



# General Assembly

Seventy-third session

## First Committee

19<sup>th</sup> meeting

Friday, 26 October 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Jinga. . . . . (Romania)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

### Organization of work

**The Chair:** At the outset, I would like to make a few remarks about our session in the context of the current international environment.

We are aware of the challenges and how they relate to the work of the First Committee. Particularly in times like these do we need to remain mindful of the basic principles and rules that the Member States have long upheld and which enable us to perform our shared tasks. We should guide our work by following the Latin phrase *sine ira et studio*. Those who are lawyers know what that means. I will translate it into English for those who are not lawyers. *Sine ira et studio* means “without anger and passion”. I therefore appeal to all delegations to cooperate, respect each other’s positions and promote an atmosphere that is conducive to civil discourse. That is the only way in which we can fulfil our mandate.

Before proceeding further, I would like to remind the Committee that, yesterday morning, I received a note verbale from the delegation of the Russian Federation, along with an attachment containing a draft resolution entitled “Preservation of and compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty”. In its note, the Russian Federation requested my assistance in submitting the draft resolution for the consideration of the First Committee under agenda item 101, entitled “General and complete disarmament”, sub-item (b), entitled “Nuclear disarmament”.

As delegations will recall, at the Committee’s meeting that took place yesterday morning (see A/C.1/73/PV.18), the delegation of the United States, on a point of order, asked me to rule that the draft resolution not be considered by the Committee in view of the Thursday, 18 October, noon deadline for the submission of draft resolutions and decisions under all agenda items, as contained in document A/C.1/73/CRP.1 and agreed by the Committee. Subsequently, the Committee upheld my ruling to allow for more time for consultations on the matter. I did so in accordance with my approach to acting as an honest broker and in order to do everything possible in my capacity as Chair to favour consensus. As the Committee knows very well, I have done that on previous occasions in this session.

Since our meeting yesterday, I have met with the Bureau of the Committee and conducted extensive consultations on this matter with the interested delegations. I wish to report that, unfortunately, we have not been able to reach consensus on the way forward. I would therefore seek the Committee’s guidance on whether or not the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation should be considered by the Committee, despite the fact it was submitted after the 18 October deadline.

Does the Committee agree to accept the draft resolution at this time so that it is available for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee?

**Mr. Liddle** (United Kingdom): I thank the Chair for his efforts in trying to find a way out of this situation, and I think that his quotation from Tacitus was very apt. As he said, we have to respect the rules

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of procedure that have served us so well. Without clear rules of procedure, this institution would not function.

The Chair has noted that the draft resolution is a new text that none of us has seen before and was submitted long after the deadline. It was asserted that the issue is an urgent matter of international peace and security. If that is true, then the right forum in which to discuss it is the Security Council — not this body. I think we have to respect the rules of procedure. We cannot accept moving forward on the draft.

**Mr. Robotjazi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank the Chair for explaining the facts on the most recent developments, which has clarified the situation. There are also other facts we need to take into account when we consider the question he just asked.

On 24 October, at the start of the morning meeting, the Chair raised a similar question with respect to draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1, submitted by our colleague from Cameroon (see A/C.1/73/PV.16). He gave us two reasons for considering that proposal, which was submitted after the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions. He asked if the Committee would agree to accept the proposal, given the extraordinary circumstances for the late submission and the importance of the draft resolution in promoting the international disarmament agenda. He provided two basic reasons for agreeing to reconsider the deadline and allow our colleague from Cameroon to submit its draft resolution for consideration during the action phase.

I think the same applies to the proposal submitted by Russia. Without getting into the substance, I think those two basic reasons, which the Chair gave to provide us with the proper grounds for considering the draft resolution submitted by Cameroon, wholly apply to this situation. We did not politicize or block that proposal. As far as I remember, it was unprecedented in the First Committee but we did not politicize or block it on the basis of rules of procedure. The Committee dictates its own rules of procedure.

We listened carefully to the Chair's reasoning and agreed to allow the proposal to be considered. I think that it was fair because it was within the competency of the First Committee. In our view, the new proposal is also within the competency of the Committee. It is not a bilateral issue because, in the past, we have had draft resolutions about the preservation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. We have had resolutions endorsing the

new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Those were bilateral treaties but we did not reject them because they were bilateral. We considered them carefully and valued them because we knew that they had an impact on the international disarmament agenda. They also have an impact on the nuclear-disarmament process.

I think that this issue is fully within the competency of the Committee. We should not politicize it. Our colleague from the United Kingdom is quite right that we should observe and respect the rules of procedure, but we should not politicize issues by invoking rules of procedure nor should we attempt to block a draft resolution that is completely within the competency of the Committee. With that, I request that the Chair make his best efforts to allow the issue to be considered in the Committee.

**Mr. Ji Haojun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): With respect to the most recent developments in the situation since 18 October, China is of the view that the Committee, owing to the fact that Russia has submitted a draft resolution for discussion purposes, should provide a platform for us to take action on it. The rules of procedure should be respected. At the same time, space should be provided for that purpose.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I would like to thank the Chair for his efforts to try to find a consensus way forward on this issue.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1, submitted by Cameroon, I would note that that issue was clearly on the agenda of the First Committee. The recent attempt by Russia to put a very politicized draft resolution on the agenda is something different. We think that it is very important to adhere to the rules of procedure on this matter. Otherwise, as my colleague from the United Kingdom said, the Committee will just not be able to function.

Comparing the two issues, the draft resolution submitted by Cameroon had already been approved by the First Committee; it was on the agenda but had not been submitted in a timely fashion. That was different from what occurred yesterday. When a new agenda item is being proposed with a new text that was briefed to the media before it was briefed to the First Committee, there clearly are political overtones. I think that it is important that we adhere to the rules of procedure in this matter.

**Mr. Hallak** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, as has been recognized by the First Committee, I would like to thank the Chair for all his efforts to reach a consensus on the issue that was initially raised yesterday (see A/C.1/73/PV.18). As others have said, we must stress the importance of the rules of procedure, while underlining the importance of avoiding double standards in dealing with issues.

As we make amendments, we are taking the Chair's proposals into account, given that he believes that we would not be setting a precedent for other issues in the same session; in short, we have accepted his point of view. The Chair of the Committee has a broader perspective than the delegations do, which is perhaps why they have all accepted his proposal.

The A/C.1/73/CRP.1 document has been amended more than once so far, and it is not clear to us why our colleagues — the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom — objected to the inclusion of the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation. When the draft resolution was circulated to us, we all agreed to amend A/C.1/73/CRP.1, and we saw no problem doing so in order to be able to consider a draft resolution that carries special importance to many countries.

All States members of the First Committee, including nuclear-weapon States, stress the importance of nuclear disarmament. The issue that we are dealing with is at the core of nuclear disarmament. We do not want another arms race, and we believe that this is an extremely important issue.

On the procedural side, as the Committee has already amended the A/C.1/73/CRP.1 document, we believe we could proceed with our work on the basis that a precedent has not been set for the coming years. We therefore support the inclusion of the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation in the list of draft resolutions to be considered by the Committee.

**The Chair:** Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to make a clarification. I have just checked with the Secretariat and document A/C.1/73/CRP.1 has not been amended. There has been no change in A/C.1/73/CRP.1. The deadline is the same. What the Committee decided two days ago was to accept draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1, submitted by Cameroon on behalf of the African States, not to change or modify the deadline (see A/C.1/73/PV.16).

**Mr. Hwang** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Chair for reminding us about the important matter that document A/C.1/73/CRP.1 has not been amended.

My country's position is very straightforward. We should all respect the rules of procedure, which we have all accepted by consensus. The deadline — which, as the Chair said, was 18 October at noon — has passed. I have taken note of the arguments made by the delegation of Iran that the case of Cameroon set an applicable precedent. We do not feel that this situation is in any way comparable. Cameroon was confronting a technical difficulty with respect to a draft resolution — A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1 — which had been considered by the Committee in the past, was subject to a review and was clearly on the agenda. Therefore, my delegation's position is very straightforward. We call on the Committee to abide by its rules. Respect for the law is the best way to build confidence and defend multilateralism.

**Mr. Robotjazi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since the Chair has made a point of paying careful attention to comments, I do not wish to speak out of turn.

We agree that A/C.1/73/CRP.1 has not been amended. We made a decision on the basis of the reasoning that the Chair had provided us, and I do not wish to reiterate that reasoning, because our colleague from France has said it was different, despite the fact that it was not. The Chair referred to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding Cameroon's submission of draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1. A similar extraordinary situation has arisen around the submission of the draft resolution by Russia. Some announcements were made after the deadline. Now, there are extraordinary circumstances for that.

That said, our colleagues from the United States and France are taking a very tough stance when it comes to considering Russia's proposal, which we know is for political reasons. It should not be for political reasons. We should not block the consideration of substantive issues just for political reasons. This is the First Committee, which is mandated to consider international security and disarmament issues.

They say that the issue proposed by Russia is not on the agenda and that the Cameroonian proposal was on the agenda. That is neither factually nor technically correct. If we follow this approach, the new United States proposal on cybersecurity should not have been proposed. That proposal was made under agenda item

96, “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”. It was not on the agenda. It was just submitted and the Committee accepted that.

Now, when I consider the draft resolution that is being proposed by Russia, I consider it to have been submitted without political motives. Yes, our colleagues can laugh, but it is because they do not have strong arguments; they have to laugh. Their laughter shows their weakness and their disrespect for the rules of procedure that they want other colleagues to respect. The Russian delegation has proposed its draft resolution under sub-item (b) of agenda item 101, on nuclear disarmament, so there is an agenda item and in that regard the rules of procedure have been respected. The argument that it does not exist in the rules of procedure is not valid.

**The Chair:** With all due respect to all delegations, we are discussing procedural aspects. We are not making statements in exercise of the right of reply.

I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation. After that we will do our best to make a little progress.

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I too want to speak about the rules of procedure. I would like to draw delegations’ attention to chapter VII of annex IV of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which is an integral part of the rules, and which states in paragraph 87 that

“[t]he Special Committee recommends to the General Assembly that draft resolutions should be submitted as early as possible so as to give debates a more concrete character. It considers, however, that no rigid rule should be established in the matter, since it is for delegations to determine, in each case, the most appropriate moment for submitting draft resolutions”.

Let me repeat that this rule is an integral part of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. I would also like to draw the Committee’s attention to paragraph 252 of the report of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly (A/8426). I will read it out in English.

(*spoke in English*)

“Several members of the Special Committee felt that the early submission of draft resolutions had great advantages. They argued that a draft resolution, by providing a starting point for deliberations, frequently obviated confused debate and time-wasting; it helped to shape the discussion and encouraged delegations to state their positions. It was also observed that, in the case of supplementary items or additional items, the early submission of a draft resolution was especially helpful as it provided guidance during the preliminary stages of the debate without, however, depriving delegations of their right to submit additional draft resolutions subsequently.”

(*spoke in Russian*)

Besides that, I would like to draw the Committee’s attention to paragraph (b) of rule 99 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which — and I will again read it in English — states that

(*spoke in English*)

“[e]ach Main Committee, taking into account the closing date for the session fixed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the General Committee, shall adopt its own priorities and meet as may be necessary to complete the consideration of the items referred to it. It shall at the beginning of the session adopt a programme of work indicating, if possible, a target date for the conclusion of its work, the approximate dates of consideration of items and the number of meetings to be allocated to each item.”

That means that while the issue of deadlines for submitting draft resolutions is an important one, it is not obligatory to include it in the Committee’s programme of work, and delegations could therefore change the timing of the submission of draft resolutions. I will now speak in Russian again.

(*spoke in Russian*)

We therefore believe that the rules of procedure contain no restrictions preventing the Russian Federation from submitting a draft resolution for consideration by the Committee. Moreover, there are rules of procedure or, rather, recommendations on submitting draft resolutions and in that connection, I object to what was said by my colleague from the United

Kingdom. I will again refer to the recommendation of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly in paragraph 262 of its report, which states that

“[t]he Special Committee considered various suggestions concerning the time which should elapse between the submission and the consideration of draft resolutions, amendments and subamendments. It was suggested in particular that rules 80 and 121 of the rules of procedure should be amended to specify a 48-hour rule for draft resolutions or to provide that proposals should be circulated not later than two days before the day of the meeting at which they were to be put to the vote.”

To that end, we submitted our draft resolution for consideration and circulated it on 24 October, which means that there was still time for it to be considered before the first day of voting.

I also want to object to the statement by my colleague of the United Kingdom that we should bring our issue directly to the Security Council. We will of course do that once the United States withdraws from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). Meanwhile, we have an opportunity to send an unambiguous message to the United States on behalf of all the States Members of the United Nations that it should refrain from taking a dangerous and short-sighted step that will have serious negative consequences for the entire system of arms control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and, as a result, would affect international peace and security.

I also want to emphasize once again that we believe that there is no reason to refuse to consider our proposal based on the claim that no designated item for it was listed on the Committee's agenda. There are at least two items on the agenda of the First Committee and in line with the General Assembly under which our draft resolution could be submitted. Our colleague from Iran has already mentioned one of them, and it is indicated in our diplomatic note as sub-item (b) of agenda item 101, on nuclear disarmament. There is another item in the same section, sub-item (t) of agenda item 101, on missiles, where it would also be appropriate. We therefore see no formal reason why the Committee cannot consider our proposal.

I would now like to read our specific proposal to our colleagues so that they understand what we are proposing. I will read it out in English.

*(spoke in English)*

Given the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the INF Treaty, we put forward to the Committee a motion to admit the submission of a draft resolution under sub-item (b) of agenda item 101 in support of the Treaty, after the deadline of 18 October set out in the final programme of work and the timetable of the First Committee for 2018, without establishing a precedent for the future or for other agenda items.

*(spoke in Russian)*

Our proposal is quite simple. We are asking the Chair, the secretariat and the delegations to act on the proposal of the Russian Federation on a non-discriminatory basis, since we believe that the reasons demanding the submission of this draft resolution are at least as important as the reasons that permitted us to take a decision on Cameroon's draft resolution (A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1).

**The Chair:** I have two clarifications. First, the deadline for the submission of draft proposals was established in the context of the working methods of the First Committee and decided by Member States. Secondly, Russia did circulate a proposal, but I had already submitted a proposal of my own for the consideration of the Committee, which I will repeat now, and which is, does the Committee agree to accept the draft resolution at this time so that it is available for to have action taken on it during the action phase of the Committee's work? If the Committee wants to consider the proposals, it will do so in the order in which the two proposals were submitted. There are two more speakers and then we will stop and take action.

**Ms. Wood (Australia):** I am not going to quote the rules of procedure. I think they are quite clear and should be upheld. But, I would like to make a few comments on what is reasonable.

I think that Cameroon's draft resolution (A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1) and the most recent draft resolution submitted by Russia are different. We were expecting Cameroon's draft resolution and actually wondering where it was when it did not turn up. We are entirely familiar with it. It is not a big deal for us to consider it back in our capitals.

However, I think that the latest draft resolution submitted by Russia is in a different category, and that it is not reasonable to give countries only a few days to decide whether they can take action on the matter. I think it should be considered back in our capitals. Countries have not had an opportunity to hold any consultations on the draft resolution, and voting starts next week. So, I think it is important to think about what is reasonable in the context, and that we should uphold the rules of procedure on the matter.

**Mr. Viinanen** (Finland): As far as my delegation is concerned, the issue under consideration here is purely procedural. We have no political considerations in the matter. It is about the rules of procedure and the deadlines that we agreed on for the submission of proposals and draft resolutions. It is clear that the Russian Federation has submitted its draft resolution approximately one week after the agreed deadline. It is therefore clear to my delegation that it should not be considered by the First Committee.

Where the recommendations of the Special Committee to which my Russian colleague referred are concerned, they actually refer to actions and procedures in the plenary of the General Assembly and are not applicable as such to the work of the First Committee, which has agreed on a deadline for the submission of draft resolutions.

**Ms. Yaron** (Israel): With regard to the draft resolution submitted by Russia on the preservation of and compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, Israel believes that the issue of the INF Treaty is a bilateral issue between the United States of America and the Russian Federation. The First Committee of the General Assembly is therefore simply not the right venue for its consideration, and that is why it should not be raised or discussed here in this room.

**The Chair:** In the light of the statements just made, there seems to be no consensus on accepting the draft resolution of the Russian Federation for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee. May I seek clarification if the Russian delegation or any other delegation is seeking a vote on that proposal?

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Would it be possible for me to respond to some of the comments that have been made here?

**The Chair:** I ask the Russian representative to do his best not to continue this discussion, because it

is important for us to proceed on the matter. He will have other opportunities to discuss the issue, either bilaterally or in other forums, and I would appreciate it.

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will be brief. I would just like to respond to the representative of Israel.

The Intermediate-Range Forces Treaty is a multilateral one. I agree that the mutual claims between the Russian Federation and the United States of America are of a bilateral nature. However, we are not discussing that here but rather the fact that the United States is intending to leave the Treaty. That step has been taken unilaterally by the United States and will have serious negative consequences for the entire arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation system. I want to assure the Committee that no one in the Russian Federation is forcing the United States to take such a decision.

Now, to answer your question, Mr. Chair, we do insist on a vote on our proposal.

**The Chair:** The Russian delegation has requested a recorded vote on accepting the Russian Federation's draft resolution entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty" for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee.

Pursuant to rule 128 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure,

"After the Chairman has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting."

We shall now begin the voting process. I would like to clarify that those voting yes are in favour of the Committee accepting the draft resolution of the Russian Federation for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee. Those voting no are not in favour of the Committee accepting the draft resolution of the Russian Federation for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee.

I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee is now voting on accepting the draft resolution of the Russian Federation, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear

Forces Treaty”, for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Angola, Armenia, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Uganda, Venezuela (Plurinational State of), Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

*The decision to accept the draft resolution entitled “Preservation of and compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty” for action by the Committee was rejected by 55 votes to 31, with 54 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** The Committee has therefore decided not to accept the draft resolution entitled “Preservation of and compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty” for action during the action phase of the work of the Committee.

I now give the floor to delegations wishing to speak in explanation of vote on the voting just completed.

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to comment on the results of the voting, if there is no objection. Unfortunately, what we are seeing is a startling and distressing picture. The majority of the countries that abstained are active allies of nuclear disarmament. A significant percentage of the countries that voted against the proposal were in favour of maintaining the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) Treaty. I do not understand the position of those that abstained or voted against the proposal.

The Russian Federation was trying to send a serious message to the political forces in the United States about the danger of the course of action that the current Administration has chosen. We assumed that our initiative would be supported by all rational forces, including those in this room. Unfortunately, we have been compelled to conclude that we were mistaken. In that regard, I would like to say that a year from now, if the United States withdraws from the Treaty and begins an uncontrolled build-up of its nuclear capacity, we will be confronting a completely different reality, and the procedural issues that we have been wrangling over for the two days will seem so pitiful and insignificant that we will once again regret the decision we took today.

Once again, on behalf of the Russian Federation, I want to express our deep regrets with regard to our proposed draft resolution, whose only purpose was to prevent the potentially most negative scenario in the developing situation. Frankly, that is why diplomacy exists. As diplomats, it is our sacred duty to react quickly and without delay to everything that goes on in the world and attempt, as best we can, to prevent negative developments. Unfortunately, today we opened up that possibility once again.

Nevertheless, the Russian Federation will consistently work with States that share our position with the aim of persuading the United States to take a constructive position, continue the dialogue within the INF Treaty and refrain from building up its nuclear potential, which President Trump was talking about two days ago. Of course, we will turn first to

the General Assembly, and if things go badly and the United States withdraws from the Treaty, then to the Security Council. That does not relieve the States that showed cowardice today and did not support our decision of their responsibility, however.

**Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina firmly supports all disarmament-related bilateral and multilateral instruments. Nonetheless, my delegation voted against the proposal for a draft resolution, first because we believe that the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty is a bilateral treaty originally signed between the United States and the Soviet Union and continued by the United States and Russia. It is therefore essential that the parties resolve their differences bilaterally or in an appropriate forum. In addition, the draft resolution was submitted after the established deadline.

**Mr. Ovsyanko** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): We voted in favour of the proposal submitted by the Russian Federation so that the First Committee could look at the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. I would first like to emphasize that a great deal was said today about respecting the rules of procedure of the First Committee, but many countries knowingly failed to give due attention to the issue of consistency in the First Committee's work and the decisions it takes.

Why, when a decision was being made about the inclusion of a draft resolution submitted by another country, did we discuss it without reference to the rules of procedure or to violations of one or another regulation or deadline? But when another situation came up and a different party submitted a draft resolution, suddenly questions were raised about the rules of procedure, deadlines and so forth. When we took a decision on the draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.69/Rev.1, submitted by Cameroon, it was clearly stated that the text would be considered because of extraordinary circumstances, the developing situation and the extreme urgency of the issue. The Russian Federation's draft resolution was based on exactly the same reasoning. Why do we have double standards for the two drafts? We are lying to ourselves on this issue.

We are deeply disappointed with the results of the voting since the document that is the subject of the draft resolution is a crucial treaty whose implementation has an impact on security, not just in the region but globally. To say that it is merely a bilateral treaty whose consequences affect only two countries is therefore

totally untrue. We certainly do not agree with that. We once again want to emphasize our disappointment about the fact that the Committee was unable to agree on the issue.

**Mr. Viinanen** (Finland): As far as our delegation was concerned, the vote was about rules of procedure and about honouring decisions and deadlines. We are delighted that that was upheld in the voting process. Our decisions had nothing to do with the content of the proposed draft resolution. Concerning that matter, our view on the issue of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was clearly stated in our national statement during the thematic debate on the issue of nuclear weapons (see A/C.1/73/PV.13).

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I am not going to comment on the vote itself. Countries obviously had to make sovereign decisions. I think that it is unfortunate that our colleague from the Russian Federation used very inappropriate language to describe countries' various positions on the issue. I think that is just another example of how Russia likes to use a heavy hand and intimidate countries into taking certain positions. It is quite unfortunate.

I again want to make the point that, for the past five and a half years, the United States has tried to engage Russia on the issue of violations of its Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty obligations. For the past few years, it has categorically denied having produced or tested a ground-launched cruise missile. It was only recently that it admitted to having produced a ground-launched cruise missile, but it then maintained that it did not violate the range limits of the Treaty. We presented it with information to the contrary but it has continued to deny being in non-compliance with the Treaty. As I have said, we have raised this issue for five and a half years to try to resolve it, but instead of responding to our engagement, we have received denials and ridiculous accusations that it is the United States that is violating the Treaty. On an issue of such importance to my country's national security, I submit that other countries would not tolerate such violations by another party to a treaty. The United States has been extremely patient with Russia and our hope is that Russia will do the right thing and destroy that ground-launched cruise missile.

**Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor to explain our vote.

It is my delegation's understanding that we took a vote to decide whether or not to accept the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Russia. There is therefore no question of intimidation or courage in this case. It is simply about addressing two cases in the same way. A precedent was set earlier this week. I say that without prejudice to my country's position with regard to nuclear disarmament or the Treaty referenced in the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation.

**Mr. Robotjazi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): We expressed our position with regard to the issue. We wanted to consider the draft resolution and take action on it. I would just like to request that the representative of the United States practise what he preaches. I recall that the other day in a plenary meeting he called one of our colleagues a joke. I think that is rude and disrespectful to the Committee. I think that before people tell others to be good they should do the same for themselves.

**The Chair:** There being no more requests for the floor from members wishing to speak in explanation of vote, and in accordance with its timetable, the Committee will now continue its consideration of the "Conventional weapons" cluster.

I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation on a point of order.

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): With the Chair's approval, I would like to take the floor to exercise my right of reply to the statement made by the representative of the United States.

**The Chair:** This is not the time to speak in right of reply. If we allow it, others will also exercise the right of reply, and we will have no time to consider the cluster on conventional weapons. In an hour and 45 minutes you may speak in right of reply. Is that all right?

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I understand that, but at the end of this meeting, there will be other requests from those wishing to exercise their right of reply on the cluster that we will be discussing. But I would like to respond now in the framework of the discussion that has just taken place. I will be brief.

**The Chair:** I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation in right of reply, but it should not be taken as a precedent.

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank you, Mr. Chair, for your understanding.

First, my response was sharp because of the laughter we heard. I do not really know why people laughed at my statement. The issue is truly a very serious one, and there is nothing funny about what the Russian Federation takes seriously. I said nothing rude in my response. I merely wanted to know what was so funny.

Secondly, the delegation of the United States claims that it has been asking about our compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty for five years now. We have been asking the United States about its claims with regard to the Treaty since the year 2000, and it has been dodging our questions.

Thirdly, at a recent meeting, the United States representative declared that Russia was ready for war. Yes, we are ready for war, and I affirm that as a representative of the Russian Federation. Yes, we are ready to defend our country, our territorial integrity, our principles, our values and our people. We are prepared for that kind of war. But there is a serious difference between us and the United States. Linguistically, that difference consists in one word, which means the same in both Russian and English. The Russian Federation is ready for war. The United States is preparing for war.

(*spoke in English*)

That is, the Russian Federation is preparing for the possibility of war. The United States is preparing for war. That is a fact.

(*spoke in Russian*)

If it is not, why does it want to withdraw from the Treaty, build up its nuclear capability, adopt a new nuclear doctrine for reducing the use of nuclear weapons and so on? Those are questions for all of us.

**The Chair:** I want to appeal to all delegations to preserve an atmosphere of mutual respect. What happened yesterday and this morning was done in full respect for transparency and the rules of procedure, as I promised at the beginning of my chairmanship of the Committee. Please help me to continue to do that. This is your Committee and it is in your hands.

In the time remaining, let us therefore continue the Committee's consideration of the "Conventional weapons" cluster. I once again urge all speakers to kindly observe the established time limit. As was agreed a couple of days ago, and in accordance with the

decision taken by the Committee earlier, at 12.15 p.m. we will begin hearing statements on the cluster entitled “Other disarmament measures and international security”, with priority being given to speakers who are not based in New York and to those speaking on behalf of groups.

**Mr. Sandoval Mendiola** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Member States have a responsibility to promote societies free of armed violence, in which no ordinary citizen needs a weapon to feel safer. It is unsustainable that producing and exporting countries continue to prioritize economic interests and protect the profits of industry, when conventional weapons cause the highest numbers of deaths and victims in the world and perpetuate armed conflicts and violence while hindering security, development and sustainable peace.

Trading in arms irresponsibly leads to proliferation and drives illicit trafficking. It is therefore urgent that we work to prevent weapons from falling into the hands of transnational organized criminals and terrorists, who pose a direct threat to the security of individuals and a serious challenge to global peace. We are particularly concerned about cross-border arms trafficking. We believe that the problem requires every country’s firm commitment and cooperation, from a perspective of shared responsibility and with a truly multidimensional approach, in order to address armed violence and the diversion of weapons.

Mexico has always supported humanitarian disarmament efforts. Regrettably, given the international context in which the First Committee is meeting, we have to keep remembering that international humanitarian law must be applied without reservations and that no civilian is a legitimate target of war. We must always keep our focus on protecting people, caring for victims, assigning responsibility and ensuring accountability in the development and use of conventional weapons. We must also emphasize that there are weapons that by their very nature cannot be used in accordance with the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, among others. It is in order to eliminate their humanitarian impact that we have banned such weapons.

Mexico condemns the use of cluster munitions by any actor under any circumstances. As we mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, it must be recognized that this instrument, together with the Anti-Personnel Mine

Ban Treaty, has proved its usefulness. However, recent reports on the increasing number of civilian victims of such inhumane weapons show that much remains to be done to achieve universal observance of the Convention. We must avoid the humanitarian damage caused by the use of explosives in densely populated areas, as well as improvised explosive devices and incendiary weapons. The damage and consequences that they cause individuals and their communities are why we must develop an international instrument to protect civilians and infrastructure in cities from the use of explosives. It is vital that we discuss limits on the use of force openly, transparently and inclusively.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General has devoted a section of his Agenda for Disarmament to the challenges of new technologies in the area of international security. Responsible innovation in science and technology should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. However, we must remain attentive to technological and scientific advances that could diversify and create new methods of warfare, produce asymmetries by increasing the military capacity and power of a few States and non-State actors in a new arms race linked to new technologies. We must therefore debate the legal, technical and ethical considerations stemming from the application of new technologies with a view to reaching a legally binding instrument for the prohibition of autonomous weapons systems and the regulation of armed drones.

Mexico attaches the highest priority to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. While Mexico recognizes the valuable the efforts undertaken since its adoption 18 years ago and welcomes the outcomes of the third Review Conference, we must continue fighting the scourge of the illicit trade of such weapons, which inflict so much harm on our societies.

The Programme of Action must be updated by revitalizing its scope. We reiterate that any meaningful discussion must take a cross-cutting and equitable approach to the problem as a whole, especially when it comes to ammunition, parts and components, related technology and explosives, as well as education for peace and control of arms possession by civilians.

My country has promoted a strategy comprising the building of synergies to prevent and combat this illicit trade in addition to adopting practical measures

to achieve this goal. This was particularly relevant during our terms as President of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials and as Chair of the Working Group on Firearms of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The full version of this statement will be shared on the PaperSmart portal.

**Mr. Lim Tong Hai** (Singapore): Singapore aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia and Viet Nam, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, respectively. In addition, we wish to make the following four points.

First, the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, and, in particular, their misuse, diversion and illicit circulation threaten global peace, security and development. Singapore therefore fully supports international efforts aimed at addressing the illicit trade in and indiscriminate use of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. In this regard, Singapore reiterates our commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument process. We participated actively in the third Review Conference, held in June 2018 at the United Nations, and look forward to working with Member States to advance the Programme of Action agenda collectively at the seventh Biennial Meeting of States, in 2020. At the national level, Singapore has a strong export-control regime underpinned by the Strategic Goods Control Act, which regulates the movement through Singapore of strategic goods, including conventional weapons, military items and dual-use goods. This is supplemented by other laws, such as the Arms and Explosives Act and the Regulation of Imports and Exports Act.

Secondly, Singapore will continue to contribute to global efforts to establish common international standards in the conventional arms trade. Singapore signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 5 December 2014. Domestic consultations are under way among relevant agencies and stakeholders to put in place processes as well as possible legislative amendments to enable Singapore to fully implement the provisions of the ATT.

Thirdly, Singapore continues to support international initiatives against the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions and conventional weapons, which have an adverse humanitarian impact, especially when directed at innocent civilians. Singapore has therefore imposed an indefinite moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions.

Fourthly, Singapore believes in promoting transparency in international arms transfers. Singapore has supported annual submissions to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms since 1993, and we played a constructive role as a member of the Register's 2016 Group of Governmental Experts.

Singapore is firmly of the view that States must fulfil their international obligations in respect of curbing the illicit arms trade and the indiscriminate use of conventional weapons. At the same time, we believe that the legitimate security concerns and the right to self-defence of all States cannot be disregarded. Singapore reaffirms the sovereign right of States to acquire arms for legitimate defence and responsible law-enforcement purposes.

**Ms. Tewari** (India): India aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/73/PV.16).

India shares concerns about the challenges posed by transfers of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to terrorists and non-State actors, which have today become a major threat to international peace and security and an impediment to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. India remains committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its annexed Protocols as well as the humanitarian principles that they embody. We believe that the universality of the CCW remains critical for the success of the Convention and its Protocols.

We note with satisfaction the steady increase in the number of high contracting parties, which has now reached 125. We welcome the accession of Afghanistan and Lebanon to the CCW and Benin to its amended article 1. India supports the Plan of Action to Promote Universality of the CCW as well as the sponsorship programme, to which we have made regular financial contributions over recent years. India has also submitted its annual report on compliance every year since 2008.

We remain concerned about the current financial status of the CCW, call on all States to make their financial contributions in a timely manner and welcome the efforts being undertaken by the Chair to ensure predictability and sustainability in the Convention's finances.

In collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, India hosted an international conference on the CCW in New Delhi in December 2017. It was the only Conference focused on the CCW held in Asia in the past decade. The goal of the Conference was to further the understanding of the scope and content of the CCW, with the aim of facilitating increased adherence to the Convention, and to discuss current issues on its agenda. The Conference drew more than 83 participants from 24 States covering Asia, the Gulf region and East Africa, as well as experts from international organizations. A range of legal, military and humanitarian perspectives were deliberated on such topics as the impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war, and CCW work on improvised explosive devices, anti-vehicle mines, incendiary weapons and lethal autonomous weapons systems.

We are pleased that the 2018 session of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, under the chairmanship of India, was successful in adopting its reports by consensus, including the emerging commonalities, conclusions and recommendations. The possible guiding principles reiterate that international humanitarian law continues to apply fully to all weapons systems, including the potential development and use of lethal autonomous weapons systems.

We remain convinced that the CCW is the relevant forum to address this issue, not least because of the fine balance the Convention seeks to strike between humanitarian concerns and military necessities, but also because it provides a dynamic and adaptive platform, bringing together multiple stakeholders. Furthermore, we believe that addressing this issue within the framework of the CCW strengthens the Convention and underlines that it is capable of responding meaningfully to evolving new technologies applicable to armed conflict in the twenty-first century. We support the continuation of the GGE on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, adequate financial resources and the participation of all stakeholders for taking forward this important subject under the auspices of the CCW.

We welcome the adoption of the outcome document (A/CONF.192/2018/RC/3, annex) of the third 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, held in New York in June this year. India supports the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures and has submitted its national reports regularly.

India supports the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and is committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel mines. We support the approach enshrined in the amended Protocol II to the CCW, which addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States with long borders. India participated as an observer at the sixteenth Meeting of State Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, held in Vienna in 2017, and we look forward to the seventeenth, to be held in Geneva under the chairmanship of Afghanistan later this year. India's strong and effective national export controls governing the transfer of conventional weapons conform to the highest international standards, and we remain committed to preventing the illegal transfer of conventional weapons.

**Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique): Mozambique attaches great importance to conventional arms control as a fundamental pillar of the framework supporting the realization of the disarmament agenda with a view to securing and sustaining international peace and security, a principle that is firmly enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique.

As part of its commitment to general and universal disarmament, since 2001 Mozambique has been implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Accordingly, the Government of Mozambique has adopted a number of legal instruments and law-enforcement measures to better address the challenges arising from the proliferation of firearms, particularly in improving the management of their use and possession by civilians, and in the areas of record-keeping, marking, tracing, import, export and transit, as well as arms trade embargoes and related penalties. In that context, the Government of Mozambique also conducts regular public-awareness campaigns, seminars and workshops to explain and promote public debate with all relevant stakeholders.

We also recognize that acting in isolation and considering only the national dimension would dilute our efforts and mean that we would fail to deal effectively with the menace posed by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its facets. In an interconnected world, those responsibilities require action and partnerships among all States, regional and international organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. In that regard, and in order to further strengthen our national efforts to curb illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, Mozambique is part of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization, which coordinates all actions related to preventing and combating trafficking in small arms and light weapons in the Southern Africa Development Community subregion. Mozambique is also a State party to INTERPOL, which plays a crucial role in preventing and combating transnational organized crime, especially by strengthening regional and global cooperation, collaboration and information exchange in the areas of preventing and combating trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

Promoting peace and international security and contributing to multilateral debates and consensus-building on these matters are priorities in the Government of Mozambique's Five-Year Plan. In September 2015, as is well known, President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi formally declared Mozambique a State free of anti-personnel landmines in a practical demonstration of our commitment to their destruction and to refraining from using, stockpiling, producing or transferring anti-personnel mines, as envisaged by the Ottawa Convention. Mozambique is currently continuing to solidify its commitment to this Convention by focusing on providing assistance to the victims of landmines at the present time.

At the same time, as a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Mozambique is also implementing its provisions. A project is currently under way to ensure that all surplus projectiles and other obsolete munitions stockpiled in inadequate depots are disposed of so as to avoid uncontrolled or accidental explosions, which could pose a risk to populations and infrastructure. Our internal procedures for depositing the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which Mozambique has ratified, are under way. We believe firmly that this important step will contribute to the universalization of the ATT, complementing ongoing actions under other international instruments.

In Maputo in November of last year, as part of our contribution to conventional arms control, the Republic of Mozambique, in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Network on Explosive Weapons and Humanity and Inclusion, hosted an African regional meeting on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. The meeting offered a unique platform for the representatives of 19 African participating countries, a number of United Nations agencies and civil-society organizations and some survivors of explosive weapons in Africa to strengthen their engagement on this pressing humanitarian subject and political process. The Maputo meeting succeeded in bringing together a committed group of African States working to develop policies and analysis that can broaden international consensus on this important subject. We hope that the highly positive outcome of the Maputo regional conference and those of other similar regional gatherings planned on the issue will be encapsulated in the draft political declaration that is envisaged in order to further strengthen the disarmament architecture.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the full commitment of Mozambique to advancing the disarmament agenda.

**Ms. Sánchez Rodríguez** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We fully support the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/73/PV.16).

The upward trend in global military expenditures as hunger and poverty are increasing around the world is deplorable. Over the past year, global military expenditures reached \$1.7 trillion at the same time as 3.46 billion human beings live in poverty, 821 million suffer from chronic hunger, 758 million are illiterate and 844 million lack basic drinking-water supplies.

The leading producers have continued their exponential development of increasingly strategic, sophisticated and deadly conventional weapons, deepening the profound imbalance in the production, possession and trade of such weapons and undermining international peace, security and stability. Some producers of such weapons have continued to transfer them to unauthorized non-State actors at the same time as they seek to prevent developing countries, including through international regulations, from acquiring or

using certain conventional weapons, such as small arms and light weapons, for legitimate defence purposes.

Cuba rejects this double standard in disarmament and firmly defends the legitimate right of States to manufacture, import and possess conventional weapons to meet their legitimate security and self-defence needs, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We cannot support agreements on the control of arms, military equipment or dual-use technologies negotiated by groups of States of limited membership that impose selective and discriminatory restrictions on developing countries' access to materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

Cuba has serious concerns about the Arms Trade Treaty, which confers privileges on States exporting conventional weapons, to the detriment of the legitimate defence and security interests of all other States. The Treaty also establishes easily manipulated subjective parameters for the approval or denial of arms transfers to Member States and, quite unjustifiably, does not prohibit transfers to unauthorized non-State actors, the leading culprits in the illicit arms trade. Cuba reiterates that if we want to eradicate illicit trafficking, we must tackle the underlying socioeconomic factors that encourage it and provide international cooperation and assistance to States that request it, in accordance with their needs.

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, approved by the General Assembly, is the leading international reference point in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Cuba will continue to support the Programme of Action and to comply with its provisions and with the outcome documents of its review conferences.

We reaffirm that Cuba attaches high priority to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and fully complies with its provisions and the protocols annexed to the Convention, to which it is a State party.

In addition, Cuba advocates the adoption, as soon as possible, of a protocol to prohibit lethal autonomous weapons before they enter mass production. We must also establish regulations for the use of partially autonomous weapons, in particular military attack drones, which are responsible for high numbers of civilian casualties. Such weapons are totally incompatible with international humanitarian law.

We hope that the First Committee will give the necessary impetus to the Geneva negotiations of the Open-ended Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems.

**Mr. Moraru** (Republic of Moldova): The Republic of Moldova aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/73/PV.18) and would like to add some remarks from a national perspective.

To achieve genuine security at the international, regional and national levels, progress in disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should be complemented by the control and reduction of conventional arms, the proliferation, excessive accumulation and misuse of which are among the main security challenges of our time.

States Members of the United Nations have an obligation to do more to reduce the unregulated availability of conventional arms and small arms and light weapons in areas of conflict or potential conflict by ensuring strict transfer controls and the safe destruction of surplus weapons and helping affected Governments to deal with all aspects of those problems. The outcome of the third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (A/CONF.192/2018/RC/3, annex) requires further action to step up national and international action against illicit diversion and transfers.

The Republic of Moldova welcomes the new ideas and approaches put forward by the Secretary-General in his agenda for disarmament to improve action, including at the country level, to end illicit arms and ammunition transfers, particularly on the basis of a deeper understanding of the impact of the over-accumulation of arms in prolonging conflicts.

The illicit production, illegal transfer and excessive and destabilizing build-up of conventional arms in so-called grey zones, where Governments do not exercise complete control over parts of their territory, is a matter of great concern for many Member States, including my own. That phenomenon is characteristic of the eastern part of the Republic of Moldova, which is partially controlled by an unconstitutional militarized entity and where there are huge quantities of conventional armaments belonging chiefly to the Operational Group of Russian Forces, which is stationed there unlawfully. Although located on the sovereign territory of the

Republic of Moldova, those conventional arms and munitions are not under its jurisdiction or control.

Due to the complete lack of transparency of, and access to, Russian armaments, both the Moldovan Government and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Mission to Moldova, which does have a proper mandate, are effectively prevented from verifying existing stockpiles, monitoring their transfers or assessing the technical conditions of munitions, some of which may pose substantial environmental danger. The specific situation in the Transnistrian region represents the main obstacle preventing the Moldovan Government from fully implementing, on the entire territory of the country, the provisions of multilateral instruments, including the transparency provisions in the area of conventional arms, to which the Republic of Moldova is party.

The Government of the Republic of Moldova has repeatedly briefed the General Assembly and the high contracting parties of relevant conventions, particularly those banning certain categories of conventional weapons, about its concerns in that regard. The imperative need for adequate transparency concerning, and the destruction or removal of, conventional armaments belonging to the Operational Group of Russian Forces in Moldova and the unlawful paramilitary forces has also been emphasized.

We expect that the complete withdrawal of Russian military forces and armaments from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in accordance with the 1999 Istanbul Summit outcome document and as required by resolution 72/282, will contribute to the demilitarization of the Transnistrian region and to the subsequent extension in the eastern part of the country of the effects of conventional arms legal instruments.

The Republic of Moldova attaches great importance to conventional arms control and would like the existing regimes and treaties to be effective in confronting threats to international peace and security. Their rules and obligations must be respected and guidelines followed.

At the regional level, we note with deep concern that the selective implementation of the Vienna Document and the Open Skies Treaty and the non-implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe have eroded the positive contributions of those conventional arms control instruments. We call on all States parties, particularly the Russian Federation, to

fully adhere to all their arms-control commitments under those important European agreements.

In closing, I wish to stress that the Republic of Moldova fully associates itself with the joint statement on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas delivered yesterday by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Ireland (see A/C.1/73/PV.18).

**Ms. De Jongh** (Netherlands): The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/73/PV.18) and would like to make some remarks in its national capacity. In view of the time limit, I will deliver an abridged version of my statement, the full version of which will be uploaded to PaperSmart.

Disarmament and arms control are not a mere paper exercise. Those efforts save lives. They do so, among other things, by anchoring the use of conventional arms firmly within international humanitarian law, by allowing communities to return to their homes, by clearing areas of unexploded remnants and by ensuring that the global arms trade is conducted in a regulated and transparent manner. The diversity of those dynamics shows us that disarmament and arms control work across multiple sectors and are not matters of weapons alone.

The Netherlands is therefore pleased to see stronger linkages between conventional disarmament efforts and development agendas, including within the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament. A strong example in that regard has been set by the third 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, which produced an outcome document (A/CONF.192/2018/RC/3, annex) that acknowledges the integrated nature of the subject matter at hand by, among other things, referring to the contribution it makes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition to its contributions to the development agenda, conventional disarmament is also a humanitarian effort. We are reminded of that by the continued use of indiscriminate weapons and the growing number of civilians that fall victim to them in contexts of conflict and peace alike.

The threat of improvised explosive devices is of growing concern to the Netherlands because the growing use of such devices by terrorists continues to bring harm

to both civilians and armed forces, including our own personnel deployed on missions abroad. We therefore stress the importance of adopting strict measures, both national and global, to prevent the supply of weapons and explosive precursors to terrorists, in line with Security Council resolution 2370 (2017).

The Netherlands also remains concerned at the increased use of anti-personnel mines and mines of an improvised nature in urban areas, the continued use of cluster munitions and the growing use of explosive weapons in populated areas. We welcome the practical measures proposed in the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament for addressing those worrisome trends. The Netherlands will continue to do its part in that regard. Through our humanitarian mine-action programme, we aim to alleviate the suffering caused by these devices and strive to increase awareness of the associated risks among those affected. My country also believes that it is essential to ensure that the use of conventional weapons remains firmly anchored within international humanitarian law. Compliance with its principles is crucial. In this regard, I reiterate that the Netherlands strongly condemns any use of cluster munitions by any actor.

We welcome the progress made in the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems. It provides a good basis for further structured discussion on this multifaceted and complex topic. Increased autonomy in weapons systems may bring humanitarian benefits, but there are also risks. The Netherlands therefore remains committed to further increasing our shared understanding in order to address those risks and will continue to participate actively in the discussions.

The rapid technological advance and increased availability and use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) requires additional international awareness, which should be based on a thorough and inclusive discussion of the possible future risks as well as positive social and civil uses of such technologies. Any use of armed UAVs should be firmly anchored within international law and sufficient measures should be in place to prevent criminal and terrorist actors from acquiring and using these weapon systems.

The Netherlands is committed to ensuring that the global arms trade is conducted in a regulated and transparent manner. Since its entry into force, the Arms Trade Treaty has established an international

norm against irresponsible transfers of arms. The Netherlands believes that the focus in the next few years should remain on the effective implementation and universalization of the Treaty. As a member of the Management Committee, the Netherlands remains fully committed to those goals as well as to addressing organizational challenges, including financial liquidity, unpaid contributions and reporting obligations. We urge all States to meet their financial obligations to this Treaty and other conventions on time and in full. We also continue to stress the importance of transparency and reporting. In that regard, we especially want to emphasize the continued relevance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We strongly encourage States to keep using this valuable instrument in particular and to fulfil their reporting obligations generally.

**The Chair:** We have heard from the last speaker on the "Conventional weapons" cluster for this meeting. In accordance with its earlier decision, the Committee will now take up the cluster on "Other disarmament measures and international security".

I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/73/L.11, A/C.1/73/L.12, A/C.1/73/L.13 and A/C.1/73/L.15.

**Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Indonesia): I am very pleased to be speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

The Movement would like to highlight the important socioeconomic opportunities that information and communication technologies provide, particularly for developing countries, and underscores the importance of preventing any discriminatory practices and policies that could hinder developing countries' access to the benefits of such technologies. NAM has noted with concern the cases that have occurred of the illegal use of new information and communication technologies, including social networks, to the detriment of member States of the Movement, and we firmly repudiate such violations.

As the use of information and communication technologies has the potential to endanger international peace and security, countering such emerging security challenges and reducing the risks they pose is essential. The development of a legal framework to address these issues should be pursued under the auspices of the United Nations with the active and equal participation of all States. The Movement stresses the importance

of ensuring that the use of such technologies is fully in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and, especially, the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, along with the internationally recognized rules of peaceful coexistence among States. The Movement stresses the central role of the United Nations regarding developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, and emphasizes the importance of continuing discussion on this matter at the United Nations in order to ensure the transparent and inclusive participation of all States Members of the United Nations on an equal footing, including in considering the establishment of an open-ended working group of the General Assembly.

The Movement also emphasizes the importance of the observance of environmental norms in the preparation and implementation of disarmament and arms-limitation agreements. Furthermore, we reaffirm that international disarmament forums should take full account of the relevant environmental norms in negotiating treaties and agreements on disarmament and arms limitation, and that all States should contribute fully through their actions to ensuring compliance with those norms in implementing treaties and conventions to which they are party.

The draft resolutions under this cluster that I am introducing on behalf of the Movement, for which it would welcome support from all Member States, are, first, draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.11, "Relationship between disarmament and development"; secondly, draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.12, "Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium"; thirdly, draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.13, "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control"; and lastly, draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.15, "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation".

**Mr. Krutskikh** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's world is totally dependent on information and communications technologies (ICT), and solving the many problems related to their unlawful application is impossible for any one country alone. The situation in the global digital environment is getting worse every day and it has become a tool in the hands of criminals, hackers and terrorist groups and sometimes even individual States, all of which are increasingly

exploiting these technologies for political purposes in order to undermine sovereignty and national security, interfere in the internal affairs of other States and violate human rights.

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that a number of countries are literally vaunting their build-up of their cyberpotential, which by its nature creates opportunities to launch a first cyberattack. Against that backdrop, the rest of the members of the international community, realizing their vulnerability, are compelled to spend funds not on development but on defence mechanisms against potential cyberwarfare. In the circumstances, after the failure in 2017 of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security at its fifth session, no adequate negotiation mechanism on these issues remains. We believe that the United Nations must maintain its leading role in addressing issues related to the provision of information security.

In the twentieth year of the discussions on this topic, Russia proposes that the negotiation process should be raised to a new level. We are submitting for the General Assembly's consideration at its seventy-third session a draft resolution that would have genuine added value.

First, in order to counterbalance the fact that the resolution of ICT issues has tipped sharply in favour of those whom one might call the rich and famous, we believe that the process should be truly democratic, inclusive and transparent. It is essential to ensure the direct involvement of all interested States, regardless of their level of technological development. That will enable them to fully realize their national sovereignty and will lay the foundations for a just world order in the digital arena that upholds the interests of all States without exception. It means establishing an open-ended United Nations specialized working group with a mandate to consider three very important topics as matters of priority — standards for States' responsible conduct, the application of international law to cyberspace, and cooperation and capacity-building in cybersecurity for developing countries. An open-ended working group would ensure the participation of all interested States in the negotiation process on the subject, enable all countries to contribute to the discussion of the most urgent aspects of the issue and participate in the relevant decisions. We firmly believe that it is important to take account of the views of every member of the international community in the process.

Secondly, our draft resolution (A/C.1/73/L.27) contains an initial outline of the basic norms for responsible State behaviour in cyberspace. They are like the rules of the road, without which it is impossible to ensure order in the digital realm. Our proposed rules provide for the use of ICT for exclusively peaceful purposes and seek to guide the efforts of the international community to prevent conflicts in the information environment by observing the principles of State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, preventing an increase in the digital divide among them and refraining from using proxies to execute harmful applications of ICT. It is also extremely important that any accusations made about such activities must be founded in fact, not be provocative in nature and, most importantly, not be a pretext for using force against States.

We thank those States that have already become sponsors of our text and hope that it will have broad support from the rest. It is important to understand that the future of every member of the international community depends on the result of the vote on this draft resolution. In conclusion, therefore, I would like to leave the Committee with a slogan: vote or lose. On that optimistic note, I thank the Committee for its attention.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). I will make a few points in my statement with a focus on cybersecurity.

First, ASEAN shares a common vision for a peaceful, secure and resilient cyberspace that can serve as an enabler of economic progress, enhanced regional connectivity and better standards of living. While rapid advances in science and technology have presented us with tremendous opportunities, the more digitized and connected our societies, the more important it is to ensure that cyberspace is secure.

Secondly, ASEAN recognizes the urgency and sophistication of the evolving and transboundary cyberthreats facing the region, especially amid widespread economic digitization. Since no one Government has all the answers for dealing with cyberthreats, international and regional cooperation are paramount, and ASEAN has therefore taken a series of concrete practical measures to address our challenges. Specifically, at the thirty-second ASEAN Summit, in Singapore, our leaders affirmed ASEAN's

collective determination to build closer cooperation and coordination on cybersecurity policy development as well as capacity-building initiatives, including through the interim, non-formal ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity and the ASEAN-Japan cybersecurity capacity-building centre. In a concrete follow-up to the ASEAN leaders' statement on cybersecurity cooperation, ASEAN recently agreed on the need for a formal ASEAN cybersecurity mechanism to coordinate regional cybersecurity efforts. ASEAN has been guided in its use of information and communications technology (ICT) by the 2015 report of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, including the 11 voluntary, non-binding norms, rules and principles of responsible State behaviour.

Thirdly, ASEAN reaffirms its view that the United Nations must continue to play a key role in discussions on cybersecurity. In that regard, we support the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, which affirms his commitment to fostering a culture of accountability and adherence to norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, and to taking steps to encourage responsible innovation by industry engineers and scientists. ASEAN also welcomes contributions to capacity-building in the region, and we are pleased that the plan of action to implement the joint declaration on the comprehensive partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations highlights the importance of enhancing training and support in cybersecurity cooperation. In conclusion, ASEAN reaffirms the importance of a rules-based cyberspace as a key enabler of economic progress. We will continue to deepen our cooperation internationally and regionally to preserve a peaceful, secure and resilient cyberspace.

I should now like to make a few comments in my national capacity as representative of Singapore. I want to point out that cybersecurity has been one of Singapore's key priorities during its chairmanship of ASEAN in 2018, and we are pleased to have made significant inroads during the course of the year. Our work on cybersecurity will continue, and we in Singapore recognize that capacity-building is one of the essential pillars of stability in cyberspace, alongside voluntary, non-binding norms for responsible State behaviour in cyberspace and practical confidence-building measures. In order to strengthen ASEAN's cyberstrategy development, legislative and research

capabilities, Singapore will establish an ASEAN-Singapore cybersecurity centre of excellence in 2019 as an extension of the ASEAN cybercapacity programme.

Singapore has also contributed to facilitating inclusive conversations on key issues such as norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, cybersecurity capacity-building and confidence-building. We were very pleased that Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, was able to participate in the third Singapore International Cyber Week, a gathering of global policymakers, thought leaders and industry experts. We worked closely with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to develop a flagship online training course on the use of ICTs, and we will be launching a Singapore-United Nations cyber programme next year to build awareness of cyber norms and cyber-scenario policy planning in ASEAN member States.

Singapore strongly believes that international cooperation is essential if we are to deal effectively with cyber threats. We have taken note of the draft resolutions put forward under this cluster and have actively participated in the informal consultations held in the past few weeks. We are disappointed that we have not yet seen convergence on a single consensus draft resolution charting the way forward on this important subject. If consensus proves elusive on such a draft resolution, I do not see how we can expect to reach consensus on a complex issue that requires technical proficiency, political will and, most importantly, a willingness to compromise. We reiterate our fundamental position that the United Nations has a crucial role to play in addressing this global threat and, if established, an open-ended working group and a group of governmental experts must find ways to work in a complementary manner. We encourage all interested parties to continue engaging in dialogue to find consensus on the way forward at the United Nations.

**Mr. Webson** (Antigua and Barbuda): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). My remarks will focus on the areas of great importance to our region.

First, we affirm that disarmament is fundamentally about ensuring that we are all living in a safe and secure world. CARICOM is of the firm view that the continued consideration of gender perspectives can advance the achievement of disarmament goals in that context, moving away from the traditional perspective to one

that embraces a multidimensional and humanitarian approach with the aim that no woman, man, boy or girl will be left behind.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-up resolutions remain central to those deliberations and our thinking against that backdrop, as they reaffirm the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian responses and post-conflict reconstruction, and also stress the importance of the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

We are proud to highlight in that vein that our fellow Caribbean Member State of Trinidad and Tobago will introduce a draft resolution entitled "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control" (A/C.1/73/L.21) in the First Committee at the current session. Since that draft resolution remains the only General Assembly resolution that considers disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control through the gender perspective, we once again urge all Member States to fully support it.

CARICOM has articulated its support for the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons as the primary international instrument for the control of small arms and light weapons. We welcome the outcome document (A/CONF.192/2018/RC/3, annex) of the recently concluded 2018 Review Conference, in particular its conclusion on ammunition and its further incorporation of the problem of armed violence.

We also welcome the fact that States undertook at that Conference to ensure the participation of women in disarmament processes under the Programme of Action and encouraged the collection of disaggregated data on gender and illicit small arms and light weapons. That is particularly relevant and important to CARICOM member States as we encounter the varying impacts of illicit small arms and light weapons on women, men, boys and girls in our communities.

While the CARICOM region is not affected by armed conflict, we face tremendous challenges relating to armed violence in our countries. Approximately 70 per cent of homicides within the region involve the use of firearms. As a result, significant resources are diverted from development and by extension from social development goals. Security costs can cause delays in social education and infrastructure programmes and

create an untenable burden for countries that are already heavily indebted and burdened by natural disasters.

The impacts of armed conflict on health are by no means limited to death as a result of injuries sustained in direct conflict. The World Health Organization has noted that the increased mortality rates of people living in violent communities are typically attributable to injuries, decreased access to food leading to poor nutrition, increased risk of communicable diseases, diminished access to health services, reduced public health services and programmes, poor environmental conditions and psychological stress.

For CARICOM, the problem of illegal weapons is closely linked to transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and money laundering. Our region is engaged in efforts to combat those illicit and criminal activities. Those destructive elements are recognized as having negative impacts on our societies. CARICOM welcomes the introduction by Indonesia, on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, of draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.11, which aims to reduce the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries. The Non-Aligned Movement urges the international community very year to devote increased resources to development.

The CARICOM Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by our Heads of Government at their meeting held in Port-au-Prince in February. The Strategy was created out of the realization that terrorism and related violent extremism pose a direct threat to our development. The CARICOM vision of integrated, inclusive, secure and prosperous economies is threatened by such acts.

In conclusion, CARICOM will continue to work alongside Member States to ensure that disarmament and arms control issues are addressed in the broader context of humanitarian and development issues, in the recognition that our subregion suffers not necessarily from conflict but from violence.

**Mr. Hassan** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to underscore the support of the League of Arab States for the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Arab League stresses that agreed multilateral agreements made in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations are the only sustainable means of

dealing with issues of disarmament and international security. We call on all Member States to renew and implement their individual and collective commitments to multilateral cooperation. We further express our belief in the role of the United Nations in disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Arab League expresses its concern about the increase of global military expenditures. A large part of those expenditures could be used to strengthen sustainable development and eliminate poverty around the world, particularly in developing countries, including Arab countries. We stress the importance of continuing to implement the Programme of Action adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, as well as following up on the implications of increasing military expenditures vis a vis the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The ongoing acquisition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the continuous modernization of nuclear arsenals, are among the gravest threats to international peace and security and to sustainable development. The Arab League therefore stresses that international disarmament forums should take relevant environmental considerations into consideration when negotiating disarmament and arms-control treaties and conventions. All States must contribute to ensuring compliance with environmental criteria in implementing those treaties and conventions.

The Arab League expresses its concern regarding the use of information and communications technology for destructive activities that undermine international peace and security. We emphasize that the United Nations must continue to develop rules and norms governing the responsible behaviour of States in that vital field, as well as relevant controls that keep pace with its rapid developments.

The Arab League stresses the need for continuing international cooperation and preserving the central role of the United Nations in such efforts. We call for the achievement of concrete progress within the United Nations in addressing threats related to increased dependence on developing lethal autonomous weapons and applications of artificial intelligence in armaments in a way that undermines human responsibility for the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of such weapons.

**Mr. Davison** (Canada): I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of Australia, Chile, Estonia, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and my own country, Canada.

Cyberspace is a source of enormous economic, political and social benefits for all persons and States when it is accessible, open, interoperable, reliable and secure, and when it is not used in ways that restrict human rights and freedoms or the free flow of information. We all have a shared responsibility and mutual interest in improving our collective cybersecurity to achieve those benefits. We are committed to promoting stability in cyberspace based on the application of existing international law, as well as agreed voluntary norms of responsible State behaviour and confidence-building measures supported by coordinated and targeted capacity-building programmes.

Yet, malicious cyberattacks, particularly by States, are nonetheless increasing in number and severity. Despite the international legal framework governing State behaviour in cyberspace, many States, either directly or through proxies and non-State actors, undertake malicious cyberactivity directed at the essential systems, infrastructure and democratic processes of other States. Such behaviour threatens international peace and security, undermines the rules-based international order on which we all rely for our security and imperils the benefits that arise from the development of cyberspace.

Civil society actors, human rights defenders and ordinary citizens are also being targeted by those same and other States in an effort to silence opposition and stifle criticism. States undertaking such acts do so with flagrant disdain for their obligations and the norms of appropriate behaviour, as well as reckless disregard for the consequences. Cyberspace is not a lawless realm, nor is it ungoverned, as some would have us believe. International law applies to the actions of States in cyberspace as it applies in other realms of State behaviour. All States have responsibilities and obligations online just as they do offline.

That is not just our position; it is an international consensus that has been validated by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security in 2013 and endorsed by the General Assembly in 2015. In addition, consecutive GGEs in 2013 and

2015 produced a number of consensus-based norms for State behaviour in cyberspace that are being used as the basis for further cooperation around the globe. Cybersecurity confidence-building measures have also been developed by several regional organizations and have led to greater predictability and stability in cyberspace.

That consensus is the logical starting point for any new initiative. We need to build on, not undermine, what we have already achieved through the work of experts from a broad range of States and the endorsement of the General Assembly. We call on those who are committed to the security and stability of cyberspace to continue to support efforts at the United Nations and elsewhere to promote the applicability of existing international law to State cyberactivities.

It is essential that we continue the work done by previous GGEs to further strengthen and deepen this consensus. In order to make progress, we must find a way to strengthen an intersessional consultative mechanism to allow all United Nations Member States to engage in the process. Appropriate ways to consult other stakeholders should also be explored. It is also essential that the GGE process find the right balance between being transparent and inclusive while remaining nimble enough to deliver a consensus outcome in a reasonable time frame. It should be expert-led, operate on the basis of consensus and focus on the critical issue at hand — namely, the risks to international security that arise from State behaviour in cyberspace.

Each and every one of us must do our part to address threats to international peace and security in cyberspace. We must deepen our commitment to the applicability of international law, implement the already agreed voluntary norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace during peacetime and reinforce our collective commitment to conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Examples of Governments publicly setting out their views on how international law applies in cyberspace are to be welcomed.

We must continue to develop and implement confidence-building measures to limit the risk of conflict due to misunderstanding or miscalculation. We welcome the progress achieved in that regard within the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum. We must

also increase international cooperation on cybersecurity and enhance capacity-building efforts to strengthen the ability of all States to secure their infrastructure and build their resilience against cyberthreats.

At the same time, we emphasize that cyberthreats should not be used to legitimize Internet controls that would restrict human rights and freedoms or hinder the free flow of information. Human rights and security are mutually reinforcing online just as they are offline.

The risks to international peace and security posed by threats to cyberspace or serious and far-reaching. We need to take a collective, global approach in responding to them. Consensus within the First Committee on the creation of a single new group of governmental experts on cybersecurity, which would include time for consultation with all States and stakeholders, would make a tangible contribution to that collective effort.

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

**Ms. Vlădulescu** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Albania, Georgia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The EU reiterates its concern at the increased ability and willingness of some States and non-State actors to pursue their objectives by undertaking malicious cyberactivities that threaten international peace and security. The EU is gravely concerned in that connection at the attempt by the Russian military intelligence service to undermine the integrity of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), as reported by the Netherlands, which hosts the organization. That aggressive cyberoperation demonstrates grave contempt for the solemn purpose of the OPCW, which works to eradicate chemical weapons worldwide, notably under a United Nations mandate.

The EU and its member States deplore such hostile operations, which undermine international law and international institutions. We reaffirm our commitment to upholding the rules-based international system and to defending international institutions from those that seek to do them harm by improving and strengthening stability in cyberspace, including through the United Nations. On 18 October, the European Council called for measures to build strong cybersecurity in the European

Union. EU leaders referred in particular to restrictive measures for responding to and deterring cyberattacks.

The EU and its member States promote the establishment of a strategic framework for conflict prevention, cooperation and stability in cyberspace that is based on the application of existing international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations in its entirety; the development and implementation of universal norms of responsible State behaviour; and regional confidence-building measures among States.

The EU recognizes the role of the United Nations in further developing norms for responsible State behaviour in cyberspace. The EU emphasizes that consecutive United Nations Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, over the years, have reached consensus on a number of measures that contribute to greater cyberstability, including measures concerning the norms, rules or principles of the responsible behaviour of States, the promotion of confidence-building measures, capacity-building and the application of international law in cyberspace. We should continue to build on such work.

With regard to the application of international law, the EU recalls that international law, in particular the United Nations Charter, is applicable and essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting an open, secure, peaceful and accessible information and communications technology (ICT) environment.

The EU recalls that the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) of 2013 (A/68/98) and 2015 (A/70/174), which the General Assembly has repeatedly endorsed, contain important recommendations that States should fully implement, including the 11 recommendations on voluntary, non-binding norms, rules or principles of responsible behaviour of States listed in paragraph 13 of the 2015 GGE report.

We note that the 2015 GGE report also stresses that States should guarantee full respect for human rights, including the rights to privacy and freedom of expression. The EU also emphasizes international principles deriving from the Charter which, inter alia, apply to States' use of ICT.

The EU supports and encourages the development of regional confidence-building measures, which are an essential element to increase cooperation

and transparency and reduce the risk of conflict. Implementing cybersecurity confidence-building measures in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Organization of American States and other regional settings will increase the predictability of State behaviour and further contribute to stabilizing cyberspace.

In order to build trust and strengthen cooperation among States and implement cybernorms, the EU acknowledges the role of capacity-building and stands ready to continue assistance to third countries in responding to cyberthreats and increasing law enforcement capabilities to investigate and prosecute cybercrime. The EU considers it essential to advance cybersecurity capacity-building through the development of appropriate domestic policies and legislation, the protection of infrastructure and the provision of training, as well as by upholding the rule of law in cyberspace.

The EU also recognizes that the interconnected and complex nature of cyberspace requires joint efforts by Governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, users and academia to address the challenges faced and calls on those stakeholders to recognize and accept their specific responsibilities to maintain an open, free, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful cyberspace.

The EU and its member States reaffirm their commitment to improving and strengthening stability in cyberspace. We should all recognize the achievements of the previous United Nations GGEs, which provide a basis to continue work. We call on the Secretary-General to continue to study and implement the measures to promote stability and security in cyberspace and convene a new Group of Governmental Experts in 2019 with a view to providing a consensus report to the General Assembly.

To be successful, the GGE should remain effective and dynamic and capable of delivering detailed results. Its mandate should be focused and guided by the cumulative conclusions agreed in previous GGE reports, including the applicability of existing international law

in cyberspace and the 11 norms of responsible State behaviour listed in the 2015 GGE report.

The EU believes that the States Members of the United Nations, in particular future GGE members, should submit national contributions on the subject of how international law applies to the use of ICT by States, which could be annexed to the GGE's report. The EU also considers that consultations with the States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders is an important element of the mandate. The GGE should hold regular, open-ended, intersessional consultations with the wider United Nations membership and interested stakeholders.

In conclusion, the EU will prioritize a resolution that reaffirms the consensus views articulated in previous reports of Groups of Governmental Experts, including the norms, rules or principles of responsible behaviour of States, confidence-building measures, international law and capacity-building and the importance of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in cyberspace.

We note that draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.37, co-sponsored by all EU member States, is based on previous First Committee resolutions that usually enjoy consensus. We note with regret that the traditional sponsor of the ICT resolution, the Russian Federation, has chosen to pursue a different course of action this year.

In particular, we would like to point out that operative paragraph 1 of the current ICT draft resolution (A/C.1/73/L.27/Rev.1) offers a selective list of the recommendations of previous United Nations GGE reports and norms established by a regional organization. Imposing such a list on the States Members of the United Nations, through a General Assembly resolution, would set an unwelcome precedent for cybersecurity and other areas of future work. It would undermine the consensus-based recommendations of previous GGEs and prejudge the outcome of any consultative process by taking an approach that is neither inclusive nor open-ended.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*