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First Committee

7th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Percaya (Indonesia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

High-level exchange

The Chair: Before we proceed with our general debate, the Committee will first have an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials in the field of arms control and disarmament.

I warmly welcome our panelists today. I will first give them the floor to make their statements. Thereafter, we will change to an informal mode, and delegations will have the opportunity to put questions to them.

I begin by inviting the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, to address the Committee.

Ms. Kane (Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs): Our panel today will consist of an exchange among my colleagues, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Ms. Grace Asirwatham, Deputy Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and Mr. Geoffrey Shaw, the representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We will also have a video message from Mr. Tibor Toth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

In my opening remarks, at the 3rd meeting, on 9 October, I took note of the many challenges ahead in

achieving the disarmament goals and made an appeal to all delegations to continue their efforts to pursue our common interests in this field. Few understand the importance of persistence more than the members of our panel, who represent organizations that are deeply committed to fulfilling their own global mandates. All are committed to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and all appreciate that the achievement of that goal will require legally binding commitments that are verifiable, irreversible, applicable to all nations and implemented transparently.

While we are all kindred spirits on this panel, our partnership is built on deeds, not words alone. Cooperation between the United Nations and the CTBTO is close. On 6 September this year, the United Nations observed the International Day against Nuclear Tests, an annual event used to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). On 27 September, the United Nations hosted the Sixth Ministerial Meeting in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and on the same day many of us here attended a special performance of the play *Reykjavik* arranged by the CTBTO.

The United Nations is also working closely with the OPCW in many areas, including assisting in areas related to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and promoting universal membership in the Chemical Weapons Convention. On 1 October, the Secretary-General addressed a high-level meeting at the United Nations to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the OPCW and the Convention, at which he stressed the humanitarian implications of the use of such weapons.

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With respect to the Conference on Disarmament, while it is an independent entity in the United Nations disarmament machinery, it does report to the General Assembly, and its Secretary-General is appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General. Efforts have long been under way in this Committee, most notably last year, to explore ways to overcome the stalemate in multilateral disarmament negotiations that persists in the Conference.

As for the IAEA, it has a wide range of mandates, including in the fields of verification and providing technical assistance. In addition, the international community has affirmed that the IAEA has an essential responsibility and a key role in strengthening the international nuclear security framework. The United Nations and the IAEA also cooperate closely in assisting in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

In a very real sense, what we have represented on this panel is not just a group of international organizations. Together, we are also representing international organizations as a process — a process of different institutions composed of member States working together for common causes.

Unfortunately, the particular common causes shared by our organizations are without question some of the most difficult to pursue in strengthening international peace and security. Eliminating the world's most indiscriminate weaponry requires overcoming monumental political, technical and institutional challenges, which takes time and persistent effort.

Yet while weapons technologies have evolved considerably over the years, many of the organizational challenges we face today resemble those faced by our predecessors in earlier institutions. The disarmament official who was my equivalent in the Secretariat of the League of Nations was Salvador de Madariaga. In his book on the subject published in 1929, he concluded:

“The solution to the problem of disarmament cannot be found within the problem itself, but outside of it. In fact, the problem of disarmament is not the problem of disarmament. It really is the problem of the organization of the World Community.”

This offers a very thought-provoking context for our deliberations on this panel, because the effectiveness of the work of each of our organizations depends very

much upon the harmony of policies and priorities of our Member States. Some have called this “political will”, and it is the source of all productive work in each of our organizations. Its presence or absence is apparent in the deliberations and votes in the First Committee, along with the work undertaken elsewhere in the United Nations disarmament machinery. And its presence or absence will shape not just the work of our organizations. It will also shape the future of international peace and security.

I welcome the support that Member States have provided to all the organizations represented on this panel today. That continuing support is enabling each of us to perform our official mandates. To the extent we are successful, we will all be contributing, each in our own way, to the construction of that great larger project described by Madariaga: the goal of establishing a true world community, which is still very much a work in progress.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, His Excellency Ambassador Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

Mr. Tokayev (Conference on Disarmament): I appreciate the opportunity to address the First Committee in this high-level exchange. The First Committee has a unique role in the United Nations disarmament architecture as its main legislative body. I appreciate that this year the Committee's work again focuses to a great extent on the multilateral disarmament activities in Geneva, which form an integral part of the multilateral process for a safer and more secure world.

As Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and personal representative of the Secretary-General to the Conference, I will focus on the situation in the CD today. I doubt that anyone in this room is unaware of the fundamentals of the current state of play in the Conference. Unfortunately, those fundamentals have remained the same for many years now. Ambassador Helmut Hoffmann, the outgoing President of the Conference, will introduce the report of the Conference next week during the thematic cluster on the disarmament machinery. I will not go into its details today.

I share the view of an overwhelming majority of both members and non-members of the CD that the situation is unacceptable. That view is one that is also strongly and eloquently expressed by the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and successive Presidents

of the General Assembly. The annual reports of the Conference cannot mask the stagnation in what should serve the international community as its single standing multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

The reasons for the impasse in the Conference are primarily political. They do not result from any one single fundamental flaw in the design of the Conference. But the reasons behind the impasse do not make it any less unacceptable. It delays, one long and potentially productive year at a time, the start of negotiations to strengthen our common security. It paralyzes what is still a formidable body of human resources and expertise in the area of disarmament in Geneva. It exacerbates divisions and leads the international community to collectively miss opportunities for a safer and more secure world that may present themselves.

I am concerned that the strengths of the Geneva disarmament community are not used to their full potential for benefit of the international community. The Geneva agenda brings together a unique mix of disarmament, humanitarian, human rights and other issues. It is an asset that has to be used in the service of a better world for all.

We live through a time of transformation and transition. The world is changing. I firmly believe that in the long run the dynamics in the Conference on Disarmament can also change, enabling it to overcome the state of paralysis. However, that requires the kind of political will that is currently not present. As in the case of climate change, this kind of crisis of multilateralism can have existential consequences for humankind. Continuously waiting for progress cannot be an option.

It was against that background that earlier this year I presented a number of practical proposals for consideration by the membership, aimed at injecting new ideas into the Conference. I believe that in addition to increased political engagement to advance the substantive agenda, which must be our first priority, concrete steps to improve the functioning of the Conference can also be politically significant as a demonstration of the membership's collective will to chart a way out of the impasse and can help to build trust.

Last year, the First Committee sent a message of urgency to the Conference on Disarmament. A year later, we have not advanced. If progress in the CD repeatedly eludes us, one annual session at a time, what should the international community do? Would that

leave no other option but to circumvent the Conference, to try another avenue?

As I stated earlier this year, if any such efforts are carried out, they should complement the Conference on Disarmament. They should make it more, not less, likely that negotiations are eventually resumed in the Conference. The international community needs a standing negotiating forum in the area of disarmament. If the CD is undermined or dismantled, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to replace it.

I appreciate that none of the drafts currently circulating in this Committee profess to squarely sideline the Conference on Disarmament. All of them would leave its mandate and its session intact. In the area of nuclear disarmament a like-minded forum can go only so far. The international community needs a forum where different views and interests can meet to find common ground, even when it takes time.

We must continue to keep in mind what is at stake. Disarmament and non-proliferation are the cornerstones of a safer and more secure future for us all. Disarmament is also linked to broader efforts for development and progress. According to some estimates, last year, global military spending exceeded \$1.7 trillion. As the Secretary-General stressed in an opinion piece in August of this year, that represents human opportunities lost. The stakes could not be higher.

Genuine and meaningful multilateralism does require willingness to compromise. It calls for self-restraint and a mindset that is able to see one's own security best served through the reinforcement of collective security. Only then is it possible to enter into a virtuous cycle of strengthening the rule of law in disarmament.

The responsibility that comes with working on disarmament is great. Throughout the multilateral disarmament machinery, we need to show to the world that we take that responsibility seriously by delivering on the mandates that are entrusted to us. Nowhere is that more urgent than in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Chairman: I now call on Her Excellency Ambassador Grace Asirwatham, Deputy Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Mrs. Asirwatham (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of

all to convey to you my congratulations on your election to chair the First Committee. I am confident that with your well-known diplomatic skills and rich multilateral experience, you will guide the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion.

The year 2012 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). At a high-level meeting held here at the United Nations on 1 October to celebrate that landmark, States parties reaffirmed their commitment to the goals and objectives of the Convention. The Secretary-General of the United Nations opened the meeting with the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). His support for the event was crucial for its success. Having completed 15 years of the operation of the Convention, we in the OPCW Technical Secretariat, together with the States parties, recognize with pride the progress that has been made in eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

The CWC is the first multilateral treaty to comprehensively ban an entire category of weapons of mass destruction on a non-discriminatory basis and under conditions of strict verification. Within a short span of time, the OPCW has proved the value of multilateralism in realizing the objectives of disarmament. As a multidimensional instrument, the Convention's goals include complete disarmament, non-proliferation, promotion of international cooperation for peaceful application of chemistry and providing assistance and protection to States parties against chemical weapons.

The OPCW, according to the Convention, provides to its States parties a forum for consultation and cooperation and, when needed, provides clarification, facilitates cooperation and conducts fact-finding missions that contribute to confidence-building among the States parties.

The destruction of chemical weapons being one of our core objectives, the organization has thus far verified the destruction of nearly 75 per cent of the 71,000 metric tons of chemical weapons stockpiles that were declared by States parties. Despite having missed the destruction deadline, the two major possessor States, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, are on track, making steady progress towards that end. The States parties carefully considered the possible impact of the missed deadline and took a

decision based on foresight and wisdom, encouraging the two to complete the task, while keeping progress under close review.

Three other countries that had declared possession of chemical weapons have commendably fulfilled their obligation to destroy their entire chemical-weapon stockpiles. To date, all of the 70 declared chemical-weapons production facilities have been deactivated, and over 90 per cent of them have either been destroyed or permanently converted to use for peaceful purposes. Those were facilities specifically built to produce chemical weapons.

Due to the possibility of chemical-warfare agents being produced in commercial facilities, the Convention extends the reach of verification to the global chemical industry. This should be seen as a confidence-building measure that does not in any way reflect a measure driven by suspicion. The contribution and support of the global chemical industry is an outstanding feature in the success of the Convention. Without such cooperation, the goals of the Convention would have remained elusive.

We are aware that the future of the CWC will place new demands on the OPCW. As we approach the completion of the destruction of declared arsenals of chemical weapons, progressively greater attention will have to be focused on the objective of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. It will be important to review the industry verification regime to ensure that it will continue to promote confidence in compliance. The regime will need to keep pace with developments in the global chemical industry. States parties will be called upon to improve surveillance of transfers and trade in chemicals. On the whole, the CWC regime will need to ensure that it remains an effective guarantor of security against both conventional and non-conventional chemical threats.

The total number of facilities around the world considered relevant for the purposes of the Convention is in the range of five thousand. They are liable to be inspected, and, indeed, those producing chemicals deemed to be of most relevance are regularly inspected by the Technical Secretariat. So far, more than 2,200 such inspections have been carried out in 81 countries.

Further, as part of our objective to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention regime monitors global exports and imports of chemicals covered by the Convention.

With regard to certain types of chemicals of greater concern, States parties have to declare their transfers to the Technical Secretariat. Furthermore, such trade with States not party to the Convention is either conditional or prohibited. States parties are required to carefully monitor such transfers and to report relevant information to the OPCW. To streamline procedures and make this monitoring tool more effective, the Organization works closely with the World Customs Organization.

This disarmament treaty is tied closely to science, and the dynamic nature of science has a direct impact on our work. We are facing a time of rapid advances in science and technology. Further, the topic of the growing convergence between chemistry and biology has direct relevance to the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is therefore our responsibility to sufficiently assess and address new developments in science and technology that may affect the implementation of the Convention.

The Convention is not intended at all to hamper the scientific, economic or technological development of States parties. On the contrary, under its article XI, the Convention provides for the promotion of international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for peaceful purposes. The OPCW has for this purpose introduced a wide range of programmes for creating awareness, building capacities and exchanging best practices and information. OPCW programmes in the areas of assistance and protection against chemical weapons, as well as international cooperation, offer strong incentives to our broader membership to remain engaged and benefit from participation in the OPCW.

That the Convention is widely considered as a valuable and worthy instrument is evident from the number of countries that have joined it in such a short period of time. Some 188 States parties subscribe to the global ban on chemical weapons. Such overwhelming endorsement by the international community represents a decisive seal of authority on the global prohibition on chemical weapons.

Our single most important challenge, however, is convincing those few countries that have not yet joined the Convention to do so. This is a matter of serious concern. States that do not join the Convention prevent the declaration and verification of their capabilities. Any chemical weapons present in this group of countries will not be eliminated under international verification. In these circumstances, the vision of a world free of chemical weapons will remain elusive.

There was recently a declaration from a State not party to the Convention alluding to the astonishing possibility of the use of chemical weapons. We must deplore this development. It is a severe blow to the sentiment of the global community that regards chemical weapons as abhorrent and unacceptable. We must therefore redouble our efforts to convince the remaining eight States to join the Convention. This is critical for there to be complete confidence that chemical weapons have indeed been eliminated from every country.

Together with universal acceptance, it is crucial that all our States parties continue to make steady progress towards full and effective domestic implementation, which is a clear prerequisite for the good functioning of the Convention. Effective implementation of the Convention not only builds confidence in the international community; it also brings home the security benefits of the Convention. Our experience has demonstrated that, rather than an imposition, national implementation should be seen as an advantage. A legal framework through legislation and the means to enforce it create the domestic capacity to monitor, report on and guide activities involving chemicals along peaceful and productive lines.

More than 50 per cent of States parties still need to take action to ensure that their legislation covers all areas of the Convention. That means that we need to redouble our efforts in assisting States parties in their implementation of the Convention. At the Executive Council session held in The Hague last month, those States parties that have not yet completed national implementation measures were urged to do so expeditiously, and the Technical Secretariat and other States parties were encouraged to provide technical support to them to conclude this process.

Over the past 15 years, the Chemical Weapons Convention has proved its value and adeptness. The work of the OPCW demonstrates what we can accomplish together. The CWC and the OPCW offer a model that can indeed spur progress in other areas of global policy.

The culture of cooperation, constructive engagement and consensus that marks the OPCW multilateral experience promises to be our greatest resource not only to complete the current tasks, but also in the context of future challenges. A transition awaits the OPCW, as it has already fulfilled a major part of one

of its core responsibilities. The verified destruction of chemical weapons declared by States parties is well on track. By 2016, only one per cent of such weapons will remain to be destroyed. The Convention has brought significant benefits and advanced the objectives of international security. We are now required to adjust our priorities to better meet the challenges of the future. Progress made in the destruction of chemical weapons is an important factor defining the transition for the organization, but not the only one. All issues related to the operation and implementation of the Convention will be reviewed at the forthcoming third Review Conference, in April 2013. An open-ended working group to prepare for the Review Conference is currently carrying out its work.

In conclusion, allow me to recall that the Convention has received consistent support from the United Nations. It is our hope that we will continue to work closely together in pursuing our common goals of promoting international peace and security.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Geoffrey Shaw.

Mr. Shaw (International Atomic Energy Agency): Nuclear technologies have a wide range of applications and are used in most countries — treating cancer, enhancing crop yields, protecting the environment, and managing scarce water resources, to name just a few. But clearly, nuclear power for the generation of electricity remains the best-known peaceful application of this technology. And it is clear that 18 months after the Fukushima Daiichi accident, nuclear power will remain an important energy option for many countries.

Our latest projections show a steady rise in the number of nuclear power plants in the world over the next 20 years, with most growth expected in Asia. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) therefore has a central role to play in ensuring that any expansion in the use of nuclear energy occurs in a way that is safe and secure and does not contribute to proliferation.

Let me touch on some of the areas of IAEA activity relevant to the work of the First Committee, beginning with nuclear non-proliferation. As reaffirmed last month at the IAEA General Conference, IAEA safeguards are a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. IAEA safeguards contribute to our collective security and help to create an environment conducive to nuclear cooperation.

So what is the current state of play? Safeguards agreements are in force with 180 States, of which 172 are non-nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) with comprehensive safeguards agreements. However, 13 countries have yet to meet their obligations under the NPT and conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. For those States, the Agency cannot draw any conclusions with regard to safeguards. The Agency therefore urges all such remaining States to conclude their comprehensive safeguards agreements as soon as possible.

The number of States with additional protocols in force continues to rise. It now stands at 118. This is very encouraging, because the additional protocol is essential to enabling the Agency to provide credible assurances not only that declared nuclear material is not being diverted from peaceful uses, but also that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities in a country. Clearly, we are heading in the right direction, and the Agency encourages all States to bring additional protocols into force as soon as possible.

Safeguards implementation continues to evolve to address new challenges, to take into account lessons learned and to take account of new technologies. In this regard, the Agency has continued to evolve what we call the State-level concept for the planning, conduct and evaluation of safeguards. Safeguards implementation pursued in accordance with this concept is based on a comprehensive evaluation of all safeguards-relevant information relating to a State. In other words, it helps the Agency to tailor its verification activities.

The IAEA, with its knowledge and experience, is able to assist in the nuclear disarmament process by independently verifying that nuclear material from dismantled weapons is never used again for military purposes. In this context, the Agency continues to work with the Russian Federation and the United States, at their request, in the development of an agreement that provides for Agency verification of the disposition of plutonium designated by the Russian Federation and the United States as no longer required for their respective defence programmes.

Turning now to nuclear-weapon-free zones, as Committee members know, the five existing nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties, covering vast regions of the world, recognize the verification role of the IAEA through the application of Agency safeguards.

The IAEA also supports the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In November 2011, Director General Amano convened an IAEA Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East. The Forum provided an opportunity in which participants could learn from the experiences of other regions relevant to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. There was a constructive exchange of views on this important issue, and the IAEA stands ready to continue assisting international efforts to pursue this goal.

Finally, let me turn to nuclear security. As evidenced at the High-level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism, convened by the Secretary-General last month, world leaders have in recent years focused considerable attention on the threat of nuclear terrorism and the need for enhanced nuclear security. While primary responsibility for nuclear security lies with national Governments, it has been recognized that the IAEA has a central role as the global platform for strengthening nuclear security. Put simply, the IAEA helps to minimize the risk of nuclear and other radioactive material falling into the hands of terrorists or of nuclear facilities being subjected to malicious acts.

The Agency has established internationally accepted guidance that is used as a benchmark for nuclear security. It helps countries to apply that guidance through expert review missions, specialist training and human resource development programmes. In fact, the IAEA has trained over 12,000 people in more than 120 countries in nuclear security in the past decade.

The Agency has provided assistance to ensure that considerable amounts of high enriched uranium have been put into more secure storage. The IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database tracks thefts and other unauthorized activities involving nuclear and other radioactive materials.

Despite the increased interest in nuclear security, progress towards the entry into force of the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials remains slow. Only 58 States have adopted the Amendment. The Amendment obligates States parties to protect nuclear material in domestic use, transport and storage, as well to protect nuclear facilities against sabotage. It makes an

important difference to nuclear security, and its entry into force must be afforded the highest priority.

Much progress has been made in recent years in countering the threat of nuclear terrorism, but more needs to be done. As a next step, in July 2013, the Agency will convene a high-level international conference on nuclear security.

Let me conclude by noting that the IAEA is unique within the United Nations system, being the only organization with expertise in nuclear technologies. The Agency uses this expertise to help countries benefit from nuclear science and technology for sustainable development. The Agency also works to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to enhance global nuclear security and safety. Such efforts demonstrate the tangible contributions that the IAEA is making to international peace and security.

The Chair: I now call on the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Mr. Tibor Tóth, who will speak to us via video teleconference link.

Mr. Tóth (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization): In addressing the First Committee, I had intended to deliver the prepared statement that is distributed in the room. But I think it is important that I explain to the Committee three issues related to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the verification system. The first concerns political empowerment; the second is about empowerment through the verification system; and the third is empowerment through the creation and distribution of knowledge. Normally, I emphasize that this Treaty works at the intersection of the most devastating devices that man has created and the most devastating forces that nature can unleash.

Today, we have an anniversary, the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Cuban missile crisis, on 16 October 1962. I would like to make the first day of the Cuban missile crisis a reference point for why it is important that this Treaty, this arrangement, be considered as politically empowering the Member States.

On 16 October 1962, when the Cuban missile crisis began, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was not yet in the cards of the realpolitik. Nor had it been in the cards eight years prior to that crisis, back in 1954 when, for the first time, President Nehru of

India proposed such a treaty. This Treaty was not in the cards five years before the crisis erupted when, in 1958, a moratorium was put in place, or when, in 1961, the moratorium was overwritten by the re-launching of nuclear explosions.

Even in the summer of 1962, there was still a possibility of putting a treaty in place — soft tools, cooperative tools — but it was not in the cards. Even on 16 October, when the crisis started, it was not in the cards. Then, on 26 October 1962, just hours before midnight — because it was a collective doomsday — suddenly there was a proposal from General Secretary Khrushchev to put the Test-Ban Treaty into the package of a solution for resolving the crisis, and it was embraced. And in a couple of months' time, suddenly, the Test-Ban Treaty, although only a partial treaty, became a reality.

There is a moral to what we witnessed 50 years ago. Moral number one is that nothing is new; things are forgotten. Again, we should not forget that in those hectic, politically complex days there was no soft tool, no cooperative means of security. That is the reason that today, when eight countries are still missing from the list of those that have ratified the Treaty, it is important that they think through as to whether what happened back in 1962, 50 years ago, was a unique set of events, or whether there might be a need in the future for any two of the countries, any of the subregions or regions, or for the entire world, to have this Treaty as a cooperative soft security tool.

The second point I wanted to make is about empowerment through the verification system that the Treaty and the member States have created. It is a very important point, because that verification system and the regime are uniquely democratic. If I may say so, this was the first time that Linux was used, at the State level, as a creation principle for a verification system, meaning since the beginning of verification discussions in 1958. Since that time we have seen an all-inclusive system arrangement that, from data gathering through data processing to data distribution, is truly all-inclusive.

This verification system works for detecting possible breaches of silence by nuclear explosions. It worked in 2006 and in 2009. It has empowered countries — not just the permanent members of the Security Council, but non-permanent members, in both 2006 and 2009 — to know what happened, exactly how

they should define their political action in the light of the breach that happened.

The verification of breaches of silence by nuclear explosives is important, but there is another aspect, and that is the issue of complex disasters. We were reminded on 11 March 2011 that, tragically, such occurrences happen as well. Here we have a system where all the components can provide information in a situation such as happened on 11 March. The seismic station with tsunami early warnings, hydro-acoustic systems, and radionuclide and noble gas and atmospheric transport modelling are very helpful for letting us know where released radioactive isotopes might be going on a transboundary journey.

All that is in place to provide help to those countries that are interested in having safety nets for occurrences that can, tragically, happen. So what our organization has been trying to do since 11 March is to keep information continuously available for member States, in addition to training and research, and to empower countries to make the best use of data and data products.

That leads me to the third point I would like to emphasize. The third aspect of empowerment is empowerment through the creation and distribution of knowledge. As a result of this unprecedented democratic verification system, a \$1 billion financial, scientific and technical investment has been put in place. It is extremely important that this gold mine of information be used, and used in a leveraged way. That is what we in the CTBTO are trying to do.

We are trying to do that through three major channels, the first of which is training. With training we are trying to do our best to bring to Vienna, or to move to other places around the world, the best knowledge that can be distributed. Every year we train as many people as the size of the organization itself, through, number one, traditional training and number two, through what we call e-learning. We have created dozens of e-learning tools to make the training accessible to everyone.

In addition to that, since 2006 we have rolled out a series of scientific and technical conferences, in 2006, 2009 and 2011. The next one will take place in June 2013, and I invite as many of those here as can make it. Again, the science and technology conferences are about empowerment, about putting together research and cutting-edge science, not just on the verification

side but on the complex-disaster issues as well. We are expecting 1,000 visitors during the June 2013 science, technology and innovation conference. The idea is to have not just to discuss the traditional issues of verification in a traditional setting, but also to create a special segment for the Fukushima type of complex disasters, and to have a segment for young researchers and scientists.

That leads me to my last point, on empowerment through the distribution of knowledge — the capacity development initiative. We as an organization embarked on that initiative two and a half years ago. Nowadays there are a lot of references to massive online open courses. That is what we have been rolling out since 2010, and I am happy to say that we have managed to enrol hundreds of participants each year during the period since then. We are talking about training people on a large scale: people in national data centres and foreign ministry personnel, in addition to students from various universities. Again, the idea is to massively leverage the knowledge, to turn data and information into knowledge. We are doing that both by having participants physically present in Vienna and by making lectures and electronic simulation tools available through the virtual space of the Internet, thus making it possible for distant participants to take part in simulations, such as the oversight inspection simulation that we have been running recently.

I am explaining all this not just to show what we have but to indicate that there is a need for Committee members to use all these tools for knowledge empowerment. We now have 1,300 institutions and users, and we have the capacity to increase that to 5,000. It is important that these empowerment tools be used, and it is important that Committee members use the verification system tools for technical empowerment. And, once again, it is important, especially on this fiftieth anniversary of the Cuban missile crisis, that we collectively think through the political empowerment that this Treaty offers.

What I have tried to unfold here is a picture of a treaty and an organization that I call a globally sharing organization; an organization that from the very moment of the birth of the system back in 1978 was an open-source verification system and has remained so. That is the message today. I am sorry that I could not be present, but I think it is important that the Committee get this message today.

The Chair: In keeping with the working methods of the Committee, I intend to provide the Committee with the opportunity to have an interactive discussion with our panelists through an informal question-and-answer session. I will therefore suspend the meeting to enable us to continue in an informal setting.

The meeting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.

Agenda items 86 to 102 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): The Philippines extends our warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. It is a pleasure and a source of pride for the Philippines to see a close neighbour and friend chairing this very important Committee. In the spirit of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) solidarity, I congratulate you.

The Philippines associates itself with the statements delivered at the 2nd meeting by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Myanmar at the 3rd meeting on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

This year has been an extraordinarily hectic and challenging time in the field of disarmament. After the successful 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we got back down to business in April and commenced the preparatory work for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. In July, we strived but failed to negotiate an arms trade treaty. The disappointing end to that month-long work did not, however, put a damper on our resolve to fulfil our commitments to global disarmament, as we regrouped and successfully concluded 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 in early September. Given this heavy workload, the Philippines commends all States for their hard work, tireless efforts and undeterred commitment to move forward, for we all know that much work remains to be done.

With three months to go before we conclude the year, we remain hopeful that a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all

other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East will be convened. The Philippines lends its support to all those initiatives, consistent with its policy of promoting nuclear disarmament, preventing nuclear non-proliferation and putting an end to the flow of illicit weapons.

In our quest for a nuclear-weapon-free world, the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), with its 64 action points, remains our guide. We welcome the successful outcome of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, as it reaffirms the action plans we committed to undertake in 2012. The next Review Conference will need to make significant advances on a range of critical NPT issues, especially nuclear disarmament, in order to sustain the credibility and integrity of the Treaty.

The Philippines also welcomes the outcome of the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which produced a joint statement that called for the entry into force of the Treaty. We laud Indonesia for its recent ratification of the CTBT, and we continue to urge the remaining eight annex 2 States to ratify it. The Philippines likewise welcomes the announcement of Iraq and Thailand on their intention to ratify the Treaty, and we hope that they will do so at the soonest possible time.

The voluntary nuclear-test moratorium has become an established norm. But there remains the challenge of how we can move from a voluntary to mandatory moratorium, which the CTBT's entry into force will make possible.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is crucial to our goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As new challenges and potential conflicts threaten the peace in the Asian region, it is imperative that the five nuclear-weapon States resolve their outstanding issues and sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone at the soonest possible time. The Philippines considers the last-minute reservations made by France, the United Kingdom and Russia before acceding to the Protocol to the Treaty as a temporary setback in our efforts for the full and effective implementation of the Treaty. The Philippines calls for further consultations with the nuclear-weapon States regarding these reservations.

The Philippines is hopeful that the Helsinki process will push through as planned, through the convening of the 2012 international conference on peace in the Middle East in December, to be attended by all States of the region. We commend the Finnish Government for making preparations to host the event and appointing Under-Secretary Jaako Laajava as facilitator for this process. The Philippines reiterates its call on all relevant actors to continue consultations to ensure that the 2012 conference becomes a reality. My country wishes to underscore that the conference will be only the beginning of a long and difficult process for the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. But it has to happen this year, as it will have serious implications for other initiatives in the fields of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Philippines continues to view with concern and disappointment the continuing impasse in the Conference on Disarmament. It is high time that the Conference adopt a programme of work. It is also imperative that the Conference open discussions on its own enlargement. The Conference should thus appoint a special rapporteur to review the issue of membership.

In the area of conventional weapons, the Philippines commends Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina for his work on the arms trade treaty.

(spoke in Spanish)

His work has been exceptional, and we welcome it.

(spoke in English)

But our work is not yet done, and the world is awaiting our next move. The Philippines cannot emphasize enough that the future arms trade treaty is necessary to regulate the trade in conventional arms. The Philippines stands ready to support a draft resolution that calls for the convening of another conference early next year. It is our hope that by then the time will be ripe for flexibility among all of us that will lead to an agreement on the remaining contentious issues.

We are proud and honoured to be able to contribute to the global discourse on conventional weapons. The Philippines will serve as the President of the 2012 Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Universalization of the CCW is a priority of the Philippine Government, and

States that have not yet already done so are urged to accede to the Convention and its Protocols.

Synergies with other related treaties — such as the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions — need to be explored, including through the integrated provision of victim assistance to persons affected by the weapons covered by the three conventions. More efforts are needed to prevent the use of improvised explosive devices, which are increasingly becoming the weapon of choice of non-State actors all over the world. Their usage and users must be stigmatized.

The Philippines is actively engaged in advancing biosecurity and biosafety cooperation in South-East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region. We have just concluded a successful series of workshops on biosecurity in cooperation with the United States and Australia in the context of the ASEAN Regional Forum. We are working closely with our ASEAN partners and other friends, through cooperation with the European Union and the Group of Eight Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear concerns.

The Biological Weapons Convention is a useful framework for advancing biosecurity and biosafety cooperation. The interrelation between biosecurity and biosafety and overall public health concerns, particularly with respect to the activities of the World Health Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health, also needs to be further explored.

The Philippines has throughout its history shown its desire and capacity to pursue peace. Many of our efforts are carried out not in isolation, but with the assistance and expertise of countries worldwide. We have started collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, among many endeavours, an undertaking that we hope to continue for many years to come. We see the importance of taking a regional approach to peace and security, something that we believe the Regional Centre espouses and aims to fulfil. In the future, we hope to see a greater and wider role for the Centre as countries in the Asia-Pacific region work towards lasting peace.

Let me assure you once again, Mr. Chairman, of the Philippines' full support and cooperation as we

undertake our work in the First Committee over the next two months.

Mr. Staur (Denmark): As this is the first time I take the floor in this Committee, let me start off by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau upon your election and by assuring you of Denmark's full cooperation and support throughout this session.

From the outset, I would like to align my delegation with the comprehensive statement delivered by the observer of the European Union, but please also allow me to make a few remarks from our national perspective.

This year, Denmark's focus will be on maintaining the momentum gained towards achieving a global arms trade treaty, on our concern over the decade-long stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament and on consideration of possible new avenues for making headway in the essential multilateral nuclear disarmament talks, as well as on dealing with the real proliferation threats that potentially and dangerously erode not only the basis of our global non-proliferation regime but also international security and stability as such. There are many other crucial issues to be discussed at this session. We will participate actively, but for now I will limit myself to touching upon those three issues.

First, on the arms trade treaty, Denmark is a strong supporter of such a treaty. It should come soon, be universal and legally binding and cover all types of conventional weapons, including ammunition. It should also set up robust transfer criteria that ensure respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. We were encouraged by how remarkably close we got at the Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in July to the goal we all share of a solid and comprehensive treaty. That laudable work must now be continued on the basis of the Conference President's draft treaty text of 26 July 2012 (A/CONF.217/CRP.1). We will work for the proposal to convene a shorter and final session of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in early 2013, and we will do our utmost at that Conference to contribute to a successful conclusion. We owe that to the individual victims and to the countries and regions that are destabilized by the unregulated and illicit as well as the legal arms trade. We must also deal with the all-too-often related gender issues. Time is of the essence.

Secondly, on the Conference on Disarmament, if we are ever to achieve our common goal of a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, it is crucial that we be aided by a strong, comprehensive and dynamic regime for multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament. In that effort, the Conference on Disarmament, as the unique forum for non-proliferation and disarmament negotiations, should play a pivotal role. We are therefore deeply concerned by the entrenched stalemate that we have witnessed in the Conference for more than a decade. The plain truth of international diplomacy is that a regime that is not progressing is backsliding, and a backsliding regime is not strengthening international peace and stability but quite the contrary.

What is more, with only a third of States Members of the United Nations being members of the Conference, the Conference clearly lacks full legitimacy, backing and ownership. That situation is also contrary to the declaration of the Assembly's first special session devoted to disarmament, which stated that "all States have the right to participate in disarmament negotiations" (*resolution S-10/2, para.28*). The question of the enlargement of the Conference therefore needs to be addressed.

We believe that there are numerous issues within the remit of the Conference that have great potential and could easily be brought forward, if we collectively decided to do so. Negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty are but one example. Nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the weaponization of space are others. The time has not come to abandon the Conference's central role in multilateral disarmament, but the time may have come to consider other avenues that can assist in bringing issues forward and prevent further backsliding. The situation was extensively discussed last year, and perhaps this year it is time to act on that discussion.

Thirdly and finally, on the real proliferation threats to our collective security, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery remains a growing threat to international and regional peace and security. The Security Council has a key responsibility for non-proliferation. We continue to fully support Security Council resolutions 1887 (2009) and 1540 (2004). The Security Council has also adopted a number of country-specific resolutions, with the object of upholding the integrity and efficiency of the non-proliferation regime.

It is essential, in that connection, that all countries fully implement the Security Council's resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and on Iran.

With regard to Iran, the ongoing and expanding enrichment activities, including enrichment to a level of 20 per cent, are cause for great concern. The most recent International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors' resolution, adopted only last month, underscored the need for Iran to urgently step up its cooperation with the Agency. We urge Iran to comply fully with all resolutions of the Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors, as well as with the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, so that confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities can be restored. We stand firmly behind the E3+3 Governments, led by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in their efforts to bring about a negotiated and acceptable diplomatic solution without further delay.

The First Committee's ability to deal effectively with real and urgent proliferation threats, including the risk that non-State actors could gain access to such weapons, has an impact on the basic credibility of our entire endeavour. Those issues cannot be ignored, and at the end of the day, we will be judged by our ability to address them robustly while providing sustainable and forward-looking solutions. That goes for nuclear weapons and for other weapons of mass destruction, such as biological weapons and agents. Denmark recognizes the indispensable role of international cooperation on biosecurity in that effort, and we stand ready to contribute in various ways to the common task of reducing proliferation risks and improving the toolkit at the disposal of the international community.

We support the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference to call a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and we stand ready to assist, in whatever way possible, Under-Secretary of State Jaakko Laajava and the Government of Finland in their role of facilitator for that admirable and, at this point in time, extremely critical effort. We call on everyone, in particular the countries of the region, to work towards a successful conference in 2012 in an open and constructive manner.

In conclusion, Denmark supports the voluntary establishment of regional zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We

believe that we should explore how the establishment of such zones, including in the Arctic, could become an integral part of a comprehensive multilateral strategy to implement global nuclear disarmament and combat the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election and wish you every success in your work. My delegation aligns itself with the statements made at the Committee's 2nd meeting by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and at the 3rd meeting by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The nuclear-weapon States now possess approximately 20,500 nuclear warheads, over 5,000 of which are deployed and ready for use and 2,000 under highest alert. Thanks to technological advances, a large number of them have a yield between 8 and 10 times greater than the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The intentional or accidental use of those nuclear weapons remains a real and present danger that could destroy our planet several times over. Therefore, progress must be made simultaneously in the process of general and complete nuclear disarmament and in meeting the objectives of both horizontal and vertical nuclear non-proliferation. In that regard, the nuclear Powers must respect the commitments they have undertaken internationally.

It is important to underscore the decision to convene an international conference to examine the question of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Such an event could lead to commitments by States in the region, including Israel, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone prohibiting the production and possession of such weapons in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Our delegation reiterates its call for the universalization of that international legal instrument and encourages those who have not yet done so to accede to it.

Venezuela advocates the sovereign right of States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the provisions enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We are concerned about the pressures being exerted by the Government of the United States and other nuclear Powers that wish to restrict the right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to develop its nuclear industry for

peaceful purposes and its aspiration of achieving energy and technological independence.

Venezuela attaches special importance to the granting of negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. The latent threat of the use of nuclear weapons against those countries that do not possess such weapons remains present. It is therefore necessary to adopt a binding international instrument that restricts the nuclear-weapon States. The priorities agreed to in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) remain fully valid. That is all the more true if we take into account the process of the modernization of nuclear weapons, which has continued at a fast pace.

Venezuela recognizes that multilateralism is the most complete and effective way to achieve nuclear disarmament and the control of conventional weapons. We underscore the importance of making disarmament mechanisms more effective in order to overcome the lack of political will on the part of some States. My country hopes that the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral disarmament forum, can emerge from the stagnation that has been affecting it for over 15 years. We stress the need for the Conference to focus as soon as possible on addressing a number of priority issues, including the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and a convention on nuclear disarmament.

My country welcomes the progress made in the framework 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, and we commend Ambassador Joy Ogwu of Nigeria for her excellent work done at the head of the Conference.

My delegation takes note of the possible resumption of negotiations on an international instrument for the control of conventional weapons, and we reiterate that any agreement will depend on two basic factors — first, that a collective agreement is reached on practical mechanisms for its implementation, mechanisms that are accessible to all States and that do not in any way jeopardize the security, sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States; and, secondly, that there are effective safeguards that avoid the politicization or manipulation of a possible

international instrument by the major producers and exporters of conventional weapons.

We support the building of a multipolar international system geared towards peace, justice and development and based on the strict respect for the norms and principles of international law. We reject undesirable practices that violate the principle of the legal equality of States.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): It is a great pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over this important Committee, and I congratulate you on your election. We are confident that your experience and skills will guide this Committee towards optimum results. You can count on our support and cooperation. Pakistan associates itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Since the end of the Cold War, the global security environment has increasingly deteriorated. Even as old regional conflicts fester, new ones have flared up. Tensions and confrontations at the global level are also increasing. There are dangerous trends on the horizon. We may well be on the verge of a new Cold War, if ambitions for world domination are not contained and the search for global supremacy is not replaced by accommodation and engagement as the basis for a rules-based cooperative multipolar world.

Those developments have had a severely negative impact on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Regardless of the professed zeal for a world without nuclear weapons, disarmament efforts remain stagnant and under great threat. New weapons systems — both strategic and conventional — are being developed and deployed in several parts of the world, for example, anti-ballistic missile systems, as well as the indiscriminate use of drones. There are other worrying trends, such as the growing weaponization of outer space and the hostile use of cybertechnologies. The production of conventional weapons with destructive capacity equal to that of nuclear weapons would be dangerously destabilizing, as their use would not be constrained by the same limits applicable to nuclear weapons. Even worse, given the massive destruction caused by such weapons, it would increase the temptation to respond by the use of nuclear weapons.

It is in such a grim context that Pakistan has consistently called for the development of a renewed consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation in an attempt to halt, if not reverse, some of the negative

trends. While recognizing that consensus building will be a difficult task, we take this opportunity to put forward some ideas that we feel are essential to promote greater global security through arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

First, in evolving a new approach, we must start from a basic premise, which is the recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament adopted the principle of equal security for all States, both in the non-conventional and the conventional fields as well as at the regional and the international levels. That is a critical prerequisite for progress in the areas of arms control and disarmament.

Second, we must address the motives that drive States to acquire weapons to defend themselves. Those motives include perceived threats from superior conventional or non-conventional forces, the existence of disputes and conflicts with more powerful States, and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

Third, the nuclear-weapon States must demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame. Without that commitment, the bargain of the non-proliferation regime will continue to erode. In any case, given their large inventories of conventional weapons and the lack of disputes between them, the possession of large arsenals of nuclear weapons is not essential for the major Powers. The eventual objective must be the total elimination of nuclear weapons within the context of a re-energized collective security system.

Fourth, an agreed, criteria-based and non-discriminatory approach must be developed for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States. The advances in technology and an improved inspections regime put forward by the International Atomic Energy Agency have made it possible to promote proliferation-resistant nuclear energy. However, in building a new inspections regime, it would be vital to ensure that it is applied equitably, both to nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States, in accordance with their obligations.

Fifth, until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States should be given assurances that they will not be threatened with the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The security assurances

offered by some nuclear-weapon States need to be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty.

Sixth, we must develop a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of anti-ballistic missile systems, which are inherently destabilizing, while being of dubious reliability.

Seventh, we must recognize the need for strengthening the international legal regime aimed at preventing the militarization of outer space.

Eighth, as a pragmatic step towards disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States need to halt future production of fissile materials and eliminate all stocks thereof under a fissile material treaty.

In the area of conventional weapons, there is an urgent need for negotiations on the balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. As laid down in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to Disarmament (resolution S-10/2), those negotiations should be conducted with particular emphasis on militarily significant States. The disturbing trend of the escalation in the number and sophistication of conventional weapons has to be stopped, as it has a causal relationship with the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons.

The recent break down of the negotiations on an arms trade treaty reflects the failure of a partial and selective approach in pursuing the disarmament agenda. We must therefore adhere to the cardinal principle identified by the first special session devoted to disarmament, namely that

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

In the past three years, we have heard the contrived lament over the failure of the disarmament machinery. In our view, the description of the state of the machinery and the diagnosis of its ailment are partial and focus almost exclusively on symptoms rather than causes. Even worse, the solutions put forward are selective, discriminatory and inconsistent.

In order to objectively evaluate the causes underlying the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, it is important to acknowledge the following basic facts. First, the Conference's work or lack thereof is a reflection of prevailing political realities, as the Conference does not operate in a vacuum. Secondly, no treaty can be negotiated in the Conference that is contrary to the security interests of any of its member States. The consensus rule was designed precisely to ensure that point. Any forward movement in the Conference is possible only by addressing the security concerns of all of the Conference members. Thirdly, the Conference's lack of progress cannot be attributed to its rules of procedure, since landmark instruments, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, were negotiated successfully under the same rules of procedure. Fourthly, the Conference on Disarmament is not a body that should negotiate only one of the items on its agenda, for example, the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). It has four core issues on its agenda. If there is no consensus on negotiating an FMCT, there is also no consensus on negotiating nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances or the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The lack of consensus cannot, therefore, be due to the position of one State only, as is claimed by some delegations.

It is clear that the problems encountered by the Conference on Disarmament are not organizational or procedural in nature. The challenges relate to an external political environment signified by discriminatory nuclear cooperation policies, double standards and selectivity, and guided by power, politics and profit.

The challenges facing the international disarmament agenda and machinery are not exclusive to the Conference on Disarmament. The United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee face similar difficulties. The Disarmament Commission has not been able to bring forward an agreed document for more than a decade and half. The resolutions adopted by the First Committee are adopted almost mechanically without any progress towards their implementation. Why then blame the Conference on Disarmament alone for its inaction?

A comprehensive revitalization effort is required therefore. A new bargain for the twenty-first century is needed. Pakistan reiterates its support for the long-standing call of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, which comprise almost two thirds of the

United Nations membership, for the convening of a fourth special session on disarmament. That session should aim at an integrated and holistic approach towards achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner and should keep in view the security interests of all States.

Mr. Morejón (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, may I express to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau my delegation's congratulations on your election. I also wish to express our delegation's appreciation to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, for her presence at our meetings and for her ongoing work. The delegation of Ecuador wishes to express its support for the statement made at the Committee's 3rd meeting by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and at the 2nd meeting by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. In my national capacity, I would like to say the following.

Ecuador is the first country in the world to recognize, in its Constitution, the rights of nature, making nature a subject rather than an object. In that connection, our Constitution affirms that nature — that entity within which life exists and reproduces — has the right to have its existence, preservation and the regeneration of its vital cycles, structure, functions and evolving processes be respected completely.

In recognizing those rights, we are closing the circle of their integral and complementary relationship with the rights of human beings. In that framework, Ecuador deplores and condemns the very existence of weapons of mass destruction on the face of the Earth and believes that their use or the threat of their use is a crime against nature and against humanity.

In that regard, Ecuador believes, like many other States, that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be parallel, interrelated and converging processes. My country, a non-nuclear-weapon State, has fulfilled and will continue to fulfil its international obligations regarding nuclear non-proliferation. In so doing, we expect reciprocity in the area of nuclear disarmament. However, Ecuador regrets to say that, to date, it has not seen such reciprocity. Since the adoption of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, over 40 years have elapsed, with strict compliance with the obligations regarding nuclear non-proliferation.

Unfortunately, over 40 years have also elapsed without any specific achievements with regard to nuclear disarmament. That situation is the cause of many concerns, all of them very legitimate. One of these is how long the non-nuclear-weapon States will have to wait before we see general and complete nuclear disarmament, as well as the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, in a universal, transparent, irreversible, verifiable process, guaranteed by a legally binding treaty. Another is how long the same States will have to wait to see legally binding guarantees that our lands and our people will not suffer from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons while nuclear disarmament is being negotiated. The answer to the situation in the Conference on Disarmament probably lies in the answers to those questions.

Ecuador shares the concern of other States at the current deadlock within the Conference on Disarmament. However, we are also concerned about the intention to begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the margins of the Conference on Disarmament, because, above and beyond frustrating the role that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament assigned to the Conference on Disarmament as the only negotiating forum on disarmament, that would mean further delaying the just aspirations of the international community to fulfil its obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which relates to nuclear disarmament. In that regard, only the simultaneous treatment of that topic with the other pending issues in the Conference on Disarmament, namely, a convention on nuclear weapons, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, can guarantee that we will make progress on both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

With regard to the future fissile material cut-off treaty, my delegation believes that the negotiations should resolve all of the concerns of States with regard to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Only an instrument that covers existing and future stockpiles of such materials can do so. If we add to that the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has had unsuccessful results for the past few years, it is logical, coherent and necessary that we undertake an overall analysis of the United Nations disarmament machinery. To that end, my delegation

reiterates its support for the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, so that all of the disarmament organs can be considered and the respective corrective measures be taken.

Ecuador reiterates its appeal for the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as compliance with the commitments stemming from the actions stipulated in the conclusions and recommendations of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in May 2010. In that regard, Ecuador hopes that the last meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna, as well as the next two meetings of that Committee, which will be held in 2013 and 2014, will clear the way for a successful conclusion of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

In its capacity as a contracting party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, also known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Ecuador wishes to urge the signatories of the Protocols to that Treaty to amend or withdraw the interpretative declarations that they made unilaterally when they signed the Protocols, because they affect the denuclearization status established by the Treaty.

In the same context, we also want to urge all States to make every effort to establish and strengthen other nuclear-weapon-free zones in all parts of the world. We also firmly support the implementation of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference resolution on the Middle East, and we request that pending aspects be defined as soon as possible, making it possible, in that framework, to hold a conference to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East in December, with the participation of all of the States of the region.

In the context of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, Ecuador expresses its support for the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We also support the legitimate and inalienable right of States to develop, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. In that regard, our delegation reaffirms its support for the regulatory framework provided for that purpose by the International Atomic Energy

Agency, and we emphasize the obligation of the States that have chosen that type of energy to develop and implement the highest standards for nuclear security and protection.

In connection with other weapons of mass destruction and on the basis of what we said at the outset, the delegation of Ecuador wishes to reiterate its full commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

In the area of conventional weapons, Ecuador resolutely shares and supports the objectives of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In that context, we want to express our great satisfaction with the agreements reached in the Small Arms Review Conference, and we pledge our support for the commitments that stem from those agreements.

At the same time, we regret that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in July, did not achieve positive results. Ecuador believes that past negotiations on that subject revealed many obstacles that are hard to resolve. In that regard, we believe that there needs to be an instrument of that type to tackle the subject in a transparent, balanced and non-discriminatory manner, safeguarding the basic principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States, self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, territorial and political integrity and the right to self-defence. Only through its adoption by consensus will the universality of that treaty will be ensured.

Faithful to its commitment to disarmament and universal peace and with strict respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, Ecuador has ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Moreover, since we believe that civilian society and development are the main victims in the use of that type of weapon, we want to reiterate our commitment and support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

In conclusion, in addition to conveying the commitment of the Government of Ecuador to peace, universal disarmament and international security in the context of complete respect for international law, human rights and the Charter of the United Nations,

my delegation reiterates its pledge of cooperation in the First Committee.

Mrs. Zografska-Krsteska (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election as the Chair of the First Committee at its sixty-seventh session. I congratulate the other members of the Bureau as well. I assure you, Sir, of our full support and wish you great success in arriving at a desired outcome. The Republic of Macedonia aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. However, I would like to present some additional observations in my national capacity.

Achieving progress in disarmament with regard to conventional weapons is of particular interest to my country. Statistics confirm that those weapons are among the deadliest ones, causing far more casualties than any other weapons owing to the large scope of their use. The control of the spread of conventional weapons, in particular of small arms and light weapons, as well as preventing their divergence into illicit trade, are issues that directly affect the stability of countries in our region, but also worldwide.

For those reasons, the Republic of Macedonia has supported 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, since its inception, and is further committed to strengthening it at the national and international levels. Through the actions taken under the Programme of Action, we have been able to increase security at home and beyond. By cooperating closely with our neighbours in the wider international community on those and other disarmament issues, we have contributed to enhancing stability, good-neighbourliness and development in South-Eastern Europe.

In that context, I would like to highlight the fact that human security, that is, the people-centred approach, remains central to Macedonian policy and action with regard to small arms and light weapons, enhancing the safety of individuals affected by such weapons. Among the several achievements made on the domestic front last year, let me mention the elaboration and adoption of the law on the examination and marking of weapons and ammunition, the adoption of a new law on international restrictive measures, the upgrade of the weapons registration and management software, the implementation of a ballistic identification system, the strengthening of the implementation of our border

management strategy, and increased cooperation with the civil sector, especially in the revision of the law on weapons and in awareness-raising events.

At this point, I would also like to express Macedonia's satisfaction with the consensual outcome of the recent second Review Conference on the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, and as many other delegations have done, to extend our congratulations to Ambassador Joy Ogwu of Nigeria for her skilful chairing of the Conference. Macedonia will remain committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the Programme of Action.

The Republic of Macedonia is a strong supporter of the adoption of a legally binding instrument to regulate the arms trade. We are situated in a region where, during the last decade of the twentieth century, the uncontrolled spread of conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons, fuelled or exacerbated conflicts and had devastating humanitarian consequences. We understand, therefore, the consequences of further delaying the adoption of the arms trade treaty. Macedonia shares the disappointment expressed by other delegations that the Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, convened from 2 to 27 July, was unable to conclude its work. We should not, as a result, cease our efforts, but should rather step up our work and continue on the basis of the President's text of 26 July 2012 (A/CONF.217/CRP.1). In that regard, we support the draft resolution submitted by a group of countries for the early continuation and convening of the final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty to complete the unfinished work on the treaty.

The protection of civilians has been at the core of United Nations work, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions is considered as an instrument that greatly embodies that aim. We note with satisfaction that the number of ratifications has grown to 75. At the third Meeting of State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was held in Oslo recently, the Republic of Macedonia provided information on the status of its implementation of the Convention, and we reiterated our firm commitment to finalize the destruction of the remaining stockpiles of cluster munitions. Let me take this opportunity to once again extend our thanks to our international partners, the Government of Germany and Norwegian People's Aid, with whom we have cooperated closely to meet that objective by the next intersessional meeting, in April 2013.

Macedonia supports international efforts for the universalization of the various international instruments banning weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This year marked the fifteenth anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The meeting on 1 October 2012 renewed calls to Member States that have not yet acceded to the CWC to do so without delay. Let us hope that by the third Review Conference of the States Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention in April 2013, we will be able to note some progress in that regard.

We are eager to see progress in the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and in the implementation of the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in May 2010, with regard to all three pillars of the Treaty. We support the strengthening of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in several parts of the world. The zones could contribute to regional and global stability, and that is particularly relevant for the Middle East. Macedonia hopes that the upcoming conference in Finland on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction can provide a desired outcome.

While recognizing the recent ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by the Central African Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, Guinea, Guatemala and Indonesia, the entry into force of the Treaty remains crucial for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Macedonian Minister Nikola Poposki joined other Ministers calling for the early entry into force of the CTBT in the Joint Ministerial Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (A/67/515, annex) issued at the Sixth Ministerial Meeting in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held on 27 September.

Macedonia has made significant progress in building its legislative, institutional and administrative capacities to prevent the proliferation of WMDs, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In that regard, let me report that, since 2011, the Republic of Macedonia has taken an active part in the European Union Instrument for Stability initiative for the establishment of the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) centres of excellence for South-Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Moldova and the Caucasus. The Republic of Macedonia has already

identified its needs and submitted project proposals for improvements in several areas. Following a decision by the Government, a national CBRN coordination body was established on 19 June, consisting of representatives of all of the competent authorities.

In conclusion, let me stress that the current threats to international security require that we have more functional and efficient disarmament machinery. Unfortunately, that is not the case at present. The reasons for that situation are complex, but they do not represent insurmountable impediments. We should explore all avenues and mobilize more political will to make some headway at this sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Bearing those considerations in mind, we have been studying the initiatives to expand the membership of the Conference on Disarmament and to make progress in the negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty.

Mr. Wai (Myanmar): My delegation associates itself with the statement made at the Committee's 2nd meeting by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and with the statement made at the 3rd meeting on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

In the field of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, nuclear disarmament continues to be the highest priority for Myanmar, for obvious and indisputable reasons. Nuclear weapons impinge on the security of all nations. We share the view that it is necessary to address the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and that their use is inconsistent with the fundamental rules of international humanitarian law. We must not lose sight of the fact that as long as nuclear weapons continue to exist on Earth, we run the risk of putting ourselves on the verge of extinction. We therefore firmly believe that the only absolute guarantee against a nuclear catastrophe is the complete and total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Against that backdrop, it is incumbent upon all of us to faithfully pursue and implement the commitments and responsibilities stipulated in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the consensus agreements reached at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Myanmar would like to reiterate its call on all nuclear-weapon States, particularly those with the largest nuclear arsenals, to fully and immediately

comply with the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II)), as well as the 22-point action plan on nuclear disarmament detailed in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). In that context, we view the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament as a step necessary for laying the groundwork for the 2015 Review Conference.

While we recognize the bilateral efforts aimed at reducing nuclear arsenals, we need to be mindful, at the same time, that those efforts could be undermined by the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. The catastrophic consequences resulting from the use of nuclear weapons know no boundaries. Pending the achievement of their total elimination, non-nuclear-weapon States are entitled to an internationally and legally binding instrument on security assurances of non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against them. That urgent and legitimate call has yet to be answered.

Taking the prevailing international security environment into account, Myanmar is of the view that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones serves the practical purposes of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and security assurances. An early signing of the protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone by the five nuclear-weapon States will contribute not only to non-proliferation and disarmament in the region but also to international peace and security. We welcome the readiness expressed by the five permanent members of the Security Council to sign the protocol to the Bangkok Treaty. We look forward to the convening of the conference on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, with the participation of all the concerned parties in the region.

We welcome the recent ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by Guatemala, Guinea and, particularly, Indonesia, which is one of the annex 2 States. The continued destruction of existing chemical-weapon stockpiles down to their last quarter is a source of encouragement for us. We

would also like to join previous speakers in welcoming the outcome of the seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, held in Geneva in December 2011. Myanmar does not harbour any ambition to possess nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Myanmar is a non-possessor State of WMDs. Despite its priorities and preoccupations with the political, economic and social reforms aimed at achieving a democratic society, Myanmar is not oblivious to the disarmament treaties, to which it is committed. It is considering ratifying them.

The United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in July was not conclusive. For an internationally and legally binding disarmament instrument to be universal, effective and successful in its application, the inalienable rights of States to their sovereignty, territorial integrity and self-defence are, first and foremost, to be preserved and protected. Myanmar hopes that that fundamental principle will be strictly observed in an arms trade treaty that might emerge. Myanmar welcomes the outcome of 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.

Myanmar reaffirms its support for the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. The unique composition of that body is a strength in itself in dealing with the international security issues that we face today. The Conference on Disarmament has produced important disarmament instruments in the past. Now is the time for us to salvage the Conference. We share the view of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, that the deeper roots of the stalemate lie in the Conference's external political environment.

In order to adequately respond to today's international security challenges, the effectiveness and efficiency of the whole United Nations disarmament machinery should be reviewed. That could be done, in our view, by convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In line with its priorities and commitment to the cause of disarmament, Myanmar has submitted a comprehensive draft resolution on nuclear disarmament to the First Committee on an annual basis. We will once again submit it during the current sixty-seventh session. The draft resolution, among other things, comprehensively outlines concrete practical steps towards achieving

the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We sincerely hope that States Members of the United Nations will support and co-sponsor our draft resolution.

Mr. Sin (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at its sixty-seventh session. I am confident that, under your able leadership, the upcoming meetings will achieve success. I take this opportunity to assure the First Committee of my delegation's fullest support and cooperation. My delegation would also like to associate itself with the statement made at the Committee's 2nd meeting by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

World peace and security remains under grave threat owing to the continued existence of weapons of mass destruction, in particular, nuclear weapons. The United Nations has, over the six decades since its inception, devoted a great part of its efforts to addressing that concern; nevertheless, no fundamental changes have been made so far. It is a stark reality that some Powers continue to rely on nuclear weapons in pursuit of a strong-arm policy aimed at monopoly, domination and interference.

Nuclear weapons are being used ever more openly as an instrument for threats and blackmail, going beyond the role of deterrence and giving rise to profound concern in the international community. The nuclear Power with the most sophisticated nuclear weapons has designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a target for a pre-emptive nuclear strike and has been increasing its nuclear threats by staging ever-intensifying nuclear war exercises on and around the Korean peninsula every year. For the Korean people, the threat posed by nuclear weapons is by no means an abstract notion but a practical and long-standing reality.

In defiance of the unanimous desire and demand of the people at home and abroad for peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, provocative and aggressive military exercises were staged this year as well, in simulations of a nuclear war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on several occasions in the southern part of the Korean peninsula. Joint military exercises, such as Key Resolve, Foal Eagle and Ulchi Freedom Guardian, have involved huge numbers of troops and offensive means from the United States mainland and other military bases in the Asia-Pacific

region, thereby creating a real war-like situation. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea aspires to durable peace more than anybody else, but it would never beg for peace at the expense of its sovereignty or national dignity. Confronted with the extreme nuclear threat of the United States, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has responded with its own nuclear deterrent. That nuclear deterrent not only serves as a powerful means of safeguarding its sovereignty and deterring war on the Korean peninsula but also provides a mighty guarantee for its efforts to concentrate on building the economy and improving the living standards of the people.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea supports nuclear disarmament. In United Nations disarmament forums such as the Conference on Disarmament, it has, jointly with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, set nuclear disarmament as the fundamental issue affecting world peace and security and remains steadfast in giving the highest priority to nuclear disarmament. The view of nuclear disarmament that international society is eager to achieve is the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons. To our regret, the nuclear disarmament process remains inactive, as the result of unchanged, aggressive nuclear doctrines and small reductions, at times, in nuclear weapons. That kind of process can be regarded only as a mockery of the desires of non-nuclear-weapon States and will only drive them to further lose confidence in the nuclear Powers.

The Conference on Disarmament has remained deadlocked for over a decade, owing to the insincerity of the nuclear-weapon States on nuclear disarmament issues and their non-proliferation policy. Nuclear disarmament is considered to be the only absolute solution to the issue of proliferation, because proliferation has resulted from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear Powers. My delegation reiterates its position that the primary concern with regard to disarmament issues should be on concluding a legally binding treaty on the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The use of nuclear energy and the exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes constitute inalienable rights of all sovereign States. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has decided that the development of an independent nuclear-power industry is a practical solution to its energy problem, and it is therefore

making efforts to build a light-water reactor and produce nuclear fuel on its own.

In 2009, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also joined the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and the 1975 Registration Convention with the intention of actively participating in space-exploration activities, which offer great advantages for economic development. It has, so far, launched several space satellites that it manufactured on its own, using 100 per cent domestic resources and technology.

Some countries have, however, related my country's peaceful outer-space activities to a military programme and have gone as far as to make groundless allegations referring, *inter alia*, to a long-range missile test organization and a uranium-enrichment programme. They allege that, under Security Council resolutions, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot conduct any launch using ballistic-missile technology, and that even a satellite launch for peaceful purpose should not be allowed. If those same countries are free to launch space satellites and only the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is excluded, that would be an intolerable infringement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's sovereignty.

As far as the Security Council resolutions are concerned, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has never recognized them because they do not constitute a fair judgment of our self-defensive nuclear testing in response to the hostile policy of the United States, which relies on prejudice and pressure. Given that reality, the question is how and why the Security Council has kept silent about the United States nuclear threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for over half a century, despite the Security Council's values of justice and fairness in international relations. It is a tragedy of today's international relations that double standards and injustice are more rampant than ever before.

Some countries often say that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has what is called "nuclear ambitions". The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been fully open and above board before the international community in each and every measure it has taken and has never avoided the public eye or pursued any clandestine programme. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is firmly confident of the righteousness of its cause. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has already emerged as a fully

fledged nuclear-weapon State, and the period when the United States could threaten the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with atomic bombs is a bygone era. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea opted for the possession of a nuclear deterrent, not because it wanted to trade that for something else, but because it had to counter the measures of the United States aimed at eliminating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

As long as the United States persists in its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear possession will inevitably be prolonged on a long-term basis. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will abide by its responsibilities as a responsible State possessing nuclear weapons and will continue its efforts to advance peaceful space exploration and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Desta (Eritrea): Let me join representatives who have spoken before me in congratulating you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau on your election to steer the work of this important Committee. We are confident that your experienced leadership will lead us to a successful outcome. I assure you of my delegation's full support. My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made at the Committee's 2nd meeting by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. I wish to add the following brief remarks in my national capacity.

Almost a century after the early attempt by the League of Nations to rid the world of deadly weapons, we are still far from achieving that noble objective. The enormous stockpile of deadly weapons of mass destruction and unregulated conventional arms continues to pose an existential threat to humanity. The threats are real and global. No country acting alone can secure its border and citizens in the increasingly globalized world.

In that connection, Eritrea stresses that regional and international security and issues of disarmament are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, transparent, comprehensive and non-discriminatory instruments. Eritrea supports the various international instruments aimed at achieving a complete, verifiable and irreversible disarmament that covers all weapons.

It is regrettable that in recent years we have not been able to make progress on the question of the Conference

on Disarmament. Our shared future must compel us to demonstrate the necessary political will to agree on the core agenda and immediately commence substantive discussions on disarmament matters.

In many parts of Africa, small arms and light weapons continue to fuel conflicts, exacerbate crime, absorb much-needed resources and perpetuate regional insecurity. The successful outcome 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, held last August, is an important development. The implementation of the Programme of Action is primarily the responsibility of national Governments; yet, the nature of the trading in illicit arms and light weapons, which often transcends national boundaries, requires a regional response. Eritrea believes that strengthening the capacities of regional arrangements would meaningfully advance the objective of curbing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

As a signatory to the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa and as an active member of the Regional Centre on Small Arms, Eritrea will continue to work actively with the sisterly countries in the region to eliminate the illicit trade in small arms in all its aspects.

While the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty did not achieve its stated objectives, it is Eritrea's view that the constructive engagement by representatives during the month-long process is a sign of general support for an international instrument to regulate the transfer of arms. Such an instrument, if it is balanced, non-discriminatory and resistant to any political abuse, can be an important step towards preventing and eradicating illegal arms transfers. As we prepare for another possible conference on the topic, Eritrea stresses that any potential treaty must be a result of a comprehensive and transparent intergovernmental process. Any future treaty must not infringe on the inalienable right of every State to acquire, manufacture, stockpile and import arms for self-defence. The treaty should not allow any political misuse and must include clear provisions to render it immune from such misuse.

The existence of nuclear weapons continues to pose a great danger to humankind. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their being

used — intentionally or accidentally — will remain. Eritrea believes that the sole guarantee against the use, threat of use and proliferation of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. It is the view of my delegation that we must intensify our efforts to implement, in a balanced manner, the three pillars set forth in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)).

The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is illegal and unethical. Pending the realization of general and complete disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States must give security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States with regard to the use and threat of use of those deadly weapons. Such negative security assurances must be legally binding. Moreover, the imminent entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will be a critical step towards the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Eritrea is a signatory to the Treaty of Pelindaba, which established an African nuclear-weapon-free zone. The establishment of such zones in other regions will make an important contribution towards attaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear technology can indeed play an important role in sustainable development, including the attainment of internationally agreed development goals. Eritrea supports the inalienable right of every State to develop and/or acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and in accordance with the comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My delegation commends the activities of the IAEA, which is making a remarkable contribution towards the socioeconomic development of developing countries. In Eritrea, the IAEA support in livestock production, particularly in the fight against brucellosis and tuberculosis, has been significant.

In conclusion, let me stress that experience has shown that weapons only fuel insecurity. Thus, disarmament remains the only viable tool for a more secure planet. Eritrea believes that international and regional security can be realized only through the peaceful settlement of disputes and economic cooperation. The reform of international institutions, which are entrusted with maintaining security and ensuring financing, is an important step forward.

Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana): Allow me, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of my delegation, to express our pleasure in seeing you preside over this Committee. I also wish to extend our congratulations to the other members of your Bureau on their well-deserved election. I wish to assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of your mandate. Let me also take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen of Finland for his very effective stewardship of the First Committee during its sixty-sixth session. My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered at the the Committee's 2nd meeting by the representatives of Nigeria and Iran on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively.

Botswana reaffirms its commitment to the multilateral processes relating to disarmament. The interrelatedness of the issues of international peace and security and development and disarmament cannot be overemphasized, and my delegation continues to accord priority to those issues. When addressing this Committee under this item during the sixty-sixth session (see A/C.1/66/PV.9), my delegation underscored the importance of disarmament in reducing political tensions as well as mitigating conflicts.

As we meet today, there is a general air of frustration sweeping across the international system regarding the United Nations disarmament machinery. The reality that the world's single most important multilateral disarmament negotiating platform, which is the Conference on Disarmament, remains in perpetual deadlock is more than exasperating for all of us. We remain acutely concerned at the lack of progress in the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Botswana fully supports the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament, and we urge the members of the Conference to adopt and immediately begin implementing its programme of work. There is no doubt that such progress would offer renewed hope for the start of negotiations on other important disarmament instruments, including the conclusion of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which should fulfil both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives.

Our hopes for nuclear disarmament were rekindled in 2010, following the adoption of the action plan at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). At that time, nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, and committed to accelerating progress in that regard.

Botswana is of the view that global disarmament efforts can benefit from efforts at the regional level, particularly progress in creating nuclear-free zones. That remains an important milestone in nuclear disarmament, which can spur international efforts.

We welcome the forthcoming conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, to be hosted by Finland later this year. We look forward to successful deliberations at that important conference, which we believe will fundamentally inform the 2015 review cycle of Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. For our part, we reiterate our commitment to the implementation of the Treaty of Pelindaba, which established a nuclear-free zone in our own backyard.

Botswana puts high priority on the international efforts being made to achieve the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Having ratified the Treaty some years ago, we remain concerned at the slow pace of its ratification by States. Our concern stems from the fact that such sluggish progress could endanger the already fragile nuclear disarmament landscape. We thus take a keen interest in the universalization drive for that important instrument. We wish to call on the nuclear-weapon States, and in particular those countries listed under annex 2 that have not yet done so, to consider ratification without any further delay.

Botswana welcomes the adoption by consensus, in September 2012, of the outcome documents 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, and of the International Instrument to Enable States to Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/4, annexes I and II). As we focus on the implementation

of the Programme of Action, Botswana appeals for international assistance and cooperation in the areas of border control and management, marking and recording, so as to be able to contribute effectively to the fight against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

International cooperation and assistance remain critical and primary in determining the success or failure of national efforts to implement all aspects of the Programme of Action. In that respect, it would be useful for us to consider how the limited resources of various partners could be effectively utilized to attain concrete results.

We regret the fact that the inaugural United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which was held in July this year, could not conclude the envisaged treaty aimed at regulating international trade in conventional weapons. While that frustration remains fresh in our minds, we remain convinced that all was not lost. In fact, the July Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty marked a significant step forward in galvanizing the international community towards a common resolve in that regard. It is for that reason that we place a high premium on the resumption of negotiations on that important treaty in the near future.

On disarmament issues, Botswana welcomes the convening of the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, held in Geneva in December 2011. The Review Conference adopted a forward-looking outcome document (BWC/CONF.VII/7), which, among other things, established a sponsorship programme to facilitate the participation of developing countries in future meetings, adopted a revised reporting form for confidence-building measure submissions and renewed the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit.

In conclusion, Botswana is convinced that the multilateral system remains the right platform for reinvigorating the disarmament and non-proliferation machinery. In that connection, we look forward to the next session of the Conference on Disarmament, which should adopt its programme of action and resume implementation in earnest. We are also optimistic that the negotiations on the arms trade treaty will resume in the near future and deliver the important international legally binding instrument that we all yearn for.

The Chair: With the consent and concurrence of the Committee, I would like to interrupt the list of speakers, given the fact that the Secretary General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) will be leaving tonight. In that context, I now give the floor to the Secretary General of OPANAL.

Ms. Ubeda (Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your understanding. Allow me also to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee, and to thank you for the opportunity to share the progress and positions of the Agency during the past 12 months. I also welcome the presence of the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, and the other members of the Bureau.

One year ago, I had the opportunity, in this forum, to describe the revitalization process of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and its political agenda in the current international context (see A/C.1/66/PV.9). Those remarks included the 2011 joint declaration that OPANAL member States presented to the other States Members of the United Nations. That declaration incorporates new regional consensuses, above all the determination of our 33 member States to join in with the efforts of the international community to move forward towards negotiating a universal, legally binding instrument aimed at prohibiting nuclear weapons. Today, that consensus is a guideline for the Agency's agenda, as well as for the strengthening of non-proliferation measures. Both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are inseparable from OPANAL's work.

One part of the revitalization process is to continue strengthening the zone itself through concrete actions taken by member States and through the signatory States' compliance with their obligations under the Additional Protocols to the Treaty. We therefore continue to urge the Permanent Five, which made interpretative declarations at the time of signing and/or ratifying the Protocols, to modify or withdraw those declarations, especially those affecting negative security assurances. However, we understand that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute assurance.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education is another mission of the Agency within the region. As requested by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, OPANAL submitted a report this year on peace, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education for the period from 2010 to 2012, which members of the Committee can find on our website. Together with member States, we will continue to promote courses and other education and outreach activities. We are very willing to share those activities with all other interested parties.

It is clear that nuclear-weapon-free zones are not islands. Even though they have been conceived as defined territorial spaces, they exist within the international architecture of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Each zone contributes to regional and global peace and security. At the same time, they incorporate themselves into that architecture through their own treaties and other universal treaties, *inter alia*, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the treaties on nuclear security.

In the same vein, I would like to reiterate that all OPANAL member States are parties to the NPT and 31 of them are now parties to the CTBT. In January this year, we received the good news of Guatemala's ratification of the CTBT. Only two States in the zone have not yet ratified the Treaty. We will continue to work to achieve that objective as soon as possible, and we also call on all States listed in annex 2 to adhere to that universal instrument at the earliest opportunity.

We took part in the first session of the Preparatory Committee of the ninth NPT Review Conference with a strong hope that greater progress will be made in 2015 than was made in 2010. There are still opportunities for that to become a reality, but it is not without great challenges, such as bringing together today's diametrically opposed positions, even though all States express the same wish in their statements, namely, to build a world that is safer, in peace and free of nuclear weapons.

In 2012, OPANAL has cooperated with the member States, urging those that have not yet done so to move towards signing and/or ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We acknowledge the efforts of

Chile, Costa Rica and Colombia in organizing this year's regional workshops for that purpose. Likewise, the intrinsic relationship between OPANAL and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an important part of that legal and institutional framework, a relationship that was built into the Treaty of Tlatelolco itself, signed in 1967, and which granted the Agency functions and powers over the surveillance system established to verify compliance with the obligations undertaken by States Parties and States signatories of additional protocols.

In the past two years, the connection between the two agencies has been reinvigorated. The participation of Mr. Yukiya Amano, the IAEA Director General, in the commemorative event on the occasion of the forty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as well as the participation of OPANAL, *inter alia*, in the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011 and the Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East in November 2011, has shown the greater dynamism existing between the two agencies. We are pleased that, this year, Trinidad and Tobago participated for the first time as a member State in the IAEA General Conference.

Furthermore, nuclear-weapon-free zones are not islands unto themselves; they are also connected by bridges, which have been more openly built since 2005, when the first Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones was held. OPANAL is pleased that Indonesia has agreed to chair the third conference. That is the first time that it will be chaired by a State outside the Latin American and Caribbean region. We assure the delegation of Indonesia of our collaboration, so that, under its leadership, concrete steps may be taken to strengthen and consolidate the nuclear-weapon-free zones and their common purposes. Without a doubt, this is a propitious time to strengthen coordination and cooperation among nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially when it comes to promoting the exchange of best practices and lessons learned with a view to supporting regional consolidation processes. At the same time, all five existing zones can work together and continue to share relevant experiences for the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Once again, we would like to reiterate our confidence and extend our best wishes with regard to the holding of the conference on the establishment of

a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction this year, pursuant to the resolution adopted in 1995. We acknowledge the efforts made by Finland as facilitator, and we reiterate to Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, the Under-Secretary of State, our best wishes for the important mission that has been entrusted to him. Acknowledging that it is a sovereign process of the States in the Middle East region, we are very willing to share the experience of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. Last week I had the opportunity to meet with the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to discuss the matter and reiterate our firm support. We hope that the States of the Middle East will begin, as soon as possible, the long and complex process that could lead to laying the foundation for a stable and durable peace in the region.

To conclude, I would like to share with the Assembly that, within the framework of the commemorative events on the occasion of the forty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the OPANAL member States held an international seminar entitled “The Experience of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean and the perspective towards 2015 and beyond”, in February this year in

Mexico City. We would like to thank States from other nuclear-weapon-free zones that took part in that important gathering, in particular, New Zealand, Indonesia and Kazakhstan. We also want to thank the participating non-governmental organizations from various countries, both regional and international. We acknowledge the participation of the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs at the time, who acted on behalf of the Secretary-General, as well as the participation of the IAEA Director General and of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. We would like to highlight the presence of high representatives of the signatory States to Additional Protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco — the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the Netherlands. The presence and participation of all of those persons and entities alongside member States of the region gave the commemoration a reflective quality that allowed OPANAL's vision for the future to be renewed. That vision, in addition to having an impact on all actions of the Agency, remains permeated with the highest of values and purposes, namely, peace, security and the well-being of our peoples.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.