assistance needs with available resources, and encouraged its further development. We have welcomed this broad support in the expanded tenth preambular paragraph in the draft resolution. Given the central importance of the Implementation Support System to the implementation of the Programme of Action, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs must be able to rely on sufficient resources for maintaining it. This has been included in paragraph 6 of this year's draft resolution.

In the report of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3), States are encouraged to consider ways in which needs and resources can be matched and coordinated more effectively. We are convinced that the well-established Group of Interested States as an informal, open and transparent forum can and should facilitate the effective matching of needs and resources, building on its experience and broad-based composition. This is encouraged in new paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. Besides these modifications, we have made only some technical changes to update the 2008 resolution.

I recommend this draft resolution for the consideration and support of this Committee. Informal consultations were held prior to the submission of the draft in an effort to once again secure its adoption

without a vote. My delegation hopes that this tradition can be maintained.

Mr. Arrocha Olabuenaga (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): In recent years, my country has expressed its profound concern over the irresponsible or illicit use of conventional arms, which exacerbates many of the conflicts currently threatening peace and security, and has repeatedly called the attention of the Organization and the international community to the importance of concluding agreements enabling us to bring such activities to an end.

Illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, irresponsible conventional weapons transfers, the use of cluster munitions and the existence of large minefields around the world are some of the main challenges we must face and on which we must focus our efforts by establishing more effective controls over such weapons. However, this year we have seen demonstrations of the political will of States in this field through constructive dialogue and negotiations in various forums, reaffirming that progress is possible on this front.

The entry into force on 1 August of the Convention on Cluster Munitions; the first adoption by consensus of a substantive document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3) at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; the agreements reached at the Second Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; and the successful conclusion of the national demining plan in Nicaragua, which made it possible to declare Mexico and Central America a mine-free zone, strengthening that Convention — all of these are signals of the renewed commitment of States to tackling the threat posed by the irresponsible or unlawful use of conventional weapons. We hope that this commitment will also be reflected in the work of the First Committee.

My delegation appeals to States to maintain that spirit of commitment in their approach to the tasks that remain to be achieved, such as the negotiation of an arms trade treaty. Mexico believes that it is particularly important for us to succeed in concluding an arms trade treaty in 2012, as such an agreement is essential to the

regulation of the arms trade, and not merely to export controls. In other words, we should establish not only parameters for the sale of weapons, but also mechanisms to ensure that, after sale, weapons are used correctly and not diverted to the black market or used for illicit purposes.

For my delegation, it is imperative that such an instrument go beyond regulating the arms trade and also cover munitions, thus avoiding a repetition of the mistake we made in 2001 when we adopted the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which left out the important illegal munitions market that now poses a serious threat to a large number of countries.

Out of the same concern to ensure the comprehensive nature of our efforts, Mexico is concerned by the possibility, raised by a number of countries, that hunting and sporting weapons will be left out of the Treaty. Mexico believes that such an approach would be wrong; the fact that such weapons are manufactured for peaceful uses does not guarantee that they will not be used, at times systematically, to violate peace, international humanitarian law and human rights. This point is a priority of particular importance, especially for Latin America and Africa.

Given this situation, my delegation hopes to see the conclusion of a maximal standards treaty in 2012, recalling that we, together with the majority of States, have publicly supported a robust and legally binding text. This is Mexico's goal and, without prejudice to the importance of addressing the concerns of all delegations, we will not accept vetoes or impositions, which are contrary to the purpose and aims of the Treaty.

Lastly, my delegation profoundly regrets the lack of results in the negotiations on a cluster munitions protocol to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). Mexico notes with great concern that, despite the grave effects of such weapons on civilian populations and the mandate to achieve an agreement in this area, we have not managed to find a way to control them in the context of the United Nations.

My country is as committed to the work of our Organization as it is to seeing steady progress in

international law, in particular international humanitarian law. That is why, faced with the paralysis in any forum, such as that of the CCW, resulting from positions that do little or nothing to address humanitarian concerns, we believe there is a need to seek other forums that would enable us to carry out meaningful negotiations, such as those achieved through the Oslo process that led to the successful adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We issue a strong call on States to consider this issue carefully in order to take a decision that will enable us to move forward towards the humanitarian aims of the Convention.

Mr. Mugoya (Uganda): The first decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed complex and profound changes in the international security environment, marked by both challenges and opportunities to deal with security threats. Regional hotspots and conflicts have continued to emerge. Africa, and the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa in particular, have suffered persistent conflicts, perpetuated by the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These conflicts continue to impact negatively on economic, political and social development.

The countries of the Great Lake region and the Horn of Africa, and Uganda in particular, attach great importance to the fight against illicit trafficking in and proliferation of conventional weapons. We are convinced that illicit arms and weapons are an impediment to peace, security and development in our region. There is therefore an urgent need for cooperation among all Member States to combat their proliferation, including by destroying them. To date, under the East African Community small arms and light weapons management programme, the five partner States have destroyed more than 14,600 small arms and five tons of explosives in an effort to make the East African subregion secure and peaceful.

We support the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and consider it to be a useful mechanism in the efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in and proliferation of arms. Uganda welcomes the Outcome Document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3) of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in June, and looks forward to the Meeting

of Governmental Experts in 2011 and the Review Conference in 2012.

The Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa adopted a strategy that complements and reinforces national, regional and global efforts to prevent and combat the proliferation and trafficking of illicit arms. There is a Regional Centre on Small Arms in Nairobi, which guides national and regional efforts in this endeavour.

Uganda launched its national action plan on small arms and light weapons in 2005, focusing on three key areas, namely, the control and management of existing small arms and light weapons; the reduction of the number of small arms and light weapons in circulation; and the prevention of proliferation. In accordance with the requirements of the Nairobi Protocol, the United Nations Programme of Action and the international tracing instruments, Uganda is currently engaged in a nationwide firearms marking exercise, which includes firearms in the hands of the Ugandan police and the military. The marking exercise will help to determine surplus stock and facilitate the decommissioning and disposal of surplus small arms and lights weapons.

Uganda has been working closely with civil society organizations in the implementation of our national strategy to combat the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. Civil society organizations are particularly important in the areas of institutional capacity-building and the sensitization of the public on the dangers of illicit arms.

In our view, the most effective way of combating the proliferation of small arms is through conflict prevention and resolution. It is well known that the small arms corridors in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa have links to conflict situations that perpetuate trafficking in small arms. The Great Lakes, East African Community and Intergovernmental Authority on Development subregions have therefore prioritized and intensified efforts towards conflict prevention and resolution.

It is essential that stakeholders in the arms industry cooperate in the global efforts to implement initiatives directed at combating illicit trafficking in and proliferation of conventional arms. It is also important to reiterate that international measures to combat the illicit trade in small arms and trafficking should not be used by any State to deny another its sovereign right to legally acquire arms for self-defence.

Another area of concern for Uganda is the presence of unexploded ordinance, including landmines left behind from previous conflicts on the African continent, which has resulted in deaths and injuries. We commend the efforts of international organizations, non-governmental organization and development partners to help national and regional efforts to get rid of these dangerous materials.

The use of cluster munitions in armed conflicts also continues to pose a major challenge to the international community. Uganda has been a victim of the use of cluster munitions, with devastating effects on our population in areas of armed conflict. Uganda therefore welcomes the entry into force in August of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, to which Uganda is a signatory. Uganda is also a signatory to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty. We remain committed to the full implementation of these instruments.

In conclusion, we stress the need to move forward on the multilateral, regional and subregional disarmament and non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament agenda.

Mr. Yitzhaki (Israel): As this is the first time I am taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming your duties as Chair of the Committee at this session. Allow me once again to assure you and the Secretariat of the full cooperation of our delegation as you carry out your duties.

Arms transfers to terrorists and terrorist groups present a serious threat to security, peace and stability. They have grave humanitarian repercussions, aggravate human suffering and undermine efforts to promote and secure peace. Such transfers strengthen extremist groups and allow terrorist groups to nefariously gain political advantage by using those arms against civilians. They promote a culture of violence and encourage disregard of all moral or legal norms.

The international community has been rightly preoccupied with addressing the proliferation threats posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Israel agrees that there is a need to address WMD proliferation threats, particularly as a significant portion of these proliferation concerns have emerged from the Middle East or been directed towards the region. Nonetheless, we believe that it is incumbent upon the international community to devote similar attention to the threats posed by the illicit and

irresponsible proliferation of conventional weapons, their munitions and other military equipment and know-how.

Conventional weapons are necessary for the self-defence of States and thus for the preservation of peace. Conventional arms initiatives should therefore take into account the need for balance between the legitimate security interests of States and the need to reduce unnecessary human suffering.

The Middle East is particularly vulnerable to the dire impact of arms transfers to terrorists. Arms continue to flow to terrorists groups, notwithstanding the recognition of the international community of the need to regulate the arms trade. The conflict that erupted in our region in the summer of 2006 showed that man-portable air defence system, unmanned aerial vehicles, missiles of various types and ranges, and short-range rockets and mortars are not outside the reach of terrorists.

Hizbullah, which is supported first and foremost by Iran, has continued to arm itself heavily since 2006. In recent years, Hizbullah has increased the breadth and sophistication of its arsenals. The transfer of arms from Iran and Syria to Hizbullah has continued unabated, in contravention of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). The smuggling of arms plays into the hands of those who wish to ignite conflict in the region and has been facilitated by States.

The Hamas terror organization has closely followed Hizbullah's footsteps, resulting in the conflict in Gaza. The events of January 2009 underlined the problem of terrorists using arms intentionally against civilians and the detrimental effect this has on peace and security.

A principle priority of the international community in the sphere of conventional weapons must be the prevention of arms transfers to terrorists. We must create a clear and comprehensive norm banning such transfers and adopt concrete obligations requiring States to take measures to halt all such transfers. Curbing illicit arms proliferation must begin with a strong national commitment and determination. There can be no justification under any pretext for the transfer arms to terrorists; nor can there be any rationale for actively turning a blind eye to such transfers.

In June 2007, the delegation of Israel to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva presented a working paper (see CD/1823) to promote further action on this issue. This working paper set out and analysed existing documents, instruments and resolutions on the prevention of arms transfers to terrorists. The paper demonstrated the need for immediate, comprehensive and systematic action. However, this will require pragmatism. Long-enduring differences over issues such as definitions must be put aside. Pragmatism will also be required in order to overcome the long-standing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. In the meantime, there is no reason why the Conference should not seriously address this issue while agreement is still pending on the four core issues of the Conference's programme of work.

We must identify practical steps to move this issue forward. Such steps could, for example, include identification of national programmes to increase awareness and build capacity, followed by enhanced cooperation and coordination among States on the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. Israel is looking forward to continued consultations on how best to address this issue in relevant international forums, including the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty and the Conference on Disarmament.

Small arms and light weapons are the most accessible weapons of choice for terrorists and organized crime. The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, adopted in July 2001, is the cornerstone of international efforts to curb the uncontrolled and illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Its adoption pushed States to finally take concrete action to prevent illicit transfers, including through enhanced national controls.

Israel welcomes the adoption by consensus of the Outcome Document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3) of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in New York in July. The Meeting proved the value of having focused and substantive discussions to realize the vision of the Programme of Action. Israel looks forward to the upcoming Meeting of Governmental Experts in 2011. We view this Meeting as an opportunity to address the challenges to the Programme of Action at the expert level. We believe

that the Meeting will further the understanding of where the problems lie and contribute to the overall implantation of this important instrument. We expect a focused and substantive debate during the Meeting.

Israel stands ready to play its part and engage constructively with other Member States to contribute to the success of these Meetings. All States should work together to build the political momentum and determination indispensable for a successful Review Conference in 2012. Such a success would be yet another step towards preventing the transfer of arms to terrorists and reduce the human suffering caused by this phenomenon.

I also take this opportunity to commend the Chair of the Fourth Biennial Meeting, Ambassador Pablo Macedo of Mexico, for guiding us to a restored confidence in the Programme of Action process. We also welcome the appointment of Ambassador Jim McLay of New Zealand as the Chair of the 2011 Meeting of Governmental Experts and wish him success in guiding us through the next step.

Israel welcomes the arms trade treaty process, which has begun with this year's preparatory meetings. It is Israel's view that these negotiations could eventually lead to the creation of a good instrument, provided that the following principles are accepted by all States negotiating. First, an arms trade treaty should opt for high and robust standards on export control rather than settle for the lowest common denominator. Secondly, an arms trade treaty should include concrete measures to combat arms transfers to terrorists. Thirdly, decisions on arms export must remain under the full responsibility and sovereign consideration of States.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) remains the most relevant and appropriate forum for addressing such weapons. As an important instrument of international humanitarian law, it continues to strike the necessary balance between military and humanitarian considerations. Since its inception, it has encompassed major users and producers of conventional weapons, including cluster munitions. Israel welcomes the discussions in the CCW dealing with the issue of improvised explosive devices, under the able leadership of Mr. Reto Wollenmann of Switzerland. We are looking forward to continuing those discussions in the future with a view to

addressing this dangerous phenomenon in a global, concrete and effective manner.

In past years, the CCW conducted serious, in-depth negotiations in order to conclude a new protocol on cluster munitions. This year's negotiating sessions have moved our work forward significantly. Nonetheless, it is clear that more work is needed in order to finalize a serious, balanced and effective control that would address the humanitarian problems associated with the irresponsible use of cluster munitions. But that would not be enough. All States members of the CCW must show the necessary political will in order to enable the CCW Group of Governmental Experts on cluster munitions to reach a successful outcome. Israel trusts and hopes that those CCW member States that were also involved in other negotiations on the issue will continue to exert their best efforts to achieve an agreement in the CCW and will not prevent this important forum, which encompasses all major actors, to reach a successful outcome, which will have a real humanitarian effect on the ground.

Finally, I am proud to share with this body that Israel has begun a legislative process aimed at the creation of a regulatory framework to review existing minefields and possibly conduct humanitarian demining. This step is in addition to Israel's membership in the CCW Amended Protocol II and its moratorium of the transfer of anti-personnel mines.

The Chair: At this time, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Joseph Deiss, who is here today to share some thoughts with us on some topical issues relating to the international disarmament agenda.

As we all know, the President of the General Assembly is deeply passionate about disarmament and international security issues and has seized every opportunity to address the Organization's challenges in this regard. One recent such occasion was the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations, which took place on 24 September. At the Meeting, he highlighted the crucial need to reinforce and reinvigorate United Nations disarmament structures, which many delegations have echoed in their statements.

I now have the honour to invite the President of the General Assembly to address the First Committee.

Mr. Deiss, President of the General Assembly: I am very pleased to have this opportunity to be here this morning. It is not common for the President of the General Assembly to visit the Committees, but at a meeting last week with the Chairpersons of the Committees, I informed them that I intended to meet personally with all six Committees. Very logically, you, Mr. Chair, gave me the opportunity to start with the First Committee. I would like to thank you for this opportunity.

I would also like to say that my intention, of course, is not to interfere in the Committee's work; rather, I wish to explicitly acknowledge and thank its members for their significant contribution to the work of the General Assembly. Their discussions can significantly alleviate our workload in the plenary, and it is therefore important to have the best possible division of labour and cooperation between the Committees and the plenary. I think there would be merit in further reflecting on this issue in the context of our work on revitalizing the agenda of the General Assembly. An efficient conduct of business and a constructive atmosphere in the Committees is an important element of strengthening the General Assembly as a whole.

I know that it is a particular feature of the First Committee that many of its representatives come from Geneva. I hope that this can also contribute to bringing these two important headquarters of the United Nations closer together, and lead to a better mutual understanding of the work carried out in Geneva and New York.

Turning to the substance of the Committee's work, there have been some important positive developments in the field of disarmament. This was highlighted recently, as the Chair just mentioned, at the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament, convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September. The issue of following up on the revitalization of the work of the Conference on Disarmament is now — and I am very glad about this decision taken by the General Committee last week — an additional individual item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

I am very pleased to note that the Committee is making progress in its work and that discussions are taking place in a constructive atmosphere. Therefore, I

will not take up any more of its members' time, and thank them for their kind attention.

The Chair: On behalf of the Committee, I thank the President of the General Assembly for joining us today and for his insightful statement. I invite him to stay with us for some moments, if possible, to follow out discussion and observe the atmosphere of the Committee.

We will now hear the remaining speakers on conventional weapons.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): As this is the first time I have taken the floor in the First Committee, allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau on your election, and of course to wish you all success in the fulfilment of your tasks. I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for having joined us here today and for his important remarks and his commitment to disarmament issues, as well as for his thoughts on how to further improve the organization of the work of the General Assembly and its Committees.

Allow me also to express our support for the statement delivered by Ambassador Lint of Belgium on behalf of the European Union, to which we would like to add a few points from our national point of view.

First of all, I would like to express our sincere joy and satisfaction on the occasion of the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 1 August. This was the most important event in the field of conventional weapons in the course of this year and is in our view an important step towards a safer world, free of cluster munitions. It is particularly important that the entry into force enabled the Secretary-General and depositary of the Convention to convene the First Meeting of States Parties, which will take place in the second week of November this year in Vientiane, the capital of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Slovenia is proud to have been actively involved in the diplomatic process of negotiating the Convention and to have ratified it in August 2009, thus becoming the seventeenth State party to the Convention.

Slovenia, as a State party to the Convention, will participate at the Meeting. The First Meeting of States Parties will be a milestone in the life of the Convention. There, we will adopt important documents: the Vientiane Declaration, a plan of action, a work programme for 2011, and reporting

mechanisms. These documents will guide our work in future years. Slovenia is grateful to Lao People's Democratic Republic and to the Friends of the Chair for their efforts in preparing the Vientiane meeting.

Slovenia also joined this process by assisting Australia as a friend of the Chair for cluster munitions clearance. The most important challenge ahead of us, the parties to the Convention, is its universalization. We hope that the number of States parties to the Convention will soon reach more than 100 States.

Slovenia is pleased with the outcome of the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, which took place in Colombia in November last year. In Cartagena, under the wise and able leadership of Ambassador Susan Ekey of Norway, we adopted an important five-year action plan, which must be consistently implemented, notably in the field of mine victim assistance. However, in recent years we have faced the challenge of a growing number of parties not managing to clear mined areas within the 10-year deadline established by article 5 of the Convention. We all must overcome donor fatigue and assist those countries that have so far received less donor attention. In that context, the credibility of the Convention is at stake.

At the forthcoming Tenth Meeting of States Parties, which will take place in November in Geneva, important issues will be discussed, such as a review of the intersessional process, future financing of the Implementation Support Unit, and other important issues related to the implementation of the Convention. In the context of our fight against the scourge of anti-personnel mines, Slovenia will continue to support the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance, which has a seat in Slovenia and currently operates in 14 countries.

Lastly, we should spare no additional effort to achieve the Convention's universalization, which must remain our highest priority. We would like to invite all Members of the United Nations that have not acceded to the Convention to do so without further delay and to join us in achieving our common noble goal of a world without anti-personnel mines.

In conclusion, regulating the international trade in conventional arms remains a challenge to the international community. In our view, a strong and

robust arms trade treaty would be the international community's only relevant and efficient response to that problem. We are pleased to note that there are fewer and fewer countries that dispute the need to conclude the arms trade treaty as a global response to the illicit and irresponsible international trade in arms. We would call upon sceptical countries to join our endeavours. The year 2012, when we should finalize the negotiations on the arms trade treaty, is fast approaching. The second meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty is due to take place here in New York next July. We should invest additional efforts in taking the opportunity and assuming our historic task to move negotiations towards our goal, which is the arms trade treaty.

Finally, let me conclude by commending the role of civil society in our endeavours and international negotiations in the field of conventional weapons. The role of non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society is invaluable and often not appreciated enough.

Mr. Aljaedi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country is particularly interested in the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which we believe to be a significant threat to the security, prosperity and stability of States, leading to thousands of deaths every year. Moreover, that phenomenon has a direct impact on development and economic growth. In addition, it fuels conflict and is an obstacle to national, regional and international peace and security. Indeed, countering that scourge is a difficult task and requires considerable efforts.

We have seen some progress in the area of disarmament and the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. Such efforts are important to preventing conflict and maintaining international peace and security. Among the efforts undertaken, we can include the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in July. We would like to encourage progress in that direction on the basis of consensus.

Libya is ready to combat that dangerous phenomenon by working to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Moreover, it has adopted

deterrent legislation to curb the illegal possession, import, manufacture and transfer of such weapons. We fully support the 2001 Programme.

In that regard, Libya is working to implement international criteria on domestic tracing and marking to indicate the country of manufacture, the importer and the registration of the firearm. Relevant institutions in Libya have systematically imposed strict oversight measures. Systematic oversight provides for follow-up on the transfer of munitions and firearms through official channels so as to counter the illicit trade in such weapons.

Turning to the regional level, there is good coordination among Arab countries through the holding of regular meetings and through focal points responsible for monitoring and following up on small arms and light weapons. International and regional experience and developments are exchanged, and legislation and measures to regulate the trade in small arms and light weapons are deposited with the secretariat of the League of Arab States.

Libya supports a mechanism for the prompt and verifiable marking and tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons, while taking into account the concerns and characteristics of each region. In that context, we underscore the importance of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, adopted by the General Assembly in September 2005. While it is not binding, we nevertheless hope that Member States will implement all its provisions, and believe that action by States in that regard is vital to moving forward.

The success of the United Nations in countering the dangers of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is closely linked to the resolve of States to implement the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action, which contains important measures. It also contains guidelines to ensure its legitimacy and acceptance by States, such as respect for the right of States to self-defence and the right of peoples to self-determination and to resist occupation. Those are all significant concerns, and we reaffirm that States have the right to purchase, stockpile and import arms on the basis of existing legislation.

In conclusion, I turn to the issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and combating that scourge. We underscore the fact that it

is closely linked to collective efforts and cooperation among States. In that respect, consistent international cooperation and assistance are extremely important to complementing efforts at the bilateral, regional and international levels. Further cooperation would ensure better monitoring of territorial, aerial and maritime borders and help to promote stability and prevent the transfer of such weapons to organized crime or terrorist networks, which would use them for illegal purposes.

We should all therefore cooperate, and I reaffirm our resolve and readiness to contribute towards the success of the 2012 small arms Review Conference.

Mr. Seruhere (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, I welcome the statement of the President of the General Assembly urging Member States to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament, and I hope he will listen to these words before he leaves. The United Republic of Tanzania stands ready to contribute positively.

Once again, I want to congratulate you, Sir, and the Bureau for presiding over this session and to commend you for a job well done to date. I also welcome the statement of the Chairperson of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The United Republic of Tanzania underscores the fact that, since its inception in 2001, the Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons has been a United Nations-led process. I wish to emphasize here that there is every reason for Member States to uphold the cardinal and sacred principle of multilateralism within the United Nations framework. Its Member States established the United Nations in the aftermath of two world wars with the vision of a secure and peaceful world. They gave the Organization the primary responsibility for guaranteeing the maintenance of international peace and security. Member States thus have both a moral obligation and a legal requirement to support the United Nations in all its endeavours and to abide by its Charter. In that regard, the words "United Nations" should not be omitted from the title of the Programme, which should therefore read "United Nations Programme of Action", not "Programme of Action".

My delegation welcomes the inclusion of the issue of small arms and light weapons on the

disarmament agenda as a way of improving the process of the eradication by Member States of the dangers that such weapons pose for humankind. In the Great Lakes region of Africa, for example, these weapons have been used to cause massive numbers of deaths, genocide and untold suffering to society, and I believe this is also the case in many other parts of the world. We cannot let such a situation continue. In that regard, my delegation fully supports the inclusion of small arms and light weapons on the list to be included in the scope of the envisaged arms trade treaty.

In view of the significance of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons and ammunitions, and of the need to include them on the disarmament agenda, Tanzania stands ready to co-sponsor the draft resolution on such weapons (A/C.1/65/L.32) and the related draft resolution concerning the inclusion of women as key players in disarmament (A/C.1/65/L.39/Rev.1). Women play a significant role in the disarmament debate and activities in the Great Lakes region of Africa at all levels, because they are major stakeholders in development activities and bear the brunt of the wars and armed conflicts that are waged using small arms and light weapons.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate Tanzania's support for the inclusion on the disarmament agenda of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons and their ammunitions, without prejudice to the envisaged arms trade treaty as a binding international instrument for the regulation of trade in such weapons. Disarmament in this area is therefore achievable, and Tanzania pledges to do its part.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to introduce draft decision A/C.1/65/L.18.

Mr. Ferami (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the consideration of the issue of conventional weapons within the United Nations, and aware of the consequences and effects of the illicit trade in arms — mostly small arms that are used against innocent people — in principle welcomes all attempts aimed at preventing and eradicating that trade. Iran is of the view that such a lofty goal, with the aim of achieving international and regional peace and security, can be attained only through serious international cooperation.

Moreover, Iran believes that any arrangement regulating conventional armaments should be conducted in a non-discriminatory and comprehensive manner and through multilateral negotiations.

At the same time, we reaffirm the sovereign and inherent right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms for their self-defence and security needs in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We share the concern expressed about unilateral coercive measures by the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement countries at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit, and their emphasis that no undue restrictions should be placed on the transfer of conventional arms for self-defence and security needs.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the legitimate and legal conventional arms trade among Member States is not the major problem that some countries emphasize should be dealt with at this stage. As reported by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms system, most conventional arms transfers are covered by the Register and are transparent. It is also obvious that the illegal transfer of aircraft, warships, missiles and tanks cannot be conducted as easily as the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. There is therefore no merit in trying to cover transfers of all seven categories, and we believe that negotiations on such transfers and the subsequent implementation of a possible treaty are a waste of time and resources and would only add to the burdens of developing countries.

Furthermore, according to reliable international surveys, it is estimated that around 90 per cent of direct deaths in violent conflicts are caused by small arms. It goes without saying that a tremendous effort has already been made by the international community in concluding the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, adopted by consensus by the United Nations Conference. Moreover, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons was painstakingly negotiated by all members and adopted by the General Assembly within the framework of the Programme of Action. None of these efforts, which represent a multilateral, progressive approach, should be abandoned or overlooked.

Duplication has no added value. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that since the major exporters of weapons have not fully complied with their existing obligations under the relevant agreements on conventional arms, conditions are not ripe for negotiating a comprehensive global instrument on every kind of arms transfer.

Recent flows of sophisticated weapons into volatile regions, such as the Middle East, have had negative implications for those regions' stability. The unabated manufacture of arms by major producers on a very large scale, with the aim of exporting the majority to other countries, is a matter of serious concern, and the ruthless and irresponsible export of arms to the Middle East is a clear example thereof. The export of billions of dollars' worth of arms and military assistance to certain Middle East countries is a cause of great concern for many peace-loving countries in the international community. Most of the arms — sophisticated offensive weapons — exported to the Zionist regime are intended to give confidence to the war machine of that regime in its pursuit of expansionist, aggressive and destabilizing policies in the region.

Given the well-documented United Nations reports on various war crimes committed by military officers and high officials of the Zionist regime, the main suppliers of arms to that regime — whose names are registered in the United Nations reports — are accomplices to those war crimes and must immediately stop exporting weapons to that regime and refrain from further feeding its dangerous war machine.

My country fully supports any comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach to addressing the issue of missiles in all its aspects. On that issue, having the bitter experience of eight years of imposed war, during which Iranians in defenceless cities, and even in the capital, were under constant missile attacks, Iran was obliged for its self-defence to develop its own missile technology. Needless to say, Iran was the last country in the region that resorted to missile technology for its self-defence.

Given the lack of any internationally agreed norms or arrangement, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the only way to deal with the issue of missiles in all its aspects is to pursue it within the framework of the United Nations. A discriminatory

approach outside the United Nations will not contribute to comprehensively addressing this important issue.

I should like now to introduce draft decision A/C.1/65/L.18, entitled “Missiles”. As members are aware, since 1999 Egypt, Indonesia and the Islamic Republic of Iran have jointly proposed an annual draft resolution on this subject, which has continuously been supported by Member States. I should also recall that the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement “expressed their support for efforts to be continued within the United Nations to explore further the issue of missiles in all its aspects”.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 55/33, 58/37 and 59/67, the first, second and third Panels of Governmental Experts were respectively established in 2001-2002, 2004 and 2007-2008 to assist the Secretary-General in the preparation of reports on the issue of missiles in all its aspects. The third Panel of Governmental Experts, in 2007-2008, after having a comprehensive, in-depth exchange of views on all aspects of the issue of missiles, agreed on the final report by consensus (A/63/176). Subsequently, the General Assembly welcomed the report and requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the report.

Several Member States, including my own country, have already replied to the Secretary-General’s foreword to the report. However, there was not enough time for the sponsors to analyse the views and consult with interested Member States and the Secretariat on the next step to be taken. Therefore, the sponsors of the resolution on missiles have decided to submit only a draft decision this year, which is contained in document A/C.1/65/L.18. The draft decision is only a procedural one, and we are certain that those who support keeping the issue of missiles within the framework of the United Nations will vote in favour of the draft, as they have in previous years.

Since I have the floor, allow me to say a few words regarding the so-called breaking news announced yesterday by the British delegation. As a preliminary reaction to that, it is regrettable that the mentality of the Cold War is still dominant in that document, which perpetuates the obsolete doctrine of deterrence. Additionally, with regard to the issue of the Middle East, that document is deadly silent about the more than 200 nuclear warheads of the Zionist regime — the only regime in the region that, utterly

lacking legitimacy, typifies State terrorism and threatens the peace and security of the region and beyond.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation considers positive the recent trends in the disarmament negotiations in general, and in particular developments in the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held July this year, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, who had so ably chaired the Open-ended Working Group last year and the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms in 2008. Nigeria actively participated in all the relevant meetings on the arms trade treaty, including the Group of Experts. It is envisaged that this process will lead to the Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in 2012, aimed at elaborating a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms, which my Government considers to be very important.

On the issue of the arms trade treaty, Nigeria, like most other United Nations Member States, believes that there should be clarity in the definition of arms. Such a definition should be flexible enough to include new developments in warfare technology. The need for an arms trade treaty must not be trivialized. Nigeria also believes that an arms trade treaty should contain provisions that will ban the accessibility of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors and any group or groups, whether armed or not, that operate outside Government authority or control.

It is widely acknowledged that weapons of any kind are dangerous in the hands of non-State actors. The non-accessibility of weapons to non-State actors must therefore be pursued as our main mission in the establishment of an international arms trade treaty. This is a call for a robust arms trade treaty that can stand the test of time. My delegation also agrees on the “7+1+1” configuration of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

Nigeria is nevertheless deeply concerned that illicit small arms and light weapons have continued to destabilize the African continent and a large number of developing countries. Those illicit weapons have continued to fuel and prolong conflicts, as well as to obstruct international humanitarian programmes. They have also undermined peace initiatives, increased human rights abuses, hampered development and,

perhaps more worrisome, fostered a culture of organized crime and violence. Indeed, for us, they constitute weapons of mass destruction, because they are the weapons that are actually killing people in Africa and elsewhere.

We are, however, often disappointed by the failure of the international community to accord attention to the urgent need to combat and eliminate the illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and light weapons commensurate with the devastating consequences of their use on the affected countries and peoples. We therefore call on Member States to give greater focus to the need to reduce and eventually eliminate the threat to humankind of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In so doing, the value of human life should outweigh any premium placed on the commercial benefits of the arms trade.

As Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Nigeria is pleased to report that we have made substantial progress in bringing peace and stability to countries in the subregion that were until recently embroiled in one form of political crisis or another. This has greatly improved the political environment across the subregion, which in turn has enhanced the peace and security that are critical for development. Nigeria will continue to build on these achievements in order to consolidate peace and stability and engender prosperity in the subregion.

The amnesty programme extended by the Federal Government to the militants of the Niger Delta area of the country has led to the recovery of thousands of illicit weapons. Nigeria has thus achieved tremendous success in the disarmament, disarmament and reintegration of militants in that part of the country.

The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials entered into force on 29 September 2009 following its ratification by the eleventh of its 15 member States. As required by the Convention, ECOWAS member States have established national commissions that will function as national focal points in working towards full implementation of the Convention. ECOWAS member States have collaborated closely in the ECOWAS Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP), a successor to the Programme of Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development established by the United Nations

Development Programme. We are happy to note that ECOSAP has worked very hard with civil societies to provide them with the requisite institutional facilities, including sponsorship of small arms projects. On its own, the ECOWAS Commission has sponsored and encouraged inter-State services and INTERPOL in combating transborder small arms and light weapons crimes, in view of the fact that the vast territories of the subregion make preventing the illicit circulation of such weapons a serious challenge.

My delegation reiterates the need to establish a link between the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the illicit exploitation of the mineral and natural resources of African States. That, in our view, is the bane of the Small Arms Programme, and sometimes the real cause of the deep-seated conflicts in the region. The experience of the Kimberley Process may serve us as a good guide in addressing this matter.

My delegation wishes to emphasize that enhanced international cooperation and assistance will be necessary to addressing the multifarious problems of the illicit proliferation of small arms in the West African subregion. Some of the areas where assistance is needed in the subregion and, we believe, elsewhere to tackle the menace of illicit small arms include monitoring technology for border control, as per the provisions of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and border equipment relating to sea and airport scanners and training of personnel, among many others.

Mrs. Oliynik (Ukraine): On Monday, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs distributed two fact sheets containing information and statistical data relating to the operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures. We found this information to be very important to a better understanding of trends in promoting confidence-building, for which those instruments were established. We regret that the reporting of trades to the instrument has been declining for the past three years.

My delegation attaches great importance to the continuing operation of these confidence-building measures. We therefore suggest considering the possibility of continuing the practice of preparing and distributing such papers as official documents of the First Committee.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the observer of the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Sinclair (Caribbean Community): Sir, the First Committee is just into the third week of its session, and you and the members of your Bureau are already justifying the reasons that moved Member States to place you in the management positions you occupy.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) secretariat, which I represent here as Permanent Observer, is not, of course, a State; it is not a producer or exporter of goods, to say nothing of arms; it does not have a territory or a population. Our weapons are of the non-conventional, non-lethal variety — our words, our ideas and our service. Through these means, we perform a number of critical functions in relation to the community of Caribbean States, including in the areas of human and social development, regional trade and economic integration among the 14 States members of the Community.

Inevitably, whether under one rubric or another, what affects the States of the region naturally affects the secretariat and is the secretariat's business. That includes the record levels of crime and violence in our societies, the insecurity, the economic and social dislocation, the interruptions of the development efforts that are caused by loopholes in the trade in small arms and light weapons, the transnational organized crime that this activity brings in its wake, and the illegal drug-trafficking, all of which impose enormous burdens on our law enforcement and judicial agencies. To the extent that these are challenges for the Governments of the region, they are also challenges for the secretariat, for they severely hamper and undermine our efforts to assist in the promotion of economic and social development and integration.

That is why I am thankful for having been given the floor, at this closing stage of the consideration of the present cluster of items, to say a few words specifically on the arms trade treaty on behalf of the CARICOM secretariat. We were glad when we heard the idea of an arms trade treaty raised. We did not see it as a disarmament measure. We did not see it as signifying the end of the scourge of illegal weapons in our region. But we considered that any instrument that sought, by plugging loopholes in the legal trade of weapons, to prevent them from finding their way to the illicit market was a worthy initiative.

The secretariat well recalls the scepticism with which the idea was first received in the Committee, then in the Open-ended Working Group, and even in the early days of the first Preparatory Committee. But little by little, we began to see the ability of patient, sustained dialogue to lessen doubts, improve understanding and promote confidence. Between 4 October and yesterday, my delegation has made a compilation of extracts of more than three score statements noting the expanded acceptance that the idea of an arms trade treaty has come to enjoy.

It would be ungracious of me to select from among these statements for quotation; nor shall I reaffirm what these speakers have all so pleasingly affirmed where the potential value of an arms trade treaty is concerned — also because I believe that the case for such an instrument has been abundantly made. I shall merely thank the speakers for their affirmations and express the hope that those delegations that still hesitate at the gate will before long approach the door with confidence and with positive expectation.

The slow but steady acceptance of the idea of an arms trade treaty to which I referred cannot be separated either from Ambassador García Moritán's personal brand of diplomacy and ability to inspire and persuade, or from the diligence and resourcefulness of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Regional Centres for disarmament. To the Ambassador and these entities, I pay well-deserved tributes.

As we in the CARICOM secretariat see it, like the States that we serve we need some kind of binding, globally agreed mechanism to plug the loopholes in the regulations governing the legal trade in arms. We will continue to believe that it is possible to devise such an instrument, that enough States desire it, and that it is achievable. And we will continue to work in a manner consistent with those beliefs in order to ensure that such an instrument will make the kind of difference that is needed. As we turn away from New York, it will be to prepare for the next Preparatory Committee.

Our Ministers took a decision here in New York on 25 September that our States would hold a preparatory meeting in January to prepare for the second Preparatory Committee, and we are working towards that with deliberateness. We are engaging technical experts from the various subject ministries, policymakers from the various capitals of the region, personnel from the Missions in New York,

non-governmental organizations, the media and women so that when we come together at the next Preparatory Committee in 2011, we will have a good understanding of what an arms trade treaty means for the CARICOM region, how it will work, what we want out of it, how it should be structured, and how to deal with its implementation challenges and other related aspects.

Mr. Sorreta (Philippines), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

We do not expect that CARICOM will be setting the pace of the next Preparatory Committee or determining the content or structure of an eventual arms trade treaty — far from it. However, if any force should act to slacken the momentum towards agreement on an arms trade treaty, it will certainly not be from a CARICOM State. We can be counted on for that. And if there are forces seeking encouragement to move forward with all deliberate speed towards negotiating the arms trade treaty, they too can count on us.

The Acting Chair: We have heard the last speaker on the conventional weapons cluster.

I give the floor to the representative of Argentina in exercise of right of reply.

Ms. Poroli (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): In response to the statement made yesterday by the representative of the United Kingdom in the context of the Committee's debate on conventional arms and with respect to the reference to the Malvinas Islands in which was mentioned the Ottawa Convention, the Argentinean delegation reiterates the full statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic before the Special Committee on Decolonization on 24 June.

The Argentinean Government recalls that the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas comprise an integral part of the national territory of Argentina that is illegitimately occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and are therefore subject to a sovereignty dispute between both countries that has been recognized by various international organizations.

The illegitimate occupation by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland led the General Assembly to adopt resolutions 20/65, 31/60,

31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/26, all of which recognize the existence of the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands and urge the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to resume negotiations with a view to achieving a peaceful and lasting resolution to the dispute as soon as possible. For its part, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization has repeatedly taken a stand along similar lines, most recently through its resolution adopted on 24 June.

Likewise, on 8 June the General Assembly of the Organization of American States issued a new pronouncement on the issue using similar terms. The Argentine Republic reaffirms its legitimate rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands, and the surrounding maritime areas, which comprise an integral part of the national territory of Argentina.

The Acting Chair: The Committee will now proceed to the next cluster of items. We will begin our deliberations on other disarmament measures and international security by listening to an introduction by the Chairperson of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. It is my pleasure to welcome our guest here today, Ambassador Andrey Krutskikh. Following his statement, I will suspend the meeting mode to enable delegations wishing to ask questions to do so in an informal setting.

I give the floor to Ambassador Krutskikh.

Mr. Krutskikh, Chairperson of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (spoke in Russian): I am grateful to the Chair and to the members of the Committee for the honour to speak on the report (A/65/201) of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

As members know, the Group was established in 2009 pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 60/45 of 8 December 2005. The aim of the Group is to study existing and potential threats in the field of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, as well as concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications

systems. Pursuant to the provisions of the resolution and on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experts were appointed from 15 countries: Belarus, Brazil, China, Estonia, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

From November 2009 to July 2010, the Group of Experts held four meetings. In its work, the Group considered opinions received from United Nations Member States in response to General Assembly resolution 60/45, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, and studied publications and documents submitted by individual members and groups.

I would like to highlight the fact that, as a result of a comprehensive, thorough exchange of views, the Group of Governmental Experts managed to prepare and adopt by consensus a report for submission to the General Assembly. As Chair of the Group, I cannot help expressing delight or resist the temptation to announce that, for the first time in United Nations history, such a consensus was reached in the matter of countering existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security that are among the most serious challenges of the twenty-first century.

As the report indicates, those threats may cause substantial damage to economies and national and international security. They emanate from a wide variety of sources and manifest themselves in disruptive activities that target individuals, businesses, national infrastructure and Governments alike. Their effects carry significant risks for public safety, the security of nations and the stability of the globally linked international community as a whole. That is why it is so important for the United Nations to become aware as soon as possible of the importance of this threat to humankind. Especially in the First Committee, it must take into consideration issues arising from the revolution in the development and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

I would like to focus attention on the most important points in the report. A unique characteristic of ICTs is that they are increasingly being used in critical infrastructure, giving rise to new vulnerabilities and possible damage. Given the complex

interconnectivity of telecommunications and the Internet, any ICT device can be the source or target of increasingly sophisticated misuse. Since ICTs by their very nature can be used for dual purposes, the same technologies used in the process of electronic trade, for example, might also become a threat to international peace and security.

There are increasing reports that States are developing ICTs as a means of waging war and undertaking intelligence operations be used for political purposes. There are increasing dangers arising from individuals, groups and organizations, particularly criminal groups that may use intermediaries in order to carry out online attacks in the name of other people. We cannot ignore the intensification of terrorists’ attempts to use ICTs to carry out their subversive operations.

States are also concerned that the ICT supply chain could be influenced or subverted in ways that would affect the normal, secure and reliable use of ICTs. The inclusion of malicious hidden functions in ICTs can undermine confidence in products and services, erode trust in commerce and affect national security. Another factor that must not be overlooked is the fact that the varying ICT capacity and security among different States increases the vulnerability of the global network. Differences in national laws and practices may create challenges to achieving a secure and resilient digital environment.

As disruptive activities using information and communications technologies grow more complex and dangerous, it is obvious that no State is able to address such threats alone. Confronting the challenges of the twenty-first century depends on successful cooperation among like-minded partners. Collaboration among States and between States and the private sector is very important, and measures to improve information security require broad international cooperation to be effective. The complexity and multiplicity of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities in the field of information security require the wide spectrum of participants in such cooperation to find mutual understanding and to coordinate national approaches to guaranteeing information security.

The Group of Governmental Experts has formulated some specific recommendations in this field. In my opinion, it has made the best use of diplomatic methods, based on the wise Chinese saying:

Small steps add up to great accomplishments. The most important thing is not to slacken the momentum towards establishing a more secure world and controlling the dangers posed by new technologies. Among the first steps towards guaranteeing peace, the Group felt it was possible to make the following recommendations.

First, we must foster further dialogue among States to consider norms pertaining to State use of ICTs in order to reduce collective risk and protect critical national and international infrastructure. Secondly, we must undertake confidence-building, stability and risk reduction measures to address the implications of State use of ICTs, including exchanges of national views on the use of ICTs in conflict. Thirdly, we must exchange information on national legislation and national ICT security strategies, technologies, policies and best practices. Fourthly, we must identify measures to support capacity-building in the least developed countries in this field. Lastly, we must pursue possibilities to develop common terms and definitions relevant to General Assembly resolution 64/25.

It is extremely important for those steps to be developed and supplemented by new measures, and an appraisal of the issue of maintaining international information security must be effectively continued under United Nations auspices, particularly by the group of governmental experts to be convened in 2012 pursuant to draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.37, "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security". The main goal is to prevent yet another spiral in the arms race on the basis of information and communication technologies, to preserve resources in the interest of development, and to avert new sources of conflict in the international sphere.

In conclusion, allow me to express my profound appreciation to all my fellow experts in the Group, who displayed the highest possible professionalism and constructiveness and a very human approach to the Chair. I would also like to thank the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for the contribution of its consultants and representatives, Mr. James Lewis and Ms. Kerstin Vignard. On behalf of the Group, I express our gratitude to the leadership and staff of the entire United Nations Secretariat. Notwithstanding the volcanic eruption that occurred this year and the rebuilding of the entire United Nations complex, they provided magnificent assistance

to our work. I wish to personally thank Ewen Buchanan of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, who acted as the Group's Secretary.

The Acting Chair: I would like to thank Ambassador Krutskikh for sharing his thoughts. I would like to ask him to stay on the podium, as I intend to suspend our meeting to enable us to continue our discussions informally to give representatives an opportunity to address any questions they may have to our guest.

The meeting was suspended at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.

The Acting Chair: I now call on representatives who wish to make statements on other disarmament measures and international security.

I call on the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.43*.

Mr. Suda (Japan): On behalf of my delegation, I wish to make some brief remarks on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

In May of this year, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in its Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), for the first time underscored the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education as a useful and effective means to advance the goals of the NPT in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. In its action plan, the Review Conference also encouraged all States to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124).

Japan welcomes the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference and emphasizes once again the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education. In particular, I would like to take this opportunity to draw attention to recommendation 31 of the Secretary-General's report, which encourages Member States to inform the Department for Disarmament Affairs, now the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), on steps taken to implement the Secretary-General's recommendations.

Unfortunately, according to the Secretary-General's recent report (A/65/160 and Add.1)

reviewing the implementation of those recommendations, only five countries, including Japan, submitted the relevant information this year. That is a disappointing result. My delegation encourages all Member States to put into action the Secretary-General's recommendations and to report to the UNODA on the steps they have taken.

At this session of the General Assembly, Japan is submitting a new draft resolution on nuclear disarmament, entitled "United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/65/L.43*). United action should also be employed in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education. Civil society plays a vital role in raising public awareness, mobilizing opinion, creating innovative ideas and tools, and providing various inputs to Government officials.

As a part of those activities, Japan, as the only country that has ever suffered atomic bombings, continues to actively support its atomic bomb survivors, the *hibakusha*, in sharing their stories with the people of the world. With that objective, the Government of Japan recently began to officially appoint the *hibakusha* as Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons, asking them to pass on their first-hand experiences of the tragic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons to the world and to the young generations.

I am pleased to say that the first of those Special Communicators gave their testimonies last month, when young diplomats and Government officials from various countries visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki under the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme.

In a joint working paper that we submitted together with the United Nations University to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, it was proposed that dialogue be initiated on disarmament and non-proliferation education between Governments and civil society. In an effort to realize that objective, United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues was held in Saitama, Japan, in August and provided the chance for such dialogue. There, leading non-governmental organizations, academics, diplomats, educators and students took part and presented their ideas for promoting disarmament education.

Today, I would like to announce that Japan and United Nations University will host a global forum on disarmament and non-proliferation education towards March 2011, as proposed in our joint working paper. The main purpose of that forum is to facilitate further dialogue and cooperation among civil society and Governments on the subject.

In conclusion, I would like to say that a world without nuclear weapons will not become a reality in a hurry. It will be a long journey, requiring an enduring will and enormous energy on the part of the people and leaders of the world. It is therefore all the more crucial for us to establish a broader and deeper understanding of the importance of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the minds of the world's people. That is why we need to put so much emphasis on education and public awareness in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. García López-Trigo (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba reiterates that the search for negotiated solutions in the multilateral arena and the need to reach collective agreements are the only way to safeguard international peace and security. For these reasons, Cuba firmly supports draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.15 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, introduced in the First Committee by Indonesia on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. Practice has shown that the goals of disarmament, arms control and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction cannot be achieved by unilateral measures, and even less so by negotiated agreements outside internationally recognized multilateral frameworks or by using or threatening to use force.

In regard to disarmament and development, Cuba reiterates that these constitute two of the principal challenges facing humankind, especially in view of the global nature of the profound economic, social, food, energy and environmental crises we are dealing with. While economies around the world, particularly those of developing countries, are bleeding to death, in 2009 military spending rose by 6 per cent as compared to the year before, amounting to \$1.0531 trillion. Over the past 10 years, this dangerous tendency has translated into an increase of more than 50 per cent in spending on weapons worldwide. At the same time, budgets for social, education and health-care programmes are being cut all over the world. Cuba reaffirms its proposal for the creation of a United Nations-managed

fund into which at least half of current military expenditures would be paid, with the goal of meeting the economic and social development requirements of countries in need.

We also reaffirm our support for the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which includes an international commitment to allocate part of the resources made available through disarmament to socio-economic development. We hope that draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.13 on the relationship between disarmament and development, introduced in the Committee by Indonesia on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, will enjoy delegations' support.

My delegation wishes to highlight the significance of the observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control. The existence of weapons of mass destruction and their continuing refinement constitute one of the great threats to international peace and security, to the fragile environmental balance of our planet, and to sustainable development for all without distinction. An international treaty on nuclear disarmament must necessarily include measures aimed at protecting the environment.

The Chemical Weapons Convention remains the only international agreement that covers verifiable destruction of such weapons and of the facilities that produce them, along with measures to protect people and the environment; hence the enormous importance of the principles and methods for the destruction of chemical weapons that must be taken into account by States possessing such weapons when they destroy them.

Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention is also essential to protecting the environment and preserving our planet's biodiversity. The draft protocol aimed at strengthening the Convention, which was the subject of negotiations some years ago, included proposed measures for protecting the environment in the Convention's implementation. The international community should not give up on achieving this goal.

In conclusion, allow me to touch on draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.19 on the effects of the use of

armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium, introduced by Indonesia on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, which addresses a matter of legitimate concern to the international community. At the international level, numerous countries and organizations have expressed their concerns about the effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium. Preliminary studies conducted by such international agencies as the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization make clear the need to pursue research into the long-term effects on health and the environment of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium. We hope that the draft resolution, which would enable follow-up on this matter in the framework of the United Nations, will receive the support of Member States.

Ms. Kennedy (United States of America): Our agenda examines some of the most difficult problems of our time, and the challenges we face in the area of cybersecurity rightly take their place among them. Information technology has become crucial to the development of all States, making an important contribution to the essential functions of daily life, to commerce and the provision of goods and services, to research and innovation. Information technology promotes economic development by opening access to new markets and facilitating the organization and delivery of humanitarian assistance, and increasingly supports the functioning of critical civil, public safety and national security infrastructures. It has also become a key tool in ensuring the free flow of information among individuals, organizations and Governments in ways that few of us could have foreseen only a few years ago. It is our expectation that, as traditional telecommunications and Internet networks converge, global dependency on information technology will only increase.

We are acutely aware that, as our dependency has grown, so too have the risks to our security associated with that dependency. A wide range of primarily human-made activities threatens the reliable functioning of national and global networks and the integrity of the information that travels over them. Such threats are increasing in sophistication and gravity and have many sources. The vast majority are rooted in criminal behaviour and target individuals,

businesses and Governments alike. Some threats are State-sponsored and involve the extension of traditional forms of State-on-State activities and conflict into cyberspace. Whatever the source of the cyber threat, defending against it is a key priority of President Obama, my President, who has stated that we need a strategy for cybersecurity designed to:

“bring like-minded nations together on a host of issues, such as technical standards and acceptable legal norms regarding territorial jurisdiction, sovereign responsibility and use of force. International norms are critical to establishing a secure and thriving digital infrastructure ... Only by working with international partners can the United States best address these challenges, enhance cybersecurity, and reap the full benefits of the digital age”.

As a consequence, President Obama directed the implementation of a comprehensive domestic strategy to address our cyber vulnerabilities. He has done so, however, in the clear recognition that whatever national steps the United States may take domestically to defend its information networks, our global interdependence means that they are unlikely to be fully successful without effective international collaboration.

It has long been our view that the cybersecurity efforts of each nation must proceed on two levels: at the national level, where every Government must make cybersecurity a domestic priority, and at the international level, where each nation must collaborate on common, or at least complementary, approaches to transnational cybersecurity issues. Drawing on our own experience, the United States has offered five cybersecurity awareness-raising resolutions in the General Assembly over the past decade, culminating last year in resolution 64/211, which provides a road map for States to use to assess the progress of their efforts.

We do not underestimate the difficulty of this task for any State, and we are still engaged in trying to find the right solutions for ourselves. We understand that all of us differ in experience and technical sophistication in this area, as well as in the priority we can assign to cybersecurity nationally. Nevertheless, we view national efforts as a prerequisite for effective international ones.

From our vantage point, international collaboration should focus on a variety of cooperative strategies to address the various transnational threats to information networks. We believe that we are making some progress in establishing the foundation for better collaboration in a variety of areas.

Of importance to this Committee is the fact that this past year a group of 15 governmental experts began an important discussion on the difficult issue of the appropriate standard for States with regard to the use of information technology tools in the political-military arena. In the context of the Russian-sponsored First Committee draft resolution (A/C.1/65/L.37), this Group of Governmental Experts — ably led by the Russian Chairman — was able to identify some key areas of common ground, and it emerged with a short but valuable consensus report pointing in a fruitful direction for further collaboration.

From the United States’ perspective, key among these recommendations was that there should be further dialogue to discuss norms pertaining to State use of information technology in order to reduce collective risk and to protect critical national and international infrastructures, and that further steps should include the consideration of confidence-building, stability and risk-reduction measures to address the implications of State use of information technology, to include exchanges of national views on its use in the context of conflict.

I would note that, during the course of these discussions, the United States took the significant step of affirming formally its view that existing principles of international law, specifically the law of armed conflict, serve as the appropriate framework within which to identify and analyse the rules and norms of behaviour that should govern the use of cyberspace in connection with hostilities, just as it governs the use of kinetic force.

The Russian-proposed draft resolution on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security takes into account the important work of the Group of Governmental Experts and proposes continuing discussion of its recommendations. For this reason, the United States will join the Russian Federation in co-sponsoring the draft resolution.

The Acting Chair: I call on the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.37.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have just heard a statement by the representative of the United States of America referring to the importance of information security. A little earlier, we heard from the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on this issue.

The problem of maintaining international information and security has indeed emerged as a result of an unprecedented breakthrough in the development and introduction of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in practically all spheres of social and State affairs. The specific nature of these emerging threats to international stability and security is characterized by the fact that, given the hostile uses of ICTs, including military use, we are not talking about weapons in the traditional sense of the term, since information and communication technologies have both civilian and dual-use applications.

Nevertheless, the consequences of their hostile application at a time of global computerization can be compared in scale to the damage caused by the use of conventional weapons and even weapons of mass destruction. The particular nature of information and communication technologies, if applied for destructive purposes, is illustrated by the fact that they are readily available, in many instances may be used anonymously and in the guise of peaceful applications, and have potentially broad transborder, low-cost and effective applications. ICTs can be used not only by individual offenders but also by criminal groups, terrorist and extremist organizations, and States for hostile political, military, economic and other purposes. There is also the threat of large-scale information wars or confrontations between two or more States.

In its desire to facilitate a better understanding of information security threats and the search for joint ways to fight them, in 1998 Russia presented an initiative to raise the issue of ensuring information security at the international level. Over the past the decade, the General Assembly has repeatedly adopted — almost by consensus — a resolution co-sponsored by Russia and entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”. We are thankful for

the support for our resolution at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

This year, Russia, together with 31 authors to date, is introducing an updated draft resolution on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (A/C.1/65/L.37). The draft resolution is based on resolution 64/25 of 2 December 2009. It essentially contains editorial improvements to the previous version. Its main new element is the proposal to convene in 2012 a new group of governmental experts on information security to continue to study existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, as well as relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunication systems.

It is especially important to maintain the highly positive impetus achieved by the previous Group of Governmental Experts established under resolution 64/25. As the Committee knows, it managed to lay some very important groundwork, including, for the first time in United Nations history, the preparation and adoption by consensus of a draft report on the problem of ensuring information security that identifies specific steps in this direction.

We thank all those who have already joined in sponsoring our draft resolution. Given the importance and relevance of the subject, we call on States that have not yet done so to consider the possibility of becoming sponsors. We count on the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, as it was last year.

The Chair: I now call on the representative of Trinidad and Tobago to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.39.

Mr. Charles (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to present for the consideration of the First Committee document A/C.1/65/L.39, containing a draft resolution entitled “Women, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation”.

Our intention to launch this initiative was announced during the general debate in the General Assembly by The Honourable Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago (see A/65/PV.20). At that time, the Prime Minister spoke of the important contribution of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which acknowledges that there

can be no sustainable peace and security without the contribution of women. The Prime Minister also spoke of Trinidad and Tobago's dual commitment to the advancement of the United Nations peace and security agenda and the promotion of women. It is that dual commitment and the well-matched union of those two principles that have produced the draft resolution we introduce today.

By introducing the draft resolution to the First Committee, Trinidad and Tobago seeks to build on the foundation laid by resolution 1325 (2000) by broadening the understanding of the role of women in the attainment of sustainable peace and recognizing the value of their contributions in this important field. It is our view that after 64 sessions of the General Assembly, recognition that all actions undertaken to promote disarmament would benefit from the participation of men and women alike are not only warranted but long overdue. We believe that discussions in the First Committee would stand to benefit from this more inclusive approach as we strive to adopt measures aimed at fostering disarmament and the advancement of international peace and security.

In the light of the renewed United Nations focus on gender mainstreaming in all of its substantive work, this initiative could not be more timely or appropriate. It follows therefore that document A/C.1/65/L.39, although related to some aspects of resolution 1325 (2000), must be distinguished from that resolution. Our intention is not to misappropriate, duplicate or replace resolution 1325 (2000) — because we cannot do so — but to develop a particular aspect of it in the manner I have outlined.

It is Trinidad and Tobago's expectation that a draft resolution of this nature will receive the support of all delegations because of its special emphasis. In this regard, and in an effort to bring on board a wide cross-section of views and opinions, the Trinidad and Tobago delegation has so far convened two rounds of informal consultations and held numerous bilateral meetings, which took place before and after the submission of the draft resolution to the Secretariat. Document A/C.1/65/L.39 is a product of those consultations.

We have taken into consideration the views expressed by Member States and will seek to incorporate those views into another revised text. We wish to emphasize, however, that document

A/C.1/65/L.39, as compared to the original draft that was circulated, is a compromise text. It is a demonstration of our openness, understanding and flexibility as we undertake to achieve a consensus adoption of the draft resolution. Notwithstanding the modesty of the current draft before the Committee, Trinidad and Tobago will continue to be open to further suggestions aimed at improving the text in order to achieve what we consider to be a noble objective.

The Acting Chair: We have heard the last speaker on our list for today.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Lebanon for a right of reply.

Mr. Ziadeh (Lebanon): I would like to say, in reply to the Israeli delegation, that the existence of resistance in Lebanon is first and foremost the result of the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territories and its continuous violations of Lebanese territorial integrity by land, sea and air. In this regard, we request Israel to withdraw from the Shab'a Farms, the Kfar Shuba Hills and the Lebanese part of Al-Ghajar village up to the Blue Line, in accordance with relevant international instruments, in particular Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

I would like to take this opportunity to call upon the international community to force Israel to pay damages for all losses sustained by Lebanese territories as a result of its aggressions and to submit maps showing the locations of all landmines and cluster munitions placed in the course of their occupation and aggression.

The Acting Chair: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom in right of reply.

Ms. Adamson (United Kingdom): I would like briefly to comment on the statement made in right of reply by the representative of Argentina at this meeting. The Government of the United Kingdom rejects the characterization of the sovereignty issue that was raised in Argentina's right of reply. The United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas.

The principle of self-determination, enshrined in the United Nations Charter, underlies our position on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands. There can be no negotiations on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such time as the Falkland

Islanders so wish. The Falkland Islanders regularly make it clear that they have no wish either to lose British sovereignty or to become independent.

The Acting Chair: I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to speak in right of reply.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Through its principal organs and specialized agencies, the United Nations has over decades adopted hundreds of resolutions targeting Israel and its illegal occupation policies. That impressive arsenal of international resolutions, unprecedented in the annals of legal and human history, is a true reflection of the international consensus denouncing the practices of successive Israeli Governments. The First Committee, as is well known, has shared for years in the denunciation of Israeli practices and violations in the field of conventional and nuclear weapons.

The extent to which Israel is formally and informally involved in the trade in conventional weapons is now well known; independent research shows that Israel is the fourth largest arms trader in the world. It is shameful for the representative of Israel to point the finger at others instead of apologizing to the international community for the fact that Israeli airplanes dropped millions of cluster bombs on southern Lebanon on the same day that the Security Council adopted resolution 1701 (2006), calling for a halt to Israeli aggression against Lebanon. It is truly shameful for the representative of Israel to forget that his country's authorities even today refuse to provide maps indicating where anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions have been planted in southern Lebanon, despite repeated requests from the international

community and even though that matter is clearly featured in the reports of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the Special Coordinator of the Secretary-General for Lebanon. Everyone knows that hundreds of Lebanese civilians have been killed by these criminal weapons, which are internationally prohibited.

The same applies to Israeli mines laid in the occupied Syrian Golan. Ever since the start of the Israeli occupation of the Golan in June 1967, those mines have killed and injured hundreds of Syrian civilians, including 220 children.

This is a region we belong to. Outside the region, everyone knows that the biggest traders in conventional arms, especially illegal arms, are retired military officers who work for the Israeli military complex. What the Israeli representative has said in this Committee is not an accurate reflection of the Israeli Government's actions. Israel's role in the international arms trade encourages international terrorism and protects groups involved in drug trafficking and secessionist movements.

Furthermore, international armed groups headed by Israeli rabbis are involved in trafficking in children's organs. I will say no more than I have already said, except to mention the inhuman and illegal activities that Israel has continuously engaged in over months and years.

The Acting Chair: We have heard the last speaker in exercise of the right of reply.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.