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Sixty-seventh session

First Committee

4th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Percaya (Indonesia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 86 to 102 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): We are delivering this statement in our national capacity and not as the coordinator of the African Group. My delegation would like to join others who have spoken before us in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. We have no doubt that our work will benefit tremendously from your experience, expertise and commitment. We assure you of our full support and cooperation. I also wish to commend your predecessor, Mr. Jarmo Viinanen of Finland, for his leadership and commendable efforts in the cause of disarmament. Nigeria aligns itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement, delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with the statement made on behalf of the African Group.

At the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, my delegation highlighted a number of daunting issues that have confronted our world over the past years and the minimum required of us to address them (see A/C.1/66/PV.7). But we were optimistic that better wisdom would prevail and that the international community would see the need for concerted action towards addressing those issues of grave importance.

We premised that optimism on the series of measures taken to facilitate the global agenda for disarmament and international security and on the positive impact

that those measures could produce in future. Among such commendable efforts were the convening of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held in Vienna, and the second United Nations Review Conference on the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms in New York. Other such meetings included the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Oslo, the recently held High-level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism and the high-level meeting of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Despite those achievements, my delegation remains deeply concerned about the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament. We reaffirm our belief that nuclear weapons are the ultimate weapons of mass destruction and that their total elimination should be the final objective of all disarmament processes in the United Nations. We also reaffirm our opposition to the modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types. We consider the continued existence and possession of nuclear weapons as inimical to the promotion of international peace and security.

If goodwill and common sense can not rid the world of such doomsday weapons, we believe enlightened self-interest should prevail on those possessing nuclear weapons to get rid of them. They offer no credible defence against other adversaries possessing similar weapons, and they pose an existential threat to those who do not possess them at all. If the overarching goal

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of nuclear disarmament should be a world free of nuclear weapons, then the world should, at least, demonstrate that the possession and retention of over 20,000 warheads in the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States not only remain unacceptable but should be repudiated. Compliance with the NPT should, in our view, go hand in hand with the willingness of the nuclear-weapon States to disarm and disavow the continued possession of such weapons.

My delegation welcomes the outcome of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, which provided an opportunity to assess the implementation of the Treaty. We believe that that meeting and the two remaining sessions that will be held before 2015 will contribute to an overall strategy for the full implementation of the action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol.I)), because it addresses nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East (see NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex). In that regard, we look forward to the Conference scheduled to be held in Helsinki, Finland, on the subject of the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation will continue to support the call for effective assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States. In that regard, we stress the necessity of the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

Nigeria believes in the necessity of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We recognize that treaty as being essential to promoting the process of nuclear disarmament. We seize this opportunity to call on all States that have not signed or ratified the Treaty to do so.

With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, its long-standing inability to agree on a programme of work and act on the mandate given to it by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is adversely affecting its reputation and credibility. It was our hope that the Conference would benefit from the momentum generated by the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security

convened by the Secretary-General in September 2010 and the follow-up to that meeting in July 2011. The clear message that those meetings conveyed to the Conference was that the world was disappointed by the stalemate in the Conference and by its perennial non-performance. For close to two decades, the annual sessions of the Conference have been barren and devoid of any satisfactory outcomes. Clearly, that is not a situation that should be allowed to go on indefinitely.

My delegation believes in the urgent revitalization of the Conference. Its membership should be reviewed and expanded. The Conference should also welcome greater engagement on the part of civil society, and Member States should demonstrate the political will and commitment necessary to break the current impasse and move the process forward.

My delegation, like many others, was deeply disappointed and regrets that, despite the enormous effort invested by Member States, the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty held last July failed to produce the positive outcome that the vast majority of Member States expected and worked for. My delegation seizes this opportunity to commend the efforts of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina and the dynamic contributions of the two working group Chairs, from Morocco and the Netherlands.

We wish to reiterate that an apparent lack of consensus on the draft text presented by the President last July should not necessarily deter Member States from forging ahead in making concerted efforts to address the issues on the Conference's agenda. My delegation respects the consensus rule as an abiding principle for mobilizing a wide range of support for our work, but we stress the importance of the definition that the consensus rule should not be exercised as a sort of power of veto. In that regard, Nigeria will support the present draft text as a basis for further negotiation on an arms trade treaty.

My delegation acknowledges with appreciation the overwhelming support that Ambassador Joy Ogwu, Permanent Representative of Nigeria, received from Member States during the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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. My delegation also acknowledges the valuable contributions of the representatives of Australia, Egypt, Guyana and Japan

in their capacity as facilitators during the negotiations. We also welcome and recognize the significant part played by civil society organizations in the success of the Conference. We believe that that underscores the need for the United Nations to continue to engage civil society in all its deliberations.

Finally, Nigeria wishes to underscore the important role of the First Committee with respect to realizing the objectives of the United Nations Charter. We would reiterate that the ethos of multilateralism remains the safest guarantee of international peace and security. My delegation will therefore continue to work constructively in this Committee and all other forums towards achieving the goal of disarmament.

Mr. Strohal (Austria): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the important function of Chair of the First Committee. I was delighted to see a representative of a country that is so important to the field of disarmament in the Chair. I am also personally very happy to see a personal friend in the Chair. I assure you of my delegation's full support. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

Austria aligns itself with the general statement made on behalf of the European Union on 8 October (see A/C.1/67/PV.2). I would like to use the opportunity today to briefly highlight two specific issues to which Austria attaches particular importance during this year's session of the General Assembly.

The first issue is the need for substantive progress in multilateral nuclear disarmament towards the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. That is an aspiration shared by all humankind and a commitment that the entire international community has undertaken. It needs to be acted on with a sense of urgency.

For Austria, functioning multilateral security institutions are a vital component of our security. We pay tribute to the role of the United Nations disarmament framework in that regard. At the same time, it is deeply disconcerting that for several years we have not been able to use that framework effectively to advance nuclear disarmament. Instead, we have seen flawed multilateral processes that are dominated by tactics to maintain the status quo for as long as possible. The consequence is an increasing erosion of the legitimacy of the existing legal frameworks and institutions.

Such concerns and frustrations are widely shared. Many delegations have made considerable efforts to try to find ways to overcome the paralysis in the multilateral disarmament forums. Yet, those efforts have thus far been unsuccessful owing to the strong presence of vested interests and the misuse of procedural rules, which have been impossible to surmount. We are convinced, however, that the urgency of the issue gives us all the responsibility to try new and innovative approaches. For that reason, Austria has decided to work again with like-minded countries on a draft resolution (A/C.1/67/L.13) that seeks to return the dynamic to multilateral nuclear disarmament.

The purpose of the initiative is to facilitate substantive multilateral progress in the area of nuclear disarmament through the establishment of an open-ended working group that would convene in Geneva for up to three weeks during the course of next year. It would be tasked with developing concrete proposals to take multilateral negotiations forward for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. In other words, the initiative is intended to provide a forum for constructive and substantive work, without prejudice to any outcome.

We hope that such a proposal will be perceived as an opportunity for the United Nations disarmament community to overcome the prevailing inertia and to move towards substantive disarmament negotiations. My delegation looks forward to consultations with all interested States in the coming days.

The second aspect that I would like to touch upon today is the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (ICOC). This year marks the tenth anniversary since its adoption in The Hague in 2002. Austria has served as the Immediate Central Contact and Executive Secretariat of the Code since its inception. In that function, Austria would like to express its satisfaction that the ICOC has served as a unique multilateral confidence-building and transparency instrument in the field of ballistic missile systems.

We welcome the progress to date in the universalization and implementation of the Code. The First Committee is called upon to adopt the biennial ICOC resolution, the draft of which was agreed upon at the regular meeting in Vienna. Austria is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution and encourages all States Members of the United Nations to support it. We would also like to encourage further engagement by

all Member States in dealing with the issue of missile proliferation in the future.

Ms. Gottemoeller (United States of America): On behalf of the United States, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We look forward to working with you during the course of the Committee's work. I thank you in advance for your fine leadership. The United States pledges its full support for your efforts to oversee a productive First Committee at this General Assembly session.

I am pleased to come before the First Committee for the third time in as many years to provide the views of my Government on important issues before the Committee. Although the road to a stable and secure world without nuclear weapons will be long and difficult, the United States has made great progress in pursuit of the vision set out by President Obama three years ago in Prague. We know that it is in everyone's interest to extend the more than 65-year record of the non-use of nuclear weapons indefinitely.

One fundamental instrument in that pursuit is the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that underpins it. The NPT must be upheld if we are to make progress towards nuclear disarmament. That requires that all States meet their obligations under the Treaty, with a particular focus on the comprehensive action plan adopted by consensus at the 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)).

Understanding our responsibility to be leaders in disarmament, the United States and the Russian Federation entered into the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START agreement), which is the most comprehensive arms-control agreement in almost 20 years. The implementation of the New START agreement is going very well. The parties have exchanged more than 3,000 notifications on their respective strategic forces, and the on-site inspections that enable each side to confirm the validity of that data are now well under way.

Our experience so far demonstrates that the New START treaty verification regime works and sets an important precedent for future negotiations. When President Obama signed the Treaty in Prague in 2010,

he stressed his intention to pursue further reductions in strategic, non-strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons. We and the Russian Federation are now engaged in a dialogue on strategic stability, laying the groundwork for future negotiations.

The United States is also proud to be a part of a new effort, namely, the Permanent Five (P5) process. That high-priority, regularized dialogue among the five NPT nuclear-weapon States is integral to progress on the 2010 NPT action plan. The United States hosted the Washington, D.C., P5 Conference this past June — the third in a series of such conferences. Those conferences are contributing to political dialogue and new forms of cooperation on nuclear weapons issues to an extent unseen in prior years, and that work, I will underscore, is among all P5 States.

Regarding other multilateral efforts, the United States is working consistently and actively in support of nuclear-weapon-free zones. We are pleased to report that the P5 and Mongolia reached agreement on parallel declarations regarding Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. We also look forward to the signature of a P5 protocol to the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone and to advance dialogue with parties to the zone treaty in Central Asia.

On the non-proliferation front, the United States applauds the 17 States that have brought the additional protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) into force since the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, bringing the total to 118 States. The Protocol has become the international standard for safeguards, and we encourage all countries to adopt it. We are also working with the IAEA and its member States to strengthen safeguards in other ways, including by ensuring that the Agency has the political support and resources needed to fulfil its essential mission.

International cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the third NPT pillar, continues to be vigorous. I am pleased to report that the IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative now has 13 contributing States and the Board of Governors has approved measures to assure IAEA members of reliable access to fuel for peaceful nuclear-power plants.

While the United States and other parties make progress on each pillar of the NPT, we have grave concerns about the actions of a few countries. Iran, North Korea and Syria have violated their NPT

obligations and have not taken the steps necessary to rectify those violations. The violations continue to threaten international security and undermine confidence in the non-proliferation regime. Above all, those cases stand in the way of our shared disarmament goals. The international community must therefore insist on a return to compliance, in keeping with the NPT action plan.

Beyond nuclear issues, the United States welcomes the success of the seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, and the ambitious work plan it adopted. We are also pushing forward with our biotransparency initiative, which is aimed at building confidence in the Biological Weapons Convention regime.

We are also commemorating the fifteenth year since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The United States remains fully committed to the CWC, and as all States parties to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons work towards a world free from the scourge of chemical weapons, we recognize that there remain real challenges before us. In that connection, we, along with partners in the international community, call on the Syrian Government to eliminate its chemical weapons arsenal, cease all threats of their use and join the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The United States is also hard at work on the creation, completion and implementation of several other international arms control and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. The United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in July made significant progress towards realizing a strong and effective treaty to regulate international trade in conventional arms. The United States is committed to improving the current draft text and supports convening a short, focused, consensus-based conference in 2013 to continue our work. We look forward to cooperating with our partners in order to achieve a treaty text that can be adopted by consensus.

The ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remains a top priority for the United States. Despite the tough budget climate in Washington, the United States has provided over \$40 million in extrabudgetary contributions to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, in addition to our annual assessment, demonstrating our confidence in and commitment to that important treaty. As the United States moves forward with its

ratification process, we encourage all Annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty.

The United States is continuing its fight for the verifiable end to the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. A fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is a logical and absolutely essential next step in the path towards global nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament remains our preferred venue for negotiating an FMCT, since it includes every major nuclear-capable State and operates by consensus, ensuring that everyone's national security concerns are protected. A year ago, the United States initiated consultations among the P5 and others on unblocking FMCT negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. We also sought to prepare our countries for what we expect would be a challenging negotiation. The P5-plus dialogue has the potential to move the FMCT forward. That said, our patience on the issue is not infinite, and we will push for what is in the best interest of global security. We will work hard to convince others that commencement of negotiations is not something to fear.

The United States is and has always been committed to innovation, and arms control and non-proliferation are no exception. In our response to the ever-changing security landscape, we are looking for creative ways to tackle long-standing verification and monitoring problems in an increasingly interdependent and interconnected world. That kind of thinking will be vital as we face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The United States will continue to work to make its way forward on the road to a world without nuclear weapons. It is hard work. There are no short cuts and no practical alternatives to a persistent step-by-step process. That is the only viable path towards disarmament. We call on all nations to take seriously their commitments to international arms control and non-proliferation regimes and to work together to move forward down that road as well. I look forward to our further deliberations.

Mr. Kim Sook (Republic of Korea): Mr. Chairman, I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. Allow me, Sir, to assure you of my delegation's full support for your able leadership and our cooperation as we move forward.

In recent years, we have witnessed encouraging developments in the nuclear arena. Among them are

the historic signing of the New START treaty by the two major nuclear Powers, two groundbreaking nuclear security summits in Washington and Seoul, and the unanimous adoption of the final document at the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2010. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also presented his five-point proposal for nuclear disarmament in 2008. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain central to the global agenda.

However, those positive trends have seemed to stall over the past two years. My delegation strongly believes that, in order to rekindle global efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, it is critical to restore trust and to nurture a spirit of cooperation between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. The non-nuclear-weapon States must faithfully observe their commitment to non-proliferation, while the nuclear-weapon States must do their part by making true progress in nuclear disarmament.

Regarding the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Republic of Korea recognizes that all States parties have the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy as long as they are in full compliance with their non-proliferation obligations. However, there is also inherent potential for proliferation in nuclear fuel cycle technologies. States taking advantage of such technologies, which can be directly diverted into non-peaceful uses, must demonstrate a higher level of commitment to non-proliferation and full implementation of safeguards obligations in order to ensure international confidence.

We believe that all outstanding issues and concerns regarding Iran's nuclear programme should be resolved expeditiously and diplomatically in order for Iran to regain the trust of the international community. An early and peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue is crucial, not only for the nuclear non-proliferation regime, but also for overall stability in an increasingly volatile Middle East. My delegation hopes that the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East this December will prove to be a resolute success.

Nuclear terrorism has emerged as one of the most challenging threats to global security. Preventing nuclear proliferation not only to States but also to non-State actors is of the utmost importance. The concerted efforts of the international community are important to prevent nuclear terrorism, and the United Nations should function as the main arena for those efforts. The

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), together with the United Nations, should continue to play a leading role in facilitating international cooperation, providing assistance and strengthening safeguards.

The High-level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism, convened on 28 September during the General Assembly, has provided a new momentum to push forward the efforts of 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit. At the Seoul Summit, 58 global leaders declared a collective international commitment to a peaceful world free of nuclear terrorism, adopting the Seoul Communiqué. The Summit served as an excellent opportunity to remind us that sustained efforts are required to address the issue of nuclear safety and security in a coherent manner. My delegation expects that we can explore newer and more creative ways to further enhance nuclear safety and security in the next Nuclear Security Summit, to be held in the Netherlands in 2014.

It is clear that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has both political and practical importance for the international community. My delegation welcomes the most recent achievements, which include ratification by Indonesia and Guatemala, as well as the signature of the Treaty by Niue. However, the promise of the Treaty will not be fully realized until it enters into force and achieves universality. My delegation urges all States, particularly those listed in annex 2, that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT, to do so without further delay. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, States must refrain from acting in a manner that undermines the purpose of the Treaty.

There have been increasing concerns over the past decade regarding the inactivity of the Conference on Disarmament. My Government still adheres to the hope that the Conference can play its central role as the premier forum for disarmament and will do its due part to put the Conference process into motion. We once again call upon all members of the Conference to first cooperate in kickstarting substantive work on the fissile material cut-off treaty and then to continue to work on all other long-standing Conference on Disarmament issues.

Following the high-level meeting organized by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons last week, the Republic of Korea recognizes the critical role of the Chemical Weapons Convention. My delegation would like to urge all States not party to the Convention — especially those States believed

to possess chemical-weapons capabilities, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — to join the Convention without further delay. Chemical weapons must not, under any circumstances, actually be used or even used as a threat. That is unacceptable under international law and goes against global humanitarian principles.

Conventional weapons have the potential to destabilize entire countries and regions, and their human toll is vast. As has been noted many times, those weapons are indeed the real weapons of mass destruction. The Republic of Korea fully supports the goals and principles of an arms trade treaty. Such a treaty should reflect well-balanced deliberations in terms of feasibility, capability of implementation and effectiveness, with a view to encouraging the full participation of all Member States. It is disappointing that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in New York in July of this year, failed to bear fruit. However, an arms trade treaty is too important to simply give up. We look forward to effective deliberations in the First Committee for constructive alternatives.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programmes continue to pose a dire threat to regional peace and security as well as an unprecedented challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. In addition to its two nuclear tests, one in 2006 and one in 2009, and the revelation of its uranium-enrichment facility in Yongbyon in 2010, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a long-range missile in April of this year. That is a clear violation of Security Council resolution 1874 (2009), which prohibits any launch using ballistic-missile technology.

In response to that provocative action, the Security Council reaffirmed, through a firm and resolute presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/13), that the international community would not tolerate the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continued pursuit of its nuclear and missile programmes. Nonetheless, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is continuing to defy its obligations by pursuing its nuclear programmes, including its uranium-enrichment programme and construction of a light-water reactor. The existence of a uranium-enrichment programme should be of grave concern to us all, as it opens the path for that country to further develop its nuclear-weapons capabilities.

Recently, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has repeatedly expressed its intention to expand its nuclear capabilities, while referring to itself as a so-called nuclear-weapon State. In response, the international community sent a unified and resolute message at the fifty-sixth annual regular session of the IAEA General Conference by unanimously adopting a resolution on 21 September. In the resolution, the international community reaffirmed that North Korea cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon State in accordance with the NPT, as clearly stressed in the outcome document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) and Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should abide by its international commitments and obligations under the Security Council resolutions and the 19 September 2005 joint statement of the Six-Party Talks.

In step with the efforts of the international community, my Government will continue to pursue a principled approach to resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, faithfully implementing sanctions in line with the Security Council resolutions, while simultaneously leaving the door open to dialogue. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately cease all nuclear activities and take concrete measures aimed at denuclearization. That would also open an avenue to improving the livelihood of its people. We will continue to work closely with the countries concerned to achieve the goal of a denuclearized North Korea in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

During this session, the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Government of Australia will submit a draft resolution on preventing and combating illicit brokering activities. The Republic of Korea, as the Chair of The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation for 2012 and 2013, will also submit a draft resolution on The Hague Code of Conduct. My delegation requests the co-sponsorship and full support of all delegations.

The disarmament community, through the lead of the United Nations, has continued to make encouraging gains, not only towards nuclear non-proliferation but also towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Achieving that goal will take more time and strenuous work, but we must continue on our path and refocus our efforts with a view towards lasting progress. My delegation once again pledges

our intention and willingness to work tirelessly for the success of the First Committee in this session and beyond, playing a role commensurate with our capacity and national focus on multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Shalgham (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee, as well as the other members of the Bureau on their election. I am sure that your wisdom and experience will help make the Committee's work a success. My delegation aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab States and the Group of African States.

On a number of occasions, Libya has reaffirmed its respect for all commitments undertaken pursuant to international disarmament instruments on weapons of mass destruction and on their delivery systems. Libya cooperates with the international community in a fully credible and transparent manner in support of regional and international efforts, with a view to implementing the texts and provisions of international agreements and protocols and with the aim of creating an environment conducive to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Libya is intent on reconsidering its position regarding certain international disarmament instruments to which it is still not party, with a view to taking a decision on those instruments following the adoption of the country's permanent Constitution and once a newly formed Government that possesses full legitimacy is in place.

The Libyan Government, aware of the considerable firepower of the weapons that are now easily available in many parts of Libya as a result of the war against the former dictator's regime, has been encouraging its citizens to hand in their weapons voluntarily. The Government has established an integrated disarmament programme to demobilize the armed groups and reintegrate them into the various organs of the State. At the same time, the Government has made it a crime to carry weapons without a permit and is working to establish the rule of law and the State's authority throughout the country. That is a programme that the Government has already launched, and it is due to conclude soon.

As to the stockpiles of equipment and non-conventional weapons, the Libyan authorities have undertaken to seal them off in safe zones under the eye of the new State authorities, while informing concerned

international organizations of that fact and acting in full transparency. It is urgent for the nuclear-weapon States to honour their commitments, as stipulated under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the outcomes of the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, the 13 steps adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and the action plan set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)).

Imposing controls on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the politicization of that question, as well as the failure to take the issue of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction seriously, or the failure to put in place verifiable and transparent mechanisms or time frames for the total elimination of stockpiles of such weapons, all such failures heighten people's concerns regarding the outlook for the future of humanity. Accordingly, my country, Libya, supports the adoption of a legally binding and unconditional international instrument to ensure the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. Such guarantees can undoubtedly help in the implementation of the provisions of the NPT and spare the non-nuclear-weapon States from the danger of the use of such weapons against them.

Libya supports the international efforts to establish zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as a step in the right direction towards the elimination of those weapons and the danger they pose to the world. In that respect, my country calls on the Secretary-General, the NPT depository States, regional groups and countries with great influence to undertake efforts to encourage all the States concerned to participate in the 2012 conference on making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in an effective manner. We reaffirm the importance of the holding of the conference next December and its success, because it is critical if we are to consolidate security, stability and international peace and security, as well as ensure confidence and trust among the peoples in the regions. Libya stresses the importance of enhancing security and cooperation in the region of the Mediterranean basin. We support efforts to turn it into a lake of peace and a bridge for international cooperation in all spheres.

As regards conventional weapons, Libya hopes that the issue will be addressed with full consideration

given to the particularities of each region and each State, including their security and defence needs. Among the principles that should be taken into account are the rights of States to self-defence, territorial unity and integrity, resistance against occupation, and self-determination. Moreover, the application of double standards and arbitrary preconditions, political or otherwise, for the purpose of exerting pressure or political blackmail, should be avoided.

Libya would like to stress the importance of implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the necessity of working on the basis of results already achieved in order to implement the Programme of Action fully.

Finally, Libya emphasizes the fact that multilateral cooperation and serious political will are two vital elements that must be actively adhered to, if we are to achieve the goals of disarmament and establish a foundation of stability and trust in every region of the world, in order to ensure development, prosperity and well-being for all.

Mrs. Ribeiro Viotti (Brazil): I will read a shortened version of Brazil's statement, the full version of which will be circulated in the Conference Room.

I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of the First Committee, and to pledge our full support to you. We are confident that your experience and diplomatic skills will enable you to successfully conduct our work over the next four weeks. Your appointment is also a recognition of Indonesia's long-standing tradition and leadership in promoting multilateral disarmament efforts. We also take this opportunity to thank Ms. Angela Kane for her opening remarks and for her work as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Brazil fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Chile on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and Sweden on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition. As in previous years, the Coalition will present a draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments". The delegations of Brazil and New Zealand will also be introducing a draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. We count on the

same outstanding support that those resolutions have received from delegations in previous sessions of this Committee.

Nuclear disarmament continues to be a high priority for Brazil. During this year's general debate, President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil singled out

"the existence of immense arsenals that, in addition to threatening all humankind, aggravate tensions and hamper efforts towards peace" (*A/67/PV.6, p. 10*).

We commend, in that regard, the Secretary-General's recent article entitled "The World is Over-Armed and Peace is Under-Funded", in which he points out that massive military spending and new investments in modernizing nuclear weapons, estimated to cost at least \$4.6 billion daily, continue to reflect paradigms that are hard to explain in a post-Cold War world. While noting that nuclear weapons are useless against today's threats to international peace and security, besides being an incentive to proliferation, the Secretary-General proposes a dramatic cut in spending on the maintenance and modernization of such weapons in order to free up resources for investments in social and economic development. Brazil could not agree more.

More than 40 years after the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and more than 20 years after the end of the Cold War, it is unacceptable that thousands of nuclear weapons not only continue to exist but are continually being modernized, as part of military doctrine, and are kept at unreduced levels of operational readiness. Brazil expresses its concern about persistent attempts to justify the possession of nuclear weapons, whether to sustain minimum security levels, to ensure an alleged undiminished security or to provide a hypothetical strategic stability. Such concepts are as outdated as the nuclear weapons themselves.

While the area of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons has been a relatively successful aspect of the NPT regime, the nuclear disarmament side of the bargain is where a compliance deficit continues to exist. It is time for nuclear-weapon States to fulfil the nuclear-disarmament-related measures they have agreed to implement under the Treaty, in compliance with the action plans agreed on at the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences. The credibility and effectiveness of the regime depend on all States abiding by their obligations under the NPT.

Along with nuclear disarmament, it is in the legitimate interests of non-nuclear-weapon States to be granted legally binding assurances from the nuclear-weapon States that such weapons will never be used or threatened to be used against them. Brazil attaches the greatest importance to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Treaty of Tlatelolco was the first expression of States' clear repudiation of nuclear arms as weapons of choice in their international relations. Similarly, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials embodies another successful regional initiative in the nuclear field.

In line with its unwavering commitment to the NPT and the obligations that that Treaty contains, Brazil attaches great importance to the decisions emanating from the NPT Review Conferences, including the 2010 decision to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Brazil is convinced that the successful convening of such a conference would constitute an essential part of the NPT regime and the current review cycle. We urge all countries of the region to attend the conference, which could represent the beginning of a promising process aimed at fostering confidence-building measures among neighbouring States. While not ignoring the specificities of the Middle East that might require appropriate adaptations, Brazil stands ready to share its experiences of both the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials.

Brazil is fully committed to the objective of ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to international efforts aimed at preventing non-State actors from gaining access to those weapons or to related materials and technology. While firmly recognizing the need for all States to reinforce their national controls over nuclear and related materials, Brazil believes that only the complete elimination of nuclear weapons can ensure that they will never fall into the hands of non-State actors.

We regret that, 16 years after being opened for signature, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has still not entered into force. We welcome Guatemala and Indonesia's recent ratification of the Treaty and reiterate our call to all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, particularly the annex 2 States, to do so as soon as possible.

Brazil joins in the international community's call for the launching of negotiations on a treaty on fissile material. Discussions on that issue indicate, however, that the real difficulties involve not procedural matters but substantive ones. Given the huge quantities of plutonium and highly enriched uranium that exist in some countries — enough to produce weapons for centuries to come — one can question the added value of a treaty that ignores the question of stocks or pre-existing materials. To fully meet such expectations, Brazil believes that negotiating a treaty on fissile material should be part of a larger legal framework, that of a nuclear-weapons convention, standing side by side with other instruments aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons in a clear yet realistic time frame.

Such considerations lead us to the conclusion that the Conference on Disarmament should be ready to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations. The reasons for the stalemate at the Conference are clearly political and unrelated to institutional or procedural issues. Any effort to reform it should consider the United Nations disarmament machinery as a whole and not just the Conference itself. That is why we reject issuing an ultimatum to the Conference and support the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

The Chemical Weapons Convention, which celebrates its fifteenth anniversary this year, is an unequivocal example of the success of multilateralism in the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation. We were pleased that an agreement was reached in December 2011 that stipulated a proper framework for completing the destruction of the remaining chemical arsenals, while preserving the integrity of the Convention and the credibility of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The Convention is now an instrument with almost universal adherence. Brazil encourages all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention without further delay. As for the Biological Weapons Convention, Brazil welcomes the results of the last Review Conference, which established the basis for the next inter-sessional period, focusing on international cooperation, developments in science and technology, and national implementation.

Conventional weapons, as opposed to weapons of mass destruction, do not pose an imminent threat to the survival of humankind. However, the uncontrolled

spread and the irresponsible use of those weapons continue to account for an unacceptable human toll in different parts of the globe. In that context, we were disappointed at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in July without the adoption of a final treaty draft. Yet we are pleased to note that a timely mobilization has been taking place in order to achieve a decision by the First Committee on the reconvening of the Conference. Brazil fully supports that initiative.

The second reason for disappointment dates back to the end of 2011, when serious efforts in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons aimed at moving towards the adoption of a multilateral agreement on cluster munitions were precluded by the inflexible approach of some delegations. As a result, and for the near future, large quantities of those weapons — in particular the oldest arsenals — will continue to be retained, used and transferred without any sort of regulation.

However, we must also note positive developments in the area of conventional arms, such as the successful results of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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, as well as progress towards the objective of banning anti-personnel landmines under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Brazil continues to attach high priority to the objective of safeguarding outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes. It is a matter of concern that, while the international community increasingly recognizes the need to promote trust and confidence among nations on outer space activities, there continues to be serious resistance or indifference with regard to the urgency of adopting legally binding frameworks on that issue. Some States consider that the best approach would be one of endorsing a number of political, voluntary commitments. Brazil believes that we can and should aim for more.

The need for legal commitments is also present when it comes to preserving the security of global information and telecommunications systems. The interests of the international community as a whole rely on effective, balanced and cooperative agreements.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate Brazil's full commitment to the work of the First Committee as

we strive to promote a world free of weapons of mass destruction, based on a more cooperative approach. In pursuing that goal, the United Nations and its bodies, such as this Committee, have a fundamental role to play.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, it is a pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election as the Chair of this important Committee. We are certain that your vast experience will lead us to a successful conclusion. I should also like to commend Ms. Angela Kane, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for her comprehensive statement delivered at the beginning of our Committee's deliberations (see A/C.1/67/PV.3). I wish to align myself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States, and of Egypt on behalf of the League of Arab States. I assure the members of the Committee that the Sudanese delegation will contribute in an effective and positive manner to our work.

This session of the First Committee is being convened at a time when the whole world is looking forward to a special conference to establish a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East as part of the implementation of the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). We welcome the preparatory efforts that have been made for the convening of the 2012 conference to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as well as the selection of Finland as the host country for the conference.

We underscore the importance of the participation of all Middle Eastern States at that conference, in accordance with the plan of action agreed upon in the outcome document of the 2010 Review Conference. We invite the international community to support all efforts to ensure a successful outcome at the conference and to achieve tangible results and clear mechanisms for implementation and follow-up based on a binding timetable to ensure that a nuclear-weapon-free zone and zone free of weapons of mass destruction is established in the Middle East.

In that context, we highlight the importance of ensuring that all nuclear sites situated in the Middle East region are subject to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy

Agency, which inevitably implies Israel's participation and adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We recall that regional and international developments, in particular in the region of the Middle East, clearly demonstrate that the only way to consolidate international security is through the implementation of multilateral agreements and, above all, the convening of the special conference on the Middle East.

The Sudan is an effective partner in international disarmament efforts. We were among the first States to accede to international agreements, instruments and treaties in that field, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We also participated in efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa under the Treaty of Pelindaba, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which we signed in 2004 following our participation in a workshop that had been convened in Vienna on the objectives of the Treaty, its organization and its working methods, as well as the working methodology of its various international centres.

We also wish to recall that in 2004, Khartoum hosted the first meeting of African national organizations concerned with the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, in the context of the Sudan's interest in the universalization of that Convention and its full implementation. The Conference agreed on important recommendations, such as the establishment of a chemical-weapons-free zone in Africa and that only peaceful uses of such chemical substances should be permitted in Africa. At the same time, the rights of Member States to use chemical and nuclear components at scientific and technical facilities and for development and peaceful purposes should not be restricted.

One of the most pressing concerns of the Sudan, as for all States, in particular those in our region and other African States, is the issue of small arms and light weapons. Like many other States throughout the world, my country has been affected by this problem. In most cases, it is related to the economic situation and is further exacerbated by natural phenomena, such as climate change, desertification and drought, as well as intense competition over water sources and grazing lands. As a result, carrying arms has become a custom and a mode of behaviour that further affects communities in our region that want to display their power. It has therefore become very difficult to disarm the population and control the possession of such small

arms and light weapons. Again, removing such arms from the tribes has become very difficult.

The Sudan is aware of the threats posed by such conduct and of the need to eliminate such dangers, and thus we have actively participated in all relevant international and regional forums. We are also working at the national level through our National Office for Small Arms and Light Weapons, as we believe that there is a close link between the proliferation of such weapons and transnational organized crime, terrorism and drug trafficking.

In that regard, the Sudan is undertaking multifaceted work and efforts within the framework of the African Union and the League of Arab States and through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. In April we hosted a regional workshop on combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Moreover, the Sudan is engaged in bilateral efforts with neighbouring States to delineate borders and to ensure their monitoring and to provide customs control.

In reporting such efforts, we also take the opportunity to reaffirm that combating the proliferation of such weapons must similarly be the outcome of efforts by the main producer countries. Those countries should therefore not export such weapons to individuals, groups or non-State actors, so as to ensure that such arms do not fall into the hands of those groups or individuals without proper regulation and controls. We reaffirm the importance of ensuring that support, in particular technical support, is provided to countries affected by such phenomena, pursuant to section II 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, in order to assist them.

At the regional level, the Sudan has already accomplished a great deal with regard to implementing the Programme of Action. We have already set up the necessary bodies for implementing and monitoring it. We have also established a national contact office under the auspices of the Minister of the Interior, designated as the focal point for the implementation of the Programme of Action and of policies, plans and national strategies at the central level. We have also set up an interministerial working group that brings together the various agencies responsible for the implementation.

Furthermore, we have also established offices within the various Sudanese governorates in order to combat the illicit proliferation in small arms and light weapons under a plan that has been drawn up and will be implemented over the next five years. The main goals of the plan are coordination with the United Nations Programme of Action so as to ensure harmony of national legislation and laws with the Programme, the digitalization of arms registries to ensure the effective monitoring of arms held by the Sudan National Armed Forces, and periodic reviews of the arms registries of the small arms and light weapons licensed to certain civilians in line with the current relevant laws. The five-year plan also attaches great importance to awareness-raising and to civic education on the threats posed by small arms and light weapons. In addition, it strengthens the capacity of the monitoring and control bodies.

Finally, we all certainly agree that the 2006 Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development demonstrates clearly the intrinsic link between development and armed conflict. That must be taken into account when the Security Council considers conflicts in developing countries.

The same applies when the Council considers whether to deploy peacekeeping or peacebuilding missions in a country.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in post-conflict situations must be implemented, and, in that context, the root causes of conflict must be addressed. One of the main causes is the area of development, which is the common denominator for most current conflicts. The conflict in Darfur, which has been resolved following the signing of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and its entry into force, is an example of the close relationship among the various elements. Lack of development, drought and desertification can fuel rivalries between pastoral and agricultural communities over water resources and grazing land. As a result, members of those communities may try to acquire small arms and light weapons.

Finally, we hope that the working group will adopt an approach that addresses the root causes, and not merely the symptoms, in order to define the reasons for the proliferation of such weapons among groups and individuals.

Mr. Estreme (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to especially congratulate you, Sir, on your election to chair the First Committee and to assure you of the Argentine delegation's full cooperation in the Committee's work in the coming two months.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Chile, at our 2nd meeting, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. Accordingly, I will add only a few points. The complete version of my statement will be distributed in writing.

The Argentine Republic has traditionally favoured addressing the issue of nuclear disarmament as a priority and has made significant efforts in that area, reflecting its clear and sustained commitment to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. At the same time, Argentina maintains a vigorous nuclear programme for exclusively peaceful purposes, in which it produces, uses and exports nuclear energy in the framework of the strictest respect for the norms enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Argentina has been developing peaceful nuclear activities for over 60 years in accordance with the highest safety standards. As the first Latin American country to operate a nuclear-power plant, my country has already opened its third nuclear plant.

Argentina reiterates its support of any measure aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons that is based on principles of the transparency, irreversibility and verification of nuclear disarmament measures. As a State party to the first nuclear-weapon-free zone established in a densely populated geographical area, Argentina reiterates its call upon States that have made interpretative declarations to the Additional Protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco to withdraw them, in conformity with the purpose of the Treaty.

In the process of considering the causes of the stagnation in both the Conference on Disarmament and the other United Nations disarmament machinery, it is clear that the problems in the ability of the Conference to resume its substantive work come mainly from outside that forum, and that while it is possible to improve the working methods of the Conference, renewed political will is needed to make concrete progress.

Argentina welcomes the adoption of a programme of work for the triennial cycle of the Disarmament Commission and the inclusion of two substantive

issues. At this point, let me acknowledge the efforts of the Chair of the Commission, Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey, to achieve that result. Argentina understands that in order for the Commission to work efficiently and adopt recommendations on the two agenda items, States must demonstrate the necessary political will.

In the field of conventional weapons, Argentina welcomes the positive results achieved in the second Review Conference 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. I would like to stress the importance of including a gender and age perspective in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The adoption of a schedule of meetings for the 2012-2018 cycle will enable clear differentiation of the mandates of the various types of meetings and the selection of specific topics for greater effectiveness.

The need for a reliable international instrument is internationally recognized, an instrument that establishes common norms that make it possible to identify the factors and circumstances that States will have to bear in mind when assessing transfer authorizations for conventional weapons in order to prevent their diversion to uses or users not authorized under international law.

In that regard, my country considers it important to conclude the work of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty and adopt a treaty in the United Nations framework. Along with the other sponsors, Argentina will submit a draft resolution on the arms trade treaty and will work for a multilateral, open and transparent exercise to achieve its conclusion. My delegation believes that a robust and effective arms trade treaty would complement the provisions of the Programme of Action regarding the control of international transfers.

As it has traditionally done, during this session Argentina will submit the draft resolution on information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, whose main objective is to promote the adoption of measures to foster confidence in the field of conventional arms, encourage dialogue on the issue and strengthen knowledge on existing measures in various forums through the voluntary provision of information.

In 2011, the Secretary-General submitted for the first time a report on the subject (A/66/176), which contains a statistical analysis of the information received from Member States since 2005. Among its conclusions and recommendations, the report highlights that the information provided by States shows that confidence-building measures can significantly contribute to strengthening international peace, security and stability. It also recognizes that most of the confidence-building measures referred to by Member States in their reports resulted from agreements made at the regional, subregional and bilateral levels. The report also underlines that the great variety of such measures demonstrates the importance of adapting to the specific security concerns of the States of a region or subregion.

My delegation hopes that the draft resolution on the matter will be adopted without a vote, as has been the case in previous sessions.

In conclusion, let me again assure members of the Argentine delegation's full cooperation in promoting an open dialogue that will enable us to build the necessary understandings so that this session of the First Committee will bear fruit.

Mr. Motanyane (Lesotho): Much has been said about your capabilities, Mr. Chairman. All that is left for me is to congratulate you on your well-deserved chairmanship of the First Committee and to assure you of my delegation's full support. I also congratulate members of the Bureau on their election.

I align myself with the statements delivered at the 2nd meeting by the representatives of Iran and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively. I therefore wish to focus my attention on a few issues that are very important to my delegation.

The United Nations was created primarily for the maintenance of international peace and security and has been working diligently to achieve that goal since its formation. Disarmament has been at the centre of its activities for the past 67 years. However, the goal of a peaceful world — a world in which humanity can live without fear of destruction resulting from the use of weapons of mass destruction — continues to further recede from sight.

Many countries still possess nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in large quantities. Some routinely modernize their arsenals, while others engage

in proliferation activities. Conventional weapons and small arms and light weapons still wreak havoc in many societies today. All of that says to us that the challenge we face in the field of disarmament and international security is huge and complex.

During the past session of the General Assembly, there was a lot of activity in the field of disarmament. Many conferences and meetings were held with the purpose of moving the disarmament agenda forward. Some of the meetings were successful, while others did not yield the desired results. The sixty-seventh session should be a time of reckoning. We need to explore ways to consolidate the gains made thus far and collectively agree on the road map to achieving universal peace and security in a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The possession of nuclear weapons not only flouts the spirit of the United Nations Charter, but also exacerbates international disputes and conflict. Unless those weapons are totally eliminated, the world will never be at peace with itself.

In our view, the road to global nuclear disarmament begins with the total commitment by all to the full and effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT constrains the proliferation of nuclear weapons and averts the possibility of those weapons landing in the hands of non-State actors. Nuclear-weapon States have made certain binding undertakings under the NPT, and those undertakings must be fulfilled. We call on those States to remain faithful to such commitments and to work towards the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable manner. That call is more urgent now than ever before if we are to preserve the integrity of the NPT regime. Indeed, it is apparent that the philosophy of possessing nuclear weapons under the pretext of deterrence is ineffective. It only encourages others to pursue nuclear-weapon programmes, which causes tension and threatens international peace and security.

It is important to fully implement the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). In that regard, I wish to emphasize that a Middle East region that is free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction should be our priority. Lesotho will continue to support all efforts geared towards the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another landmark instrument on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The early entry into force of that instrument is of crucial importance. It is trite to point out that if there is no testing of nuclear weapons, there will be no need to either manufacture or modernize such weapons. We congratulate Member States that have recently ratified the CTBT, including your country, Mr. Chairman. We call on others, in particular the annex 2 States, to consider ratifying the Treaty without further delay.

Since 2010, there have been persistent calls from many quarters for the revitalization of the disarmament machinery, in particular the Conference on Disarmament. The importance of that Conference as a primary, yet not exclusive, multilateral disarmament negotiating forum is beyond dispute. However, the current state of affairs in that body is untenable. The paralysis that has characterized the Conference for more than a decade and a half is a source of great concern to my delegation. We call on the Conference to urgently agree on a balanced programme of work that reflects the modern-day realities in the field of disarmament and, accordingly, to commence negotiations.

Moreover, we support the call to look into ways of undertaking a thorough review of the functioning of the Conference on Disarmament, including exploring the possibility of setting up a panel of eminent persons to investigate ways to overhaul that body. A Conference on Disarmament that is transparent and accessible to all will surely restore our confidence that the goal of complete disarmament will not remain an illusion forever.

Small arms and light weapons have been a chronic problem for far too long. They fuel conflict and drug trafficking and account for scores of deaths of innocent people, including women and children, on a daily basis. The successful conclusion of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 has ushered in new hope for renewed political will and commitment to fight the rampant illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Let us remain resolute in implementing the outcome of the Review Conference. The spirit that prevailed during the Conference should always be a source of inspiration as we engage in negotiations in other disarmament forums.

Lasting peace and security will continue to elude us for as long as there is no legally binding instrument to regulate the global trade and transfer of conventional weapons. The international community's failure to conclude a robust, legally binding arms trade treaty less than three months ago was a huge setback in the field of disarmament. Nevertheless, all is not lost. The negotiations have revealed that an arms trade treaty that takes into account the legitimate security needs of States parties enjoys the overwhelming support of Member States.

Perhaps the failure to conclude a treaty in July is a blessing in disguise. Now we have an opportunity to negotiate an even better and stronger treaty. We need to redouble our efforts during the sixty-seventh session in pursuing that goal. Lesotho will support all efforts aimed at resuscitating the arms trade treaty process through a multilateral process.

Allow me to conclude by pointing out that the peoples of the world have entrusted their hope in the United Nations to advance their security interests and move the disarmament agenda forward. It is through the pursuit of real multilateralism that the aspirations for a peaceful, prosperous and safe world for future generations may be achieved. Let us commit ourselves to work towards that goal.

Mr. Pham Vinh Quang (Viet Nam): At the outset, on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. It is indeed a great pleasure for my delegation to see Your Excellency from Indonesia, a colleague of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), chairing this important Committee. I am strongly convinced that with your skilled leadership and vast experience in multilateral affairs, especially in the area of disarmament, this year's session will come to a successful conclusion. My felicitations also go to other members of the Bureau.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made at the 2nd meeting by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement made at the 3rd meeting by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of ASEAN.

We begin this year's discussion in the face of growing strategic uncertainties. Regional tensions and conflicts, together with grave impacts of the current global economic crisis, food insecurity and climate

change, have given rise to new security concerns that the international community has to address together in the time to come. Global expectations for progress in the field of disarmament and renewed hope for a world without nuclear weapons have not yielded substantial results, despite years of effort by States Members of the United Nations and international and regional organizations.

While welcoming the adoption of the report of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on its first session (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/14) and the successful conclusion of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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, we are still longing for concrete results on core issues on the disarmament agenda. It is therefore critical that we renew our commitment to, and intensify multilateral negotiations on, disarmament to bring ourselves closer to a world free of the scourge of wars and conflicts.

As a country that has gone through and greatly suffered from conflict and the inhumane use of weapons, Viet Nam understands at first hand the utmost need for general and complete disarmament. It is therefore our principled policy to support international efforts towards that end, giving priority to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We have acceded to all major multilateral treaties on prohibiting weapons of mass destruction and have been an active member of many United Nations disarmament bodies.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should continue to be given top priority. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global regime in that area. The three pillars of the Treaty — nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear technology — should be promoted in a balanced and reasonable manner, including through the implementation of the 64-point action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol.1)).

In that regard, we welcome recent successes such as the outcome of the second Nuclear Security Summit, held in the Republic of Korea, and the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review

Conference of the Parties to the NPT. We also commend the continued role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in facilitating implementation of the NPT, including carrying out technical assistance to States on safeguards and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

While reiterating our commitment to the existing disarmament instruments, we must tackle head-on serious outstanding issues, including the initiation of negotiations on legally binding arrangements for assuring security for non-nuclear-weapon States and consideration of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Pending the complete disarmament of nuclear weapons, a moratorium on nuclear testing and, thus, prevention of the modernization of such weapons are critical steps incorporating the purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is therefore an urgent necessity to bring the Treaty into force. We welcome the recent ratifications by Indonesia, Guatemala and Guinea, and we urge States that have not yet done so to sign and to ratify the CTBT at an early stage.

We share the view that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia's nuclear-free status are of critical importance to global nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and international security. We look forward to concrete results in the negotiations between ASEAN and the five nuclear-weapon States on the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone with a view to achieving an early signing of that important security instrument in South-East Asia. We look forward to the upcoming conference on the Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, to be held in Finland later this year.

While prioritizing nuclear disarmament, we should allocate adequate resources to combating the negative consequences of illicit international trade in conventional arms. We welcome the success of the second Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which reaffirmed our collective commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action. We also look forward to our discussion on the way forward for an arms trade treaty.

A volatile security environment is not conducive to our ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. We must work together to create the building blocks for an atmosphere of peace, stability and mutual trust that can make compromise and collaboration possible.

Only in such an environment would the revitalization of the disarmament machinery bear fruit. To overcome the current stalemate, the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, requires only greater political will, which did help it to deliver in the early 1990s.

It has been years since we at the United Nations registered major achievements in the disarmament field. As the Secretary-General put it, "time is not on our side". Viet Nam therefore strongly supports our collective efforts to deliver results in this crucial area for international peace and security at this critical juncture. We stand ready to work with all partners and are committed to working closely with the Committee to ensure the success of this year's session.

Ms. Dagher (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee.

You may rest assured, Sir, that my country will support you and the members of the Bureau. We wish you every success in your endeavours and with the Committee's deliberations, so that we can achieve the best possible results. I would also like to thank your predecessor and the members of the Bureau at the previous session.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made at the 2nd meeting by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group.

Lebanon would like to cite Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations, recalling the desire of countries to promote and maintain international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources. International peace and security can never be achieved without the political will and global determination needed to reduce armaments and totally eliminate nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. The United Nations disarmament machinery constitutes the optimal and most representative forum in which divergent points of view can find common ground and the necessary trust can be created, so that we can work together towards a world free of nuclear weapons and of the possibility that such weapons could be used for terrorist or other destructive purposes.

Nuclear weapons are not a temporary danger only; they are a threat to the whole of humankind and to

civilization. Lebanon affirms the right of all States to develop and produce nuclear technology and research and to use them for peaceful purposes. We call for the implementation of the resolution adopted by the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference on the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (see NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex), as part of a global and regional comprehensive vision without double standards. Lebanon emphasizes the importance of holding the Helsinki conference on the scheduled date with the participation of all parties concerned.

We would also remind the Committee that Israel is the only State in the region that has not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We therefore urge the international community to pressure Israel to submit all its nuclear facilities to monitoring under the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against their use or the threat of their use, and it is the only guarantee for achieving just, lasting and comprehensive peace, security and stability around the world and in the region.

We welcome the joint statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament adopted by 16 NPT member States during the work of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, held in Vienna in May. We welcome Indonesia's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and we call on States parties to the Treaty to honour their commitments.

Lebanon affirms the right of all countries to self-defence, to possess weapons and to produce and export them. However, we must work together to create an international arms trade treaty. We regret that a consensus was not reached in July, and we call on all parties concerned to move forward within this framework to arrive at a positive result in this area.

We commend the consensus reached during the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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, as well as the personal contribution of the President of the Conference, the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, Mrs. Joy Ogwu, who played such an important role

in the success of the discussions and in progressing towards the goals of control and disarmament.

I cannot omit to recall here that Lebanon calls for raising awareness and for strengthening joint efforts that could help us to limit armaments and to create a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We say this in the light of our own difficult and bitter experiences, since we have suffered under the burden of the constant threats from Israel from land, air and sea. Repeated Israeli attacks left behind many cluster munitions and landmines. With the help of friendly States and United Nations agencies, we are attempting to remedy the consequences and the resulting damage. We will continue to demand that Israel compensate us for the losses and damages we have endured, and we hope for further technical and financial support from the international community in order to help us surmount this tragedy. We call on the international community to pressure Israel to complete its delivery of maps outlining the locations of the mines that have victimized innocent Lebanese visiting their land and properties in order to sustain their livelihoods and to live in freedom and dignity.

In conclusion, Sir, I wish you every success in your work. We hope our efforts in the Committee will be transformed from attempts to restrain an arms race to efforts in a race towards peace, security and prosperity for all peoples.

Ms. González-Román (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of the First Committee and to convey the best wishes of my delegation. I assure you of our support for the success of all the work during the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Spain fully endorses the statement made at the 2nd meeting by the observer of the European Union in this debate and would like to make the following statement in its national capacity.

I would first like to emphasize that Spain supports the consolidation of peace and international stability as one of the hallmarks of its external action, in which disarmament and non-proliferation play a key role. We welcome the successes that have been achieved in the nuclear field, such as the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the entry into force last year of the New START agreement, which contribute to the goal of a safer world.

My delegation wishes to recall that effective multilateralism, prevention and international cooperation, together with confidence and transparency, are the central elements in the European Union's strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which Spain fully endorses.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the core component of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is essential to continue working to promote its universalization and the firm implementation of the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol.I)). Spain welcomes the start of work towards the 2015 NPT Review with the beginning of the Preparatory Committee in Vienna last May.

In this framework, Spain calls for the implementation of the resolution adopted as a result of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference regarding the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We support the work of the conference facilitator, Ambassador Laajava of Finland. We trust that the conference will take place in 2012, as planned. In this respect, we welcome the seminar on this issue that will take place in November 2012, under the auspices of the European Union, as a follow-up to the 2011 seminar.

The international community continues to face significant challenges that endanger international peace and security and the international non-proliferation framework. I wish to convey our concern regarding the nuclear and missile programmes of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as the non-compliance by the Syrian Arab Republic with its safeguards agreement and its ongoing lack of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Spain calls for the strengthening and revitalization of the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The persistent deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament and the inability to start negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty continue to paralyse the United Nations disarmament machinery.

The efficient functioning of the multilateral disarmament institutions guarantees our collective security, and no individual perception regarding one's own security can be an excuse for blocking any institution. Consensus, the guiding rule in sensitive fields such as disarmament and non-proliferation, was

conceived so as to take into account all interests in the decision-making process, but to use it as a virtual right of veto is to dilute its nature.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is another fundamental piece in the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Once again, we call on those States that are not yet parties to the Treaty, in particular those included in annex 2 of the Treaty, to ratify it as soon as possible.

Extreme precautions must be taken to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorist groups. In this respect, we would like to highlight the importance of complying with the obligations and commitments undertaken in Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009). Spain is fully committed to initiatives such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, D.C., and the Group of Eight Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

We also wish to express our support to those countries that wish to develop their peaceful nuclear capacities with responsibility and transparency and in strict compliance with their international commitments. We would like to recognize the important work of the International Atomic Energy Agency in this field.

Regarding other weapons of mass destruction, Spain acknowledges the importance of the Biological Weapons Convention. Spain enthusiastically supports the activities that will take place during the intersessional period, agreed at the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, in 2011, in order to enhance confidence-building measures and the universalization and implementation of the Convention.

My delegation also promotes the universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has our full support. We hope that the review conference to take place in April 2013 will yield positive results and will give a strong impulse to the Convention.

In addition, Spain is fully committed to the negotiation of an arms trade treaty, and we support the General Assembly renewing the mandate for the continuation of such negotiations in early 2013. Although the conference held in July 2012 was unable to achieve consensus around a definitive text, we note the significant progress achieved during the

negotiations, which we hope will successfully conclude in a conference in 2013.

My delegation welcomed the adoption by consensus of the final document of the recent United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 (see A/CONF.192/2012/RC/4, annex). In this context, Spain continues to foster international cooperation and the implementation of better practices to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in order to achieve a more secure world.

Once again this year, positive results were achieved with respect to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Spain is party to these Conventions and is an active contributor. The excellent condition of the Convention on Cluster Munitions was evident at the most recent meeting of the States parties, in Oslo in September. The Convention is currently the key reference point in the fight against such weapons. The accession of 12 new countries since the Second Meeting of States Parties is an indication of the progress we are achieving.

Finally, there are many issues to be discussed in the First Committee. The Spanish delegation trusts that, besides reaffirming our commitments through our support of the resolutions presented on an annual basis, the Committee can be the scene of ambitious debates and, at the same time, show itself able to improve its own working methods so as to progressively enhance its effectiveness in the years ahead.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of the First Committee and congratulate your country, Indonesia, for this testimony of confidence on the part of the members. I would like to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the delegation of Algeria. We are confident that through your capabilities and long experience, you will ensure the success of the Committee's work. Let me also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made at the 2nd meeting by the representatives of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Nigeria on behalf of the Group of Africa States, and Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Algeria reiterates on this occasion, its commitment to multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. Over the course of 2012, we have seen renewed efforts to address a wide range of issues in this field. We note, among others, the convening of the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty and the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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. Those meetings offered opportunities to the international community to address a number of global challenges and make certain progress in this area. All States should pursue intensified multilateral negotiations in good faith, as agreed by consensus in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2), in order to achieve general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

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

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to stress the need to universalize the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, and to ensure compliance with each of its three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

While welcoming the convening of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, held in Vienna earlier this year, Algeria calls on all States parties to the NPT to implement the action plan adopted by consensus at the eighth NPT Review Conference, held in May 2010 (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). According to the terms of the NPT, nuclear-weapon States in particular have to comply fully with their special obligations. It should also be recalled that the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, which reaffirmed

the continuing obligation of the States to work towards the elimination of their nuclear arsenals and against the unlawful use of or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In that context, Algeria wishes to stress the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The achievement of that objective will contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. Algeria strongly supports the call for convening an international conference at the earliest possible date with the objective of an agreement on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame. Along those same lines, Algeria also wishes to reiterate the need for a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States, as well as a for nuclear weapons convention.

A majority of States have chosen to use atomic energy for exclusively civilian applications, in accordance with article IV of the NPT. Indeed, for many developing countries nuclear energy represents a strategic choice for their economic development and energy security needs. Accordingly, Algeria reaffirms the legitimate right to conduct research in and to produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the NPT regime.

The entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the Treaty of Pelindaba, establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa, represents an important contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security. Algeria, which was among the first countries to sign and ratify the Treaty of Pelindaba, calls on States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the relevant annexes of the Treaty, in particular States with nuclear weapons.

The examples of the Pelindaba Treaty and other nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Bangkok and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, should be followed in the Middle East. A positive step in that direction will be the convening in 2012 of the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as recommended in the action plan of the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol.I)). Algeria welcomes the initial steps taken, such as the nomination of

Ambassador Jaakko Laajava as facilitator and the designation of Finland as host Government for the conference. Algeria therefore calls on the Secretary-General and the three sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to make maximum efforts towards convening the 2012 conference without any further delay and stresses the importance of the participation of all concerned countries in the Middle East at the conference.

While we share the disappointment of Member States at the continuing impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, as well as in the Disarmament Commission, my delegation considers that the situation is caused by a lack of political will. Algeria reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament. At the same time, while recalling decision CD/1864, adopted by consensus on 29 May 2009 under the Algerian presidency, Algeria calls on the Conference to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

As to the substance, Algeria believes that no other United Nations forum replaces the Conference on Disarmament, relieves it of its prerogatives or legitimizes the dissociation of one of the fundamental issues within its mandate. Furthermore, we believe that the First Committee should send a strong and clear signal of support to the Conference. More generally, with such cases of persistent deadlock in some parts of the United Nations disarmament machinery, it will be relevant to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament issues.

Algeria calls for balanced, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Algeria regrets that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in New York last July, was unable to conclude its work to elaborate a legally binding instrument on the international transfer of conventional arms, and we look forward to a resumption of the Conference in 2013, in order to finalize the elaboration of an arms trade treaty. The adoption of that new international instrument will certainly strengthen the institutional architecture in the field of disarmament.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to threaten peace and stability in many

countries and regions, particularly in the Sahel region, as it is a source of supply to terrorist groups and organized crime and is therefore an ongoing concern to Algeria. My delegation welcomes the successful conclusion of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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. We continue to emphasize the importance of the full, balanced, and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. We also wish to stress that international cooperation and assistance is essential in its implementation.

One of the basic guidelines of Algeria's foreign policy is our commitment to regional peace and security. That is why the Algerian delegation will submit to the First Committee, as it has done in previous years, a draft resolution on the strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region, for which sponsorship and support from all delegations will be much appreciated.

Algeria views the First Committee as an essential component of the United Nations disarmament machinery and remains committed to working actively and constructively with all Member States in order to strengthen it during this current session.

Mr. Senchenko (Ukraine): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to guide our work. I also commend the efforts of the members of the Bureau in organizing this useful debate.

My delegation strongly believes that general and complete disarmament is the cornerstone of international security and global peaceful development. Effective multilateralism and a balanced approach should remain the basis for negotiations on current and potential problems of disarmament, proliferation and global security. Ukraine fully reaffirms its commitment to strengthening the existing universal mechanisms in those areas. In that regard, we believe that the Washington and Seoul Nuclear Security Summits were an important step on the way to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

As part of its contribution to that goal, Ukraine hosted the 2011 Summit on the Safe and Innovative Use of Nuclear Energy. We have also delivered on the pledge announced by President Viktor Yanukovich of Ukraine in 2010 to give up all national stockpiles of highly enriched uranium. I would also like to recall the joint

declaration by Ukraine, Mexico and Chile — countries that have made special efforts to neutralize the risks of using highly enriched uranium. The declaration remains open for signature, as other Member States are welcome to become part of the commitment to act jointly to prevent the proliferation of nuclear technologies and materials for military and terrorist purposes.

On that subject, we also stress the need for adherence by all States parties to existing multilateral legal instruments, specifically the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Furthermore, I wish to emphasize that Ukraine's decision to renounce the its nuclear arsenal — the world's third largest — and to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was encouraged by the political security guarantees received under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum.

Unfortunately, the ultimate goal of freeing the world of nuclear weapons is still a dream. Thus, negative security guarantees for States that have abandoned their nuclear stockpiles and made other relevant strategic concessions should be moulded into an internationally binding legal instrument. That could be done in an international conference held under the auspices of the United Nations.

As a non-bloc State, Ukraine cannot but be concerned with the erosion of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. We therefore plan to keep that issue high on the agenda during our 2013 chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). We view the Treaty as a cornerstone of stability on the continent and encourage its States parties to ensure its steadfast and effective implementation. Ukraine will also pay particular attention to updating the 1994 OSCE Principles Governing Non-proliferation, since the security environment has significantly changed.

Despite the long-standing impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, the delegation of Ukraine is of the opinion that the Conference, which includes every major nuclear stakeholder, remains the most relevant venue for further progress in reducing nuclear arsenals. However, productive work in that forum is not possible without strict adherence to the rule of consensus, through which legitimate security concerns of each State can be effectively accommodated.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty continues to be a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Ukraine is fully committed to the implementation of the NPT in all three of its mutually reinforcing pillars. The decisions of the 2010 Review Conference are a reliable reference point for our future efforts, as they provide a set of practical and balanced tools to universalize and strengthen the Treaty.

In addition, Ukraine encourages further universalization efforts for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We urge the States that have not done so to ratify the document in order to open the way for its entry into force. In the meantime, it is crucial that all States steadfastly refrain from further nuclear tests and any other acts contrary to the purposes of the Treaty. Eliminating all nuclear weapons is the only guarantee that they will never be used. However, mere declarations are not enough for achieving that goal. Major practical steps are necessary, such as considering the production of fissile materials under a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Ukraine reaffirms its full support of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and commends its important work in implementing safeguards to verify compliance with non-proliferation obligations. The Model Additional Protocol is an essential and indispensable tool for the effective functioning of the IAEA safeguards system. Nuclear technology must be further developed in line with the agreed guarantees, while taking into account growing energy demands and, in parallel, the need to substantially tighten the safety standards for the operation of nuclear-power plants. Ukraine calls on all NPT parties that have not yet done so to accede to and fully implement comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA and to put into effect its additional protocols.

We are all aware of our common challenges. With the tools we already have on hand and the common will to explore additional ways to augment them, we stand a good chance of writing a new chapter of success in the history of multilateral cooperation for the purposes of strengthening international peace and security. I will therefore conclude by extending to all delegations my best wishes for a productive period of work in the coming days. My delegation is looking forward to working constructively to ensure the ultimate success of our 2012 session.

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Kang Myong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in exercising its right of reply, totally rejects the provocative statement made earlier by the South Korean delegation with regard to the nuclear and missile issue on the Korean peninsula. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic would like to make its position clear on the following issues.

First, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula originated with the deployment of nuclear weapons by the United States in South Korea. As I mentioned yesterday, the nuclear and missile issue on the Korean peninsula is a product of the hostile United States policy towards our country. That hostile policy gave rise to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. Long before the rise of the nuclear issue, the United States defined the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as an enemy. Institutional and legal mechanisms against our country were put in place. Military attacks and threats aimed at eliminating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's system were openly committed. Economic sanctions and pressure to isolate and suffocate our country have been persistently pursued. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea possesses a nuclear deterrent not because it pursued any so-called nuclear ambition but because it had to counter the aggressive moves of the United States aimed at eliminating it.

As I made clear yesterday, the uranium enrichment and construction of a light-water reactor are intended for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The South Korean delegation's finding fault with such peaceful activities, especially the construction of a light-water reactor, is preposterous and ridiculous.

The South Korean delegation alleged that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a long-range missile in April. In fact, the Democratic People's Republic launched a space satellite for peaceful purposes, showing transparency by inviting the international mass media to the site. Anyone who has a fair and objective viewpoint will see that rocket launch as one for a peaceful satellite, but those who are driven by malicious intent and a confrontational policy towards my country will see it as a long-range missile.

I read in the newspaper yesterday that the United States has permitted South Korea to extend the range of its ballistic missiles to 800 kilometres, which covers the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. By doing so, the United States has undermined the Missile

Technology Control Regime, which is to prevent the worldwide proliferation of ballistic missiles. Without the permission of its master, South Korea cannot extend its missile range even if it wants to, because it has no control over its military affairs.

The missile range extension is another expression of the hostile United States policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United States is left with no moral qualifications to talk about the development of our country's missile capability, as it is none other than the United States that is part of a new missile arms race in Northeast Asia. The United States has so far stepped up sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, claiming that a satellite launch also uses ballistic-missile technology. But now it is now in a position where it is unable to make any excuses, even if my country launches a long-range missile for military purposes.

The delegation of the United States mentioned in its statement earlier today the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's violations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is no longer a party to the NPT. It pulled out of the NPT and developed nuclear weapons to safeguard its sovereignty against the nuclear threats of the United States. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was open and aboveboard in each and every measure it took throughout the nuclear confrontation with the United States. It did not avoid the public eye. It acted openly because it was confident of the righteousness of its cause.

As long as the United States nuclear threats persist, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will bolster and further increase its nuclear weapons as a deterrent. The Democratic People's Republic is fully capable of doing so, and the United States gives it the grounds and justification. The Democratic People's Republic does not feel any need to be publicly recognized as a nuclear-weapon State. It is satisfied that it is capable of reliably defending the sovereignty and security of the nation with its own nuclear weapons. It is unimaginable to expect the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the NPT as a non-nuclear State. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is ready to fulfil its responsibility as a nuclear-weapon State.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): In exercise of our right of reply, we would like to highlight a few points.

Our colleague the representative of the United States, in her statement today, said that my country was continuing to violate the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). She called on my country to accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. I would like to clarify the following points.

First, my country became a party to the NPT in 1968, just one month after the Treaty was opened for signature by its three depositaries, which include, of course, the United States. Thus the representative of the United States contradicts herself, since she ignores the fact that her country was a witness to the early commitment of my country to the NPT and to respecting it.

Secondly, the registers and archives of the Security Council are available for any researcher who wishes to understand the important reality that my country respects nuclear non-proliferation and the NPT and its universality. Now, no one can deny that my delegation, when Syria was a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2003, presented a draft resolution geared towards specifically creating a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, in the Middle East. However, that draft resolution — which still exists in the Security Council archives — was confronted with the threat of veto by the United States to prevent its adoption.

Thirdly, my country participated actively in the 1995 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the NPT. In 1995 we sought to adopt the idea of convening a conference on the Middle East, and in 2010 we sought to confirm its convening. The United States delegation participated in the discussions at both Conferences on convening a conference in 2012 on making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, but since the adoption of the NPT successive United States Administrations have put no pressure on Israel to accede to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State. The United States has yet to announce its participation at the conference in 2012 in Helsinki, even though that conference will take place in just two months' time.

Fourthly, the United States is the main party violating the NPT in all its provisions and thereby threatening its credibility. United States nuclear weapons are deployed beyond the frontiers of that country in eight States, in contravention of the first

three articles of the NPT. Through its scientific and military nuclear cooperation with Israel, the United States is in contravention of other provisions of the Treaty.

The United States nuclear non-proliferation policies are entirely bereft of any objectivity. They are marked by hypocrisy and double standards. We recall that the United States conducted a campaign against Iraq, accusing it of possessing weapons of mass destruction. The United States proceeded to invade the country and destroy it. However, the former United States Secretary of Defense, Mr. Colin Powell, then said that the information provided by his country regarding possession of weapons of mass destruction was erroneous. Here again, the United States is pursuing another media campaign, using the chemical weapons issue to launch against my country an attack similar to the one it pursued against Iraq.

Mr. Park Chul min (Republic of Korea): I would like to exercise the right of reply in response to the remarks made by the representative of North Korea. As always, the remarks of the North Korean delegation are not only incorrect, unfounded and unacceptable, but they are also ridiculous. I would like to make a few brief points.

North Korea has argued that its nuclear development was caused by the hostile United States policy against it. Quite simply, that sounds false and unacceptable. Again, it is very ridiculous. If we follow that absurd, hostile, blaming logic, there would surely be many other nations following it and developing nuclear weapons against their enemies. In reality, however, when it comes to the prohibition of nuclear weapons, there is neither tolerance nor exceptions. My delegation once again urges North Korea to halt such empty arguments and instead to heed the directives in all of the latest Security Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korea's uranium enrichment programme is a clear breach of Security Council resolution 1874 (2009) and the commitments stated in the joint statement of the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks of 19 September 2005. The right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is given to countries that faithfully implement their obligations under the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency within the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

North Korea, which announced its withdrawal from the NPT and conducted nuclear tests despite the international community's repeated stern warnings, is simply not entitled to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Under the 19 September 2005 joint statement and relevant Security Council resolutions, North Korea is obliged to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. North Korea's nuclear programme, including its uranium enrichment programme, should therefore be abolished.

It is a preposterous, outrageous and blatant lie, especially since North Korea has publicly declared its nuclear-weapons status and before the eyes of the world has shown its intention to beef up its nuclear capabilities. It has ridiculously attempted to cite the peaceful use of nuclear energy despite its public posture of having a nuclear weapons programme. Such deceitful contradictions and grotesque lies are in the plain view of the entire international community.

North Korea continues to defy Security Council resolutions, in particular by referring to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It continues to defy its solemn United Nations obligations, which enables us to clearly understand that North Korea denounces its United Nations membership. I call upon North Korea to halt such defiance, to stop its useless remarks and simply to leave the United Nations, as it attempted to do with the NPT.

Security Council resolution 1874 (2009) demands that North Korea not conduct any launch using ballistic missile technology. North Korea's missile launch in April is a clear violation of the resolution. The Council adopted resolution 1874 (2009) particularly in the light of North Korea's track record of nuclear tests and missile launches. Therefore, North Korea has absolutely no right to claim peaceful uses of outer space.

Regarding the recently concluded missile agreement between my country and the United States, it must be noted that it is in no way a pretext for invasion or to trigger an arms race in the region, as the Government of North Korea claimed this week and the North Korean representative stated today. Rather, the agreement is entirely in line with legitimate military policy. The new missile technology is inherently under the jurisdiction of our national sovereignty. Our missile policy in that regard is of a purely defensive nature and is solely intended to deter and counter any further

military provocations that may arise from North Korea in a resolute and unforgiveable manner.

The Chair: I call on those delegations wishing to make additional statements in right of reply.

Mr. Kang Myong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): As I mentioned earlier, South Korea is not in a position to address the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula because it has no authority. The nuclear issue is to be addressed through direct dialogue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. I will give one example.

South Korea cannot command or control its own military without the prior approval of the United States, its master. Wartime operational control is in the hands of the United States military deployed in South Korea. What is the use of the military in times of peace? The military is needed for times of war. South Korea does not have that. The United States is behind the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, manipulating South Korea.

The South Korean representative has just said that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should leave

the United Nations. That is ridiculous. It is South Korea that should leave the United Nations.

Mr. Park Chul min (Republic of Korea): I shall be very brief in response to the second right of reply of the representative of North Korea.

The Republic of Korea is a sovereign country. Everyone knows that. I do not have any intention of saying it to refute such absurd remarks by one of our colleagues. I only reiterate that North Korea has brazenly engaged in innumerable acts of military provocation and terror against the Republic of Korea over the past 60 years, since the cessation of the Korean War. I will not repeat myself here. I just wish to state clearly that North Korea should refrain from any further provocation and empty words. It should return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and fully comply with its commitments and obligations.

Once again, North Korea is the only country on Earth to possess all different sorts of weapons of mass destruction, the only one. I strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to stop its empty words and to return to international disarmament norms, as international society requires and warns it to do.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.