



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

## First Committee

**13<sup>th</sup>** meeting

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New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Pieris .....(Sri Lanka)

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

### Agenda items 90 to 108 (continued)

#### Thematic discussions on specific subjects and the introduction and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items

**The Chair:** The Committee will now continue its thematic discussion under the cluster “Nuclear weapons”.

Delegations wishing to exercise their right of reply will be able to do so once the Committee exhausts the list of speakers for the cluster. Time permitting, the Committee will begin its consideration this morning of the cluster “Other weapons of mass destruction”.

Before I open the floor, I would like to remind all delegations that the time limit for statements during the thematic segment is five minutes when speaking in their national capacity and seven minutes for statements on behalf of several delegations. I plead with one and all keep to those time limits. We are trying very hard to economize on time, as we are running out of it.

**Mr. Omarov** (Kazakhstan): The current pandemic has cruelly demonstrated the fragility of humanity. Yet, there is another threat — that of nuclear weapons — which is potentially more deadly than the coronavirus disease and has persisted, without abating, since 1945.

The present modernization of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems is dangerous and alarming. Equally disturbing is the secrecy with which nuclear-

weapon States surround their nuclear arsenals. Atomic weapons are also shifting from global- to regional-deterrence scenarios, making any military confrontation between State actors hazardous and less predictable. Reliance on nuclear arsenals can never ensure strategic security, but only prompt asymmetric and devastating responses, thus crossing lines of no return.

We should also be mindful of the risk of cyberattacks against nuclear command, control and communication systems, as well as the risk of such weapons falling into the hands of terrorists.

Using just one or two of the thousands of nuclear warheads existing today would be enough to cause irreparable damage to the Earth’s ecosystem. Kazakhstan stresses that the promotion of confidence-building measures among Member States is imperative. In that regard, I would like to recall our proposals for concrete steps to advance global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

First, it is necessary to strengthen, empower and consolidate existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, with an aim to facilitating efforts to establish new ones, in particular in the Middle East, North-East Asia, Europe and other parts of the world, similar to what exists in the southern hemisphere and in the northern hemisphere, in Central Asia.

Secondly, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) entered into force in January 2021. Supported by 122 United Nations Member States, it strengthens our collective hope for a world free of nuclear

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weapons. We firmly believe that this milestone Treaty reinforces Kazakhstan's earlier initiative to achieve Global Zero by the Organization's centennial, in 2045. It is a goal worth striving for that is not beyond our reach. We commend the Austrian presidency for its tremendous efforts to ensure a successful first meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, and we look forward to working with Mexico ahead of the second meeting next year.

Kazakhstan is proud to have been nominated for the presidency of the third Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW. As a country that has suffered directly from the tragic consequences of nuclear testing, we are honoured to co-chair, jointly with Kiribati and in the framework of the TPNW process, the informal intersessional working group on victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation and assistance. Our country is fully open to working closely with interested States, experts and civil society partners, as well as with other relevant stakeholders on those issues, especially the countries that have been affected by nuclear tests.

We are equally committed to advancing our joint objectives under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The failure of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty to reach a consensus-based outcome does not doom the Treaty as a whole. While the level of ambition set in the draft final document was very modest, particularly under the disarmament pillar, we still believe that the proposed elements provide a workable basis for future work. In that regard, we reiterate our commitment to engaging actively with all interested parties during the next review cycle. Kazakhstan also remains an active member of the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament, which produced many tangible proposals that were well received at the tenth Review Conference.

Last, but not least, we must also end nuclear testing once and for all by finally bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Kazakhstan joins an overwhelming majority of Member States in urging the remaining annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty immediately. We owe that collective action to the millions of victims of nuclear testing and future generations.

Let us not forget the horrific consequences of the use of nuclear weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the haunting tragedies of several

decades of nuclear testing in Kazakhstan, the South Pacific, North Africa, North America and other regions. Humankind cannot go on living in the dark shadow of nuclear warfare. It is time we overcome the threat of nuclear tests and weapons, as well as other destructive forces, and seek new horizons of peace, progress and prosperity for all.

**Ms. Alvarado** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we approached the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), our expectations grew for tangible progress on its three pillars and the existing commitments and obligations of 1995, 2000 and 2010. But less than two months ago, we witnessed only the prevalence of military and strategic security schemes of nuclear-weapon States, nuclear-weapon-possessing States and States under the nuclear umbrella.

The issue of global security cannot be the reason for the lack of progress and even setbacks in disarmament and non-proliferation. On the contrary, it should serve, today more than ever, to reaffirm the need for urgent action to ensure the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It is unfortunate that whenever we face the greatest difficulties and challenges in the international sphere, as has been the case recently, we hear increasingly frequent narratives of a nuclear threat, in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and international humanitarian law.

We mentioned this in the general debate (see A/C.1/77/PV.5), but I think it is important that we take every opportunity to recall that the only guarantee of avoiding the catastrophic humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. As long as they continue to exist, so too will strategic security theories and doctrines of nuclear deterrence, putting international peace and security at constant risk.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is the right way forward to promote the global goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We have come together and adopted a Plan of Action that will facilitate the effective and timely implementation of the TPNW, in complementarity with the NPT, in particular by elaborating the obligations under its article VI and by establishing the highest legally binding multilateral requirements for compliance with nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

Another key instrument for the process of nuclear disarmament is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-

Ban Treaty. We call for its universal ratification, in particular by those nuclear-weapon States listed in annex 2 responsible for its entry into force.

As a country, we reiterate our strong condemnation of any nuclear test. Banning and definitively eliminating nuclear tests is crucial to prevent horizontal and vertical nuclear proliferation. Treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones are also an essential part of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

As part of the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone, Peru looks forward to the consolidation of such zones around the world and considers it essential to make efforts and take all necessary action in order to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Along with our obligations to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Peru defends the right of all States to benefit, without discrimination, from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Cooperation to facilitate the exchange of material equipment and scientific and technological information should be developed taking into account the needs of developing countries. The application of nuclear science and technologies in areas of particular relevance, such as human health, food security and environmental protection, contributes directly to the social and economic development of our peoples.

With the latent threat of nuclear weapons, we are living in a time of increasing geopolitical fragmentation, mistrust and direct aggression. But we also have the necessary architecture to meet our international commitments and the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Through dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation, we will be able to defuse tensions, bridge divisions and reach the consensus that will enable us to achieve our common goal of peace and security.

**Ms. Stoeva** (Bulgaria): Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/77/PV.10). I would like to add a few points in my national capacity.

We are meeting in difficult circumstances. The nuclear threat is at its highest level since the Cold War. The Russian Federation's illegal war against Ukraine, its irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and its blatant violation of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances seriously undermine all efforts made since

the end of the Cold War to reduce nuclear arsenals. We decisively condemn that dangerous escalation, and we call upon Russian Federation to refrain from making nuclear threats.

The need for urgent progress on nuclear disarmament is more than evident. Bulgaria reiterates its commitment to the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that nuclear disarmament should be effective, verifiable and irreversible and that it can be attained only in the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely its article VI, and through a progressive, step-by-step approach.

We deeply regret the fact that the Russian Federation blocked the adoption of the outcome document of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Although far from perfect, the draft outcome document did present many points of convergence that need to be brought forward. The NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and a framework for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It is now more critical than ever that we focus our efforts on ensuring progress in the implementation of the previous commitments of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences and on seeking new pathways towards reaffirming and strengthening the Treaty's regime during the next review cycle.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is one of the building blocks in the construction of a world without nuclear weapons. More than 25 years after its opening for signature, the efforts of the international community are still required for its entry into force. Once in force, the CTBT will provide a legally binding global ban on nuclear explosions of any kind. We therefore call upon all States, particularly the remaining annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay.

The commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, within the Conference on Disarmament and in accordance with the Shannon mandate, remains a top priority in the nuclear disarmament field. Pending the entry into force of a fissile material cut-off treaty, all States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The development of effective multilateral nuclear-disarmament verification is yet another pragmatic building block that directly contributes to the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Bulgaria supports the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification as a valuable contribution to the multilateral efforts on nuclear disarmament, and we look forward to the outcome of its important deliberations.

Bulgaria considers the safety and security of nuclear facilities a major factor in the development of nuclear energy. As a newly elected member to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), we will spare no effort in countering global non-proliferation challenges and threats to nuclear security and safety. We strongly condemn the illegal seizure by the Russian Federation of the Chornobyl and Zaporizhzhya nuclear power facilities, which puts at risk their safety and security. We call for the full implementation of the IAEA Director General's seven pillars for ensuring safety and security during an armed conflict. We once again reiterate that the only sustainable guarantee for the safety and security of Ukrainian nuclear facilities is the immediate and unconditional withdrawal by the Russian Federation of all its troops and military equipment from Ukraine's territory, within its internationally recognized borders.

**Mr. Soares Damico (Brazil):** Rather than reiterate our talking points on the different themes under the cluster "Nuclear weapons", my delegation senses that the seriousness of the international situation demands a different approach.

In the past two weeks, delegations presented their priorities and expectations for this session of the First Committee. We now have the opportunity to deepen discussions and seek the path of convergence lost along the way. In order to trace such a road map, we need to engage in a double exercise: first, to understand where we stand; and secondly, to define what must urgently be done.

We meet at unprecedented times. Nuclear arsenals have reversed their declining trend. Almost all nuclear Powers are modernizing their weapons, and some appear to be bent on increasing their arsenals. Critical bilateral agreements supporting the disarmament machinery were dismantled, while some were allowed to expire or are nearing their expiration date without talk of a possible replacement. And — what was unthinkable a

few years ago — nuclear threats and aggressive rhetoric were normalized. Finally, on the diplomatic front, for the first time, consecutive review conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the centrepiece of the international regime of disarmament and non-proliferation, failed to reach a consensus outcome.

We might be very close to the fraying of the international security context. If we are not able to find common ground on the more pressing and strategic issues of weapons of mass destruction, how can we forge consensus on procedural and substantive issues under the disarmament agenda? The tendency of the present session of the First Committee is to follow a familiar pattern of confrontation. We are poised to reach yet another record high number of draft resolutions that require a vote.

We are no strangers to failed NPT Review Conferences. Before 2022, the problem was limited to disagreements over the level of ambition regarding disarmament. Despite occasional acrimony, nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States often agreed to disagree on how best to uphold the Treaty's stated objectives. On the one hand, non-nuclear-weapon States wanted more disarmament, more commitments, more transparency, more accountability and less risk. As good international citizens, they kept their side of the bargain, submitting themselves to the international community's scrutiny of their non-proliferation obligations. On the other, the implementation of the disarmament obligations and commitments of nuclear-weapon States was subject to their perception of their security needs. We are under no illusions — it is certainly not fair, but it is what it is. This dynamic prevailed from the first to the ninth Review Conference.

Now, at the tenth Review Conference, the consensus among nuclear-weapon States on the pre-eminence of non-proliferation has eroded. That is a dangerous departure from the norm. Even at the height of the Cold War, the two blocs agreed that this fundamental threat to international security was to be kept at bay. Security perceptions or misperceptions of the nuclear-weapon States are taking precedence not only over disarmament but over the entire regime.

Non-nuclear-weapon States alone cannot bear the brunt of sustaining the regime. At the tenth NPT Review Conference, we accepted a severe curtailment of our ambition regarding disarmament as a bitter but



necessary price to pay in order to keep the regime going. It fell short. The draft outcome document we had before us at the end of the Conference cannot and should not therefore be misconstrued as the golden standard of international consensus on disarmament. It was a pragmatic, but, alas, futile effort by responsible stakeholders. As we begin a new review cycle of the NPT, those efforts must start anew.

In conclusion, for next steps, we believe that the shortening of the NPT review cycle was the right choice. Inaction was not an option. But rolling up our sleeves is not enough. Clear-sightedness as to the way ahead is necessary. Good winds are of no use if we do not know our bearing.

Without making moral equivalences, we hold that the divided house of nuclear-weapon States needs urgent mending. Restraint and leadership are required. Bad examples are to be avoided. The current insecurity environment is not to be treated as a *deus ex machina* that justifies indefinite paralysis. Nuclear-weapon States are equipped with agency and ought to act responsibly. One hundred seconds to midnight is, indeed, a very short time.

**Mr. Kim Sunghoon** (Republic of Korea): We are currently facing a complicated security environment and diverse challenges, from the Russian Federation's nuclear threat during its war of aggression on Ukraine to the continued provocation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its nuclear and missiles programmes and the stalemate of the negotiations on the resumption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the prospect is bleak. The joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races, in January, faded amid the subsequent war.

With that backdrop, the failure to adopt the consensus report at the long-awaited tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) due to the objection of one country came as a huge disappointment. The NPT nevertheless remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. It is our shared obligation to enhance the credibility and relevance of the regime in the run-up to the next review cycle.

It is noteworthy that the draft final document reflected broad support for key elements of the three pillars. The draft also recognized the importance of diverse voices and the commitment to empower and

enable youth participation. We also note that, in the joint statement, 79 State Parties together expressed deep concern over the continued violations of relevant Security Council resolutions through the sustained development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear and missile programmes. Moreover, in one voice, 191 NPT Member States condemned six nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and called on it to take concrete measures to abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in the draft final document of the NPT Review Conference. As a strong supporter of the NPT regime and as a State in full compliance with the NPT, the Republic of Korea will further strengthen its commitment to the NPT to promote all three pillars of the Treaty during this review cycle, while preparing for the next Review Conference, to be held in 2026.

It is deplorable that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to launch various types of ballistic missiles while threatening the use of tactical nuclear weapons. On top of its nuclear blackmail and missile provocations, it is now assessed to be ready for yet another nuclear test, which would be its seventh. Should the international community fail to rein in Pyongyang's nuclear ambition, the crack will slowly but surely widen, potentially drawing others into the nuclear pit. The Republic of Korea will continue to work to achieve a sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula through the complete denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea under President Yoon Suk Yeol's audacious initiative, which is a testament to our willingness to engage in serious and sustained dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We once again urge Pyongyang to cease all destabilizing actions that violate multiple Security Council resolutions, to respond positively and to return immediately to dialogue.

The tall order of realizing a world without nuclear weapons requires effective multilateralism. It requires pragmatic and realistic approaches. First, the five permanent members of the Security Council (P5), in particular and among others, should assume their due responsibilities and translate this year's P5 leader joint statement into concrete actions. We join others in calling upon the P5 to engage in meaningful bilateral and multilateral dialogues to enable substantive nuclear arms and risk reduction.

Secondly, many long-standing issues, including the commencement of the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, require our full attention. We therefore support the draft resolutions submitted in that regard and call on all States to contribute to those efforts. We also reaffirm our support for the ongoing efforts to establish effectively verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world.

Thirdly, we call on the international community to align with bridge-building initiatives in order to close the perception gap and the mistrust between States. We take note of the potential contributions to nuclear disarmament represented by recent confidence-building approaches, including the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative, one of the subgroups of which the Republic of Korea chairs, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and the Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament.

Finally, the Republic of Korea recognizes that negative security assurances can contribute substantially to nuclear non-proliferation in that such assurances could reduce non-nuclear-weapon States' incentives for acquiring nuclear weapons. However, we uphold the principle that those assurances should be applied only to those who faithfully comply with the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

**Mr. Piedra Calderón** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are witnessing a situation that has not been seen in some time — one in which humankind must face the risk of the use of nuclear weapons. That challenge compels us all to engage as members of the First Committee and calls on us to redouble our efforts to move forward, together with actors from civil society, academia and other international organizations, in the search for a world free of nuclear weapons. As long as nuclear deterrence doctrines continue to be central to the security policies of various countries, we will continue to encourage their proliferation. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must proceed simultaneously, as they are interrelated and interconnected. All States must comply with their non-proliferation obligations. The world must continue to search for an order of peace and prosperity without nuclear weapons. Huge budgets are allocated to the development and modernization of those weapons, while humankind is afflicted by other global challenges such as hunger, poverty and climate change.

Now is the time to take concrete actions, and we need the commitment of the entire international community. We highlight the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, at which a Plan of Action that seeks to facilitate the effective and timely implementation of that Treaty in a practical way was adopted. Ecuador, located in the first densely populated zone free of nuclear weapons, urges all States to undertake efforts to strengthen nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. We reiterate the urgent need for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to enter into force, and we therefore call on annex 2 States that have not acceded to that instrument to do so as soon as possible.

I recall that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was held in 1978, in the final document of which it was established that “effective measures of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority” (resolution S-10/2, para. 20). Given the threat now facing the planet, those words bear repeating today more than ever. *Good Defeats Evil* is the title of the work by Georgian sculptor Zurab Tsereteli located in the gardens of United Nations Headquarters, which represents Saint George dominating the dragon and is built with fragments of nuclear missiles. That work reminds us that no nuclear weapon is good because of the catastrophic humanitarian impact it entails. The very existence of nuclear weapons raises the question of humankind's survival.

**Ms. Estrada Girón** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): World events of great magnitude have shown us how interdependent human beings are. Without cease, we find ourselves facing new crises, many of them unfortunately the result of human will. Scenarios in which force is used or threatened and in which one State commits violence against another are continually repeated. This Organization that we cherish has preserved us from a third confrontation of global proportions. However, the United Nations, as the guardian of international law and the centre of dialogue for the maintenance of peace and security among States, will not be able to resolve global dilemmas if there is no commitment from us, the representatives of States, to respect international law and resolve our differences peacefully, based on dialogue and negotiation.

My country is firmly committed to the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and is a strong advocate of general and complete disarmament. For that

reason, Guatemala is proud to belong to the first zone free of nuclear weapons, which demonstrates how the States of Latin America and the Caribbean considered their shared interests and expressed them in the Treaty of Tlatelolco for the benefit of our peoples and the entire world. My delegation reiterates its deep concern about the threat posed to humankind by the existence of nuclear weapons, their use or threat of use, as well as the humanitarian, environmental and economic impact that they represent. The only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total prohibition and elimination in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner and within a clearly defined time frame.

As a peaceful nation, we welcomed the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which represents a solid step forward in terms of the legal obligation to eliminate nuclear weapons. In that regard, we commend the holding of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty, which ended with the adoption of the Vienna Declaration, strengthening the commitment of the States parties, and Plan of Action, which seeks to facilitate the effective implementation of the Treaty in a practical and timely way.

As we have already mentioned on various occasions, Guatemala ratified the TPNW in June. With our ratification and that of the Dominican Republic, Central America has become the first entire region in the world to adhere to the TPNW. My country reiterates its position that the Treaty complements the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and strengthens its three fundamental pillars. It is unfortunate that more than 50 years after the adoption of the NPT, which is and will continue to be the cornerstone of disarmament, and more than 25 years after its indefinite extension, the States Parties have once again been unable to achieve consensus on a final document, especially when the pressing international context should compel us to seek solutions for the whole present and future of our civilization.

We would be remiss if we failed to point out the pending commitments under article VI of the NPT. It is worrisome to see the nuclear-weapon States prioritize national discourse above their legal obligations. We reiterate that the 1995 resolution and other decisions adopted in the context of the NPT Review Conferences on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

will continue to be in force until the objectives and full implementation of those agreements are achieved. We welcome the holding of the two meetings of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction and look forward to the third.

We reiterate our firm condemnation of any type of nuclear test, wherever and by whomever they may be carried out. At the same time, we call on the eight States listed in annex 2 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to accede to it to ensure its prompt entry into force. We also call for progress to be made on a fissile material cut-off treaty that prohibits the production and ensures the destruction of stored material so that an essential element in the production of nuclear weapons is eliminated.

In conclusion, until we see words translated into actions that move disarmament forward, we run the risk of heading down on a path that leads ever closer to nuclear annihilation. For that reason, we agree with the truth expressed by the five nuclear-weapon States that are party to the NPT — a nuclear war cannot be won and therefore should never be fought.

**Mr. Grigoryan (Armenia):** Armenia believes that in the current turbulent international environment the effective implementation and reinforcement of the disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms are of utmost importance. We reiterate our unwavering support for the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains a cornerstone of the international security architecture, a landmark international document designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and their technology, promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and further the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament. Armenia reiterates its firm support for the full, complete and effective implementation of the NPT and calls on the States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon parties. We regret that the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was not able to reach a consensus on a final document. However, we look forward to the beginning of the new review cycle and to relevant discussions aimed at achieving tangible progress on all three pillars of the Treaty, including article VI, which would reinforce the international security architecture.

The dialogue between nuclear-weapon States has traditionally played an important role in achieving progress on nuclear arms control. We welcomed the extension of the New START Treaty, as well as the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races, and their reaffirmation that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. We urge the pursuit of joint efforts towards verification, transparency and confidence-building measures in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Armenia considers the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to be an indispensable pillar and tool for the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We therefore support all efforts to promote the Treaty's entry into force and would like to assure the Committee of Armenia's readiness to contribute to achieving that goal. The verification and monitoring system of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization is an important asset and an effective non-proliferation instrument. Another necessary step towards disarmament is the commencement of negotiations on banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are an important regional approach to strengthening global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament norms and consolidating international efforts towards peace and security. Armenia reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, as agreed on at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

As a strong supporter of non-proliferation policies, Armenia emphasizes its full compliance with its International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol. The development of effective cooperation with the IAEA was highlighted during Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi's visit to Armenia. We attach great importance to strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and establishing effective and sustainable nuclear security regimes at the national level. International cooperation has played an essential role in Armenia's efforts to improve its physical protection regime. Thanks to that cooperation, Armenia's nuclear power plant has been implementing a number of projects for enhancing nuclear security at the facility

level in line with relevant IAEA recommendations. We stress the inadmissibility of any threats to our nuclear power plant. Armenia values the IAEA's key role in facilitating international cooperation on matters relating to nuclear security, including in the context of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, as amended. We need to work to quickly achieve an international understanding and acceptance that we have to revitalize the process of formulating an international legally binding treaty prohibiting armed attacks and threats of attacks on nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes.

In conclusion, we would like to express our hope that inclusive and transparent discussions on global security matters will bring our views closer together and create an environment that is more conducive to the achievement of tangible results in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

**Mrs. González López** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador has expressed in other disarmament and non-proliferation forums that it is a source of pride to be part of the historic Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first zone free of nuclear weapons in the world and served as an inspiration for the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones, which in our opinion strengthen international peace and security.

In that regard, we are pleased to be one of the main sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.13, entitled "Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)", introduced by the delegation of Mexico, which reaffirms the relevance of this international instrument for our region.

That is why we are concerned about the failure for the second time in a row to adopt a final document at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), after four weeks of intense debates. The final document was not perfect, but it represented a delicate balance in a complex international situation. My delegation will participate constructively in the work of the preparatory conferences for the eleventh Review Conference. We reiterate our readiness to work to achieve shared agreements that will enable us to move towards our common goal of irreversible, verifiable and transparent nuclear disarmament.



My country maintains that the existence of nuclear weapons that are ready to be launched at any moment and are being constantly updated and improved represents one of the greatest current challenges for the general disarmament regime. The only real guarantee that they will not be used is their complete prohibition and total elimination. My delegation is therefore pleased to have participated in the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and welcomes the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action. Additionally, we affirm that the full implementation and universalization of the Treaty are essential to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons and to remedying the damage done by nuclear weapons to our planet and to the victims who have suffered the catastrophic consequences of nuclear detonations and tests. It is important to point out that the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty also took place in a complex geopolitical environment. As such, the adoption of the Vienna Plan of Action deserves our full appreciation. We urge all States that are not yet party to it to consider joining or ratifying it.

El Salvador is party to a number of international instruments that reinforce the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We commend Dominica's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which represents a historic milestone demonstrating the commitment of the Latin American and Caribbean States to establishing our region as a zone of peace. We urge the eight countries listed in annex 2 of the Treaty to ratify it without delay in order to put an end to tests, care for the victims of tests and act swiftly to achieve the environmental reparations that the people and communities affected need. We also want to express our deep concern about the announcements of possible nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and urge it to renounce its nuclear arms race. Our country is waiting anxiously to see the negotiations on a treaty that limits the production of fissile material resumed in the Conference on Disarmament as soon as possible and transparency measures regarding the use of such materials increased.

Finally, we want to emphasize two issues that are priorities for El Salvador. The first is the importance of the equal participation of women and men in nuclear disarmament efforts, which is vital in view of the disproportionate effects that ionizing radiation exposure has on women and girls. We are therefore pleased to

be a lead sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.18, entitled "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control", introduced by Trinidad and Tobago.

Secondly, with respect to the broad inclusion of stakeholders, we want to emphasize the importance of ensuring the participation of multiple stakeholders in these processes. In that regard, my country recognizes that the contributions of civil society, non-governmental organizations and academia, whose members work tirelessly to achieve the same goals of complete disarmament, enrich our discussions. We appreciate their conviction and recognize the value of their commitment.

The full version of this statement will be made available on the e-deleGATE portal.

**Mr. Yakut (Türkiye):** This year, much to our regret, we could not take advantage of a historic opportunity. After four weeks of intensive negotiations, the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was unable to agree on a final outcome document. My delegation participated actively in the deliberations, and together with our partners in the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, we put forward many useful proposals and recommendations aimed at achieving a tangible outcome. While the final document, which was not adopted, was not perfect, it contained many valuable elements that reaffirmed the importance and validity of previous commitments and set out forward-looking steps to improve the implementation of NPT obligations. In particular, its emphasis on transparency and reporting measures, as well as nuclear risk reduction, represented building blocks in making much-needed progress towards the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. That body of work can guide our efforts in the new review cycle, provided that we make use of its content in a balanced manner.

Regardless of the outcome, the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation of our pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The Treaty's importance in non-proliferation efforts as well as in promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear applications remains central. For its part, Türkiye reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation and further strengthening of the Treaty in all its three pillars. We appeal to all States parties to implement their Treaty obligations and commitments in full and as undertaken

at the previous Review Conferences. We also repeat our call to States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty. Meanwhile, we welcome the decision adopted at the Review Conference to establish a working group on further strengthening the review process.

Türkiye supports systematic, progressive, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament that takes into account the strategic environment and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. We highlight the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States and encourage them to take steps to further reduce their nuclear arsenals and achieve greater transparency and dialogue with regard to their nuclear and security policies and doctrines. We believe that existing initiatives such as the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, the Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament and Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament provide good paths towards bridge-building, especially considering the extremely fragile current security environment.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons poses a serious risk to international security. As one of the members of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a newcomer country in the field of nuclear energy, Türkiye underscores the importance of the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards agreements, as well as their additional protocols, in maintaining the safety and security of peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

We reaffirm our strong support for revitalizing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a unique diplomatic achievement that has contributed to regional and international security. We hope that the ongoing efforts to reinstate the Plan can be concluded successfully. Meanwhile, we appeal for a resumption of genuine cooperation between Iran and the IAEA.

The threat created by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ballistic-missile programme has reached unprecedented levels. We repeat our call for a diplomatic solution to the problem of that country's nuclear and ballistic-missile programmes that can lead to complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remains a key component of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. We once again encourage all States, in particular the remaining annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay.

We also reiterate our call for commencing negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the Conference on Disarmament.

Türkiye maintains its strong commitment to the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. The implementation of the resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference continues to be a matter of priority.

We are meeting at a highly critical time that is marked by heightened geopolitical rivalries and an ongoing war in Ukraine, with all the dangerous nuclear rhetoric and extremely worrisome nuclear safety and security risks that accompany it. We would like to once again appeal for common sense and recall the need for full adherence to the principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

**Mr. Ogasawara (Japan):** Seventy-seven years have now passed since the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It has been Japan's mission to achieve a world without nuclear weapons ever since. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has made the path towards a world without nuclear weapons an uphill struggle. However, we must not relent in our efforts to make any realistic gains possible towards achieving that goal. Every effort should be made to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again and to refrain from any inflammatory rhetoric concerning their use. In that regard, President Putin's speech on Russian nuclear force, in the context of the aggression against Ukraine, squarely contradicts the joint statement made in January by the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States, affirming that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Japan urges the nuclear-weapon States, in particular the Russian Federation, to honour their crucial commitment in that statement, not in words but in deeds. Japan condemns the Russian Federation's words and actions implying nuclear threats in the course of its aggression against Ukraine.

It is truly regrettable that the draft final document was not adopted at the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), due to an objection by the Russian Federation. However, we still urgently need to work to light the way forward towards realizing a world without nuclear weapons, as well as to restore and reinvigorate momentum on nuclear disarmament. Backed by Prime Minister Kishida's strong commitment to nuclear disarmament, Japan has decided to submit a new

draft resolution entitled “Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons” (A/C.1/77/L.61), which presents a basic way forward in the current international circumstances towards a world without nuclear weapons. The draft resolution follows the lines of the Hiroshima action plan that Prime Minister Kishida announced on the very first day of the tenth NPT Review Conference. Key elements from the action plan were to a large extent reflected in the draft final document of the Conference. The draft resolution that we are submitting also proposes elements incorporating action and language on some aspects that are more robust than in the draft final document, with a view to salvaging constructive ideas that emerged from the discussion at the Review Conference and that were not fully reflected in the final document. We hope that the realistic approach we propose within the draft resolution will gain the widest possible support from Member States and create new momentum for nuclear disarmament in the lead-up to the eleventh NPT Review Conference.

Japan feels compelled to reiterate its deep concern about North Korea’s intensified nuclear and missile development activities. Japan strongly condemns the recent series of ballistic-missiles launches, including that of 4 October, which flew over Japanese territory, the first time that has happened in five years. Japan calls on all Member States to reaffirm their strong commitment to the goal of achieving the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of all of North Korea’s nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, as well as ballistic missiles of all ranges, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. We also call on all Member States to fully implement those Council resolutions.

**Mr. Rai** (Nepal): Nepal aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

We are living through the most difficult times in recent history. We have not seen such serious threats of the use of nuclear weapons in 77 years. Learning the lessons of the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on 24 January 1946 the General Assembly adopted its very first resolution, resolution 1 (I), on the elimination of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction. Regrettably, a few powerful countries kept, acquired, accumulated and continued to modernize an astounding number

of nuclear weapons, contrary to their obligations and nuclear disarmament commitments. The present paradox is therefore irreconcilable with our shared conscience. We have seen extraordinary expenditures on modernizing and upgrading nuclear weapons on a pretext of nuclear deterrence when we are in desperate need of resources to tackle our dehumanizing poverty, hunger, disease and environmental catastrophes. All humankind is an inch away from a miscalculation or escalation of nuclear war because of the heightened geopolitical tensions among nuclear-weapon States. Furthermore, issues created by the irresponsible use of emerging and cybertechnologies have made us more vulnerable. The global community deserves enduring peace and prosperity, not the dark shadow of the persistent threat of nuclear annihilation.

Nepal reaffirms its principled position that universal peace and security can be ensured only through a time-bound, general and complete disarmament of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against their use or the threat of their use. The advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice issued in 1996 on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/51/218, annex) has unequivocally affirmed that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is illegal and constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law.

Nepal considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament. We regret that the tenth NPT Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons recently failed to reach a consensus outcome. However, we urge Member States to implement their Treaty obligations voluntarily. Nepal emphasizes that the nuclear-weapon States should respect the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We urgently need a universal and legally binding instrument obliging nuclear-weapon States to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. Nepal calls for the commencement as soon as possible of negotiations on a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty to address existing stockpiles and prohibit the production of weapon-grade materials. We believe that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones will

help us achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Nepal supports the inalienable right of all States to develop, research and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, as per article IV of the NPT. We emphasize the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy while strengthening its safeguard mechanism to prevent proliferation.

In conclusion, Nepal calls for nuclear-weapon States to return to a path of dialogue and diplomacy with renewed trust and faith in the cause of nuclear disarmament. The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to make this world safer.

**Mr. Vongnorkeo** (Lao People's Democratic Republic): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia and Viet Nam on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, respectively (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

In recent years we have witnessed a greater risk of the intentional, accidental, mistaken or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, which could lead to indescribably catastrophic destruction for all humankind. We therefore believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to prevent their use or the threat of their use and to secure a world free from nuclear disaster. My delegation supports all international efforts to make our world free from nuclear weapons and welcomed the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, held on 26 September.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Unfortunately, the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in August this year, could not achieve its hoped-for outcome. We therefore call on all States parties to the NPT to renew their commitment to the full implementation of the Treaty.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is strongly committed to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and will continue to advocate the objective of nuclear disarmament. In that regard, we welcomed the successful convening of the first Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW in Vienna in June. That led to the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Plan

of Action, which will guide the implementation of the Treaty and pave the way for achieving the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

As a party to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, my country is of the view that the creation of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones has been a significant contribution to the strengthening of global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In that connection, the Lao People's Democratic Republic underlines the importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We welcomed six new ratifications in 2022, increasing the total number of countries ratifying the Treaty to 176. My delegation also hopes that Member States that have not done so will consider ratifying it so that its entry into force can be realized. The Lao People's Democratic Republic recognizes the significant role that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has played in nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, safety and safeguards.

On the margins of the first Meeting of State Parties to the TPNW, the Lao People's Democratic Republic submitted its adaptation of the amended small quantities protocols to the IAEA Director General. We submitted our small quantities protocols initial national report a month later. The Lao People's Democratic Republic will fully adhere to the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and is considering joining the remaining relevant international instruments in a reflection of our unwavering commitment to the international disarmament regimes.

In conclusion, I want to reaffirm my country's firm commitment to the international disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, including all efforts towards making our world free of nuclear weapons and ensuring sustainable global peace and security.

**Mr. Salmeen** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Iraq, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

Our world today is facing many dangerous challenges and rapid developments, in an extremely serious situation that is clearly visible in the increased tensions at the regional and international levels. The nuclear-weapon States continue to develop their nuclear arsenals while citing policies of deterrence. All of



those challenges demonstrate that the non-proliferation regime is at a critical stage that compels us to spare no effort in saving humankind from the consequences of those weapons. In that context, the State of Kuwait reaffirms its steadfast positions on disarmament and international security issues, which demonstrate its commitment to establishing peace, security and stability in the world. We believe that stability and peace cannot be achieved as long as various types of weapons, particularly nuclear ones, continue to proliferate and flow across the world.

We stress the importance of multilateral efforts as the best way to deal with all issues of disarmament and international security, and call for mobilizing genuine political will in support of international efforts to promote the credibility of international conventions, particularly with regard to nuclear disarmament and weapons of mass destruction. We welcomed the entry into force in January 2021 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the holding in Vienna in June of this year of its first Meeting of States Parties. We stress that the TPNW does not contradict the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) but is rather part and parcel of achieving the goals of the NPT and making progress towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. In that regard, my country agrees with statements that have stressed that implementing all obligations under the NPT that are conducive to achieving its universality is more important than ever, particularly considering that we have seen countries threaten to use such weapons. We also stress the importance of equal respect for all three pillars of the NPT and of correcting the error made by some States parties to the Treaty in focusing on one pillar at the expense of the others. We emphasize the importance of activating cooperation mechanisms in the area of the peaceful uses of atomic energy and support the inalienable right of non-nuclear States to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

With regard to the creation of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass of destruction, Kuwait reiterates the need for Israel to join the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), especially since it is the only State in the region that has not acceded to the Treaty, thereby preventing the establishment of such a

zone. It is the responsibility of all parties to the Treaty, especially the nuclear States, to implement all the decisions of 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, particularly where establishing a zone in the Middle East is concerned. In that regard, my country's delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace in the context of *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), which is helping to pave the way towards sustained international peace and stability. Kuwait regrets the failure to reach consensus in August on a final document for the tenth NPT Review Conference, and calls on the parties to the Treaty to participate actively in the next Conference with a view to achieving a comprehensive final document that will promote the Treaty's credibility and sustainability.

My country welcomed the successful holding of the two sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, in accordance with General Assembly decision 73/546, under the presidencies of Jordan and Kuwait, respectively. They saw positive results and adopted a number of objective and procedural decisions. We also support Lebanon in its presidency of the upcoming session of the Conference and once again call on all the parties to participate with a view to reaching a consensus and a binding document.

In conclusion, we look forward to supporting the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime by ensuring responsible action on the part of all States and promoting a spirit of cooperation, while continuing an open and constructive dialogue aimed at achieving the goal we all want of maintaining international peace and security.

**Mr. Alqaisi** (Jordan): Jordan aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Iraq, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.11), and would like to add some remarks in its national capacity.

Despite the consecutive failures of the ninth and tenth Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to adopt a consensus outcome document, Jordan will continue to advocate for a world free of all nuclear weapons. We re-emphasize the crucial role of the NPT in international security and its continued validity, as

well as the importance of achieving its universality. We therefore urge all State parties to the NPT to continue to engage constructively to enable the eleventh Review Conference to arrive at a consensus outcome document that overcomes the deadlock in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime at the international level, whose implications continue to affect international peace and security. In that regard, Jordan emphasizes the continued validity of previous commitments and calls upon all States parties, especially nuclear-weapon States, to fully comply with their relevant obligations and responsibilities, including through the full, effective and immediate implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT. Consequently, we urge all Member States to welcome the recent holding of the first and second sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. Jordan also looks forward to Member State support for the upcoming third session of the Conference, to be held under the presidency of Lebanon. We call upon all invited parties of the region to engage actively to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our commitment to engaging with all Member States to achieve our primary goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

**Ms. Teka (Ethiopia):** Let me start by expressing my appreciation to you, Mr. Chair, for the very effective way in which you have continued to lead the work of the First Committee, and I reiterate the full support of my delegation.

The world is in turmoil. The adverse impacts of the pandemic, climate change, poverty and terrorism, as well as the food, fuel and financial crises, are the interlocked and complex challenges that the world is confronting. Regrettably, those multifaceted challenges, coupled with heightened global rivalry and geopolitical tension, mean that multilateralism faces difficulties in offering solutions to address them. Moreover, the world is deeply concerned by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and armaments. Almost all Member States have pronounced repeatedly that nuclear weapons pose the greatest threat to humankind and the survival of civilization.

What is deeply worrisome is that there is insufficient political will to translate our words and resolutions into concrete actions. That is why, instead

of nuclear disarmament and progress to create a world free from nuclear weapons, what we are alarmingly witnessing is the modernization of nuclear arsenals. Given the current arms race and the lack of an effective and robust global monitoring system, there is a high chance that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of rogue non-State actors, compounding the threats to global peace and stability. There is also concern that, as a result of technological advances, the threat of nuclear war has not lessened but increased. Experts rightly warn us that modern technology multiplies the destructive capacity of nuclear conflict through the introduction of high-tech weapons and far-reaching improvements in artificial intelligence. It appears that we continue to lack a credible and updated common framework of dialogue to advance the peaceful use of such advanced technologies. Hence what indeed is lacking today is the genuine global partnership and leadership to implement what we continue to advocate.

Until the world, particularly those with nuclear weapons, demonstrates the much-needed political commitment for concrete actions, our words will remain largely devoid of their purpose and the creation of a world free of nuclear weapons will remain elusive. If we had achieved real and effective disarmament and the billions in financial resources spent on the arms race had been allotted to the eradication of poverty, the state of humankind and the safety of our planet would have been much improved. Ethiopia believes that our ultimate goal should be to save humankind from the scourge of war, as we promised in the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we underscore that it is high time for diplomacy to avoid calamity.

Ethiopia demonstrated its commitment to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa by signing and ratifying the Treaty of Pelindaba. Ethiopia also supports the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, because it enhances the maintenance of peace and security in the region. We also call upon all States to reaffirm their commitment to preserving and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is a cornerstone of international security. Ethiopia also stresses the right of all States to develop, produce and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only. In that regard, my delegation strongly supports the mission of the International Atomic Energy Agency with respect to the verification of States' compliance with

their commitments, under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other non-proliferation agreements, to use nuclear material and facilities only for peaceful purposes.

**Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation expresses our appreciation for your efforts, Mr. Chair, as well as those of all delegations participating in the work of the First Committee.

The international community is increasingly concerned about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons, as a result of tensions and armed conflicts, as well as the outbreak of new conflicts that have had far-reaching effects at the regional and international levels, thereby increasing the risks of possible attacks using nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Accordingly, international efforts for full and complete disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation remain the only way to achieve the desired regional and international peace and security.

With a view to removing that concern, international collective efforts led to the agreement of conventions and treaties on the prohibition of developing, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in view of their excessive harm to humankind and the environment. My country's delegation stresses the importance of strict and full compliance with all international conventions and treaties on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which entered into force in January 2021. In that context, we express regret for the failure of the tenth NPT Review Conference to achieve consensus on a final document.

The failure to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is a threat to peace and security, not only for the countries of the region but also for the countries of the entire world. My country's delegation expresses its concern at the failure to achieve progress in that regard or to implement the obligations resulting from the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT, the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the 2010 NPT Action Plan. We also express regret at the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and we welcome the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons

of Mass Destruction, which continues to be convened pursuant to decision 73/546. In that context, the State of Qatar expresses its support for the sisterly Lebanese Republic, which will preside over the third session of the Conference, to be held from 14 to 18 November. We express our hope that all countries of the region will cooperate to guarantee the success of the Conference with a view to promoting regional and international peace and security.

In support of regional and international efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East region, the State of Qatar hosted the first Arab symposium on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament from 12 to 15 September, which was organized by our National Committee for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, in cooperation with the League of Arab States, with a view to addressing, inter alia, the issue of ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar underscores the importance of international cooperation towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as non-proliferation, with a view to achieving international peace and security.

**Ms. Quintero Correa** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime, as well as an essential pillar of the international peace and security architecture. Our duty is to preserve it and promote its full implementation. The existence of more than 12,700 nuclear weapons — of which more than 3,700 are deployed with operational forces and 2,000 are in a state of alert — and the programmes for replacing and modernizing those weapons, their means of delivery and their production facilities have placed our civilization and its basic foundations in a situation of great uncertainty.

As corroborated by scientific evidence, history has shown us the catastrophic, painful and prolonged humanitarian and environmental consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and any nuclear explosion. That is the most powerful and indisputable reason to adopt urgent and effective measures for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and that is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. That is a moral imperative for, and the unavoidable responsibility

of, present and future generations. This year's events have brought us to the highest level of nuclear risk since the Cold War, demonstrating the dangerous fragility of the presumption that nuclear weapons and defence and deterrence systems provide security. Nuclear weapons challenge not only that presumption but also the very existence of humankind.

We regret that the recent NPT Review Conference did not achieve a positive result, especially given the spectre of the nuclear threat lurking among us. It is essential to move forward in the full implementation of the Treaty, especially with respect to the pillar on which the least progress has been made — disarmament. We need time frames for the implementation of the commitments related thereto, in addition to indicators and progress reports for proper follow-up. Similarly, it is essential to observe the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency in the implementation of all NPT obligations.

Nuclear disarmament is the highest priority. Progress in that sense is necessary and reasonable, given that it has been 52 years since the NPT entered into force and we have still yet to achieve general and complete disarmament. Valuable resources continue to be allocated to programmes to replace and modernize nuclear weapons, their means of delivery and their production facilities. The use of nuclear weapons continues to be a part of, and is even gaining ground in, military doctrines. The NPT is not universal: the risk of proliferation, both horizontal and vertical, persists. And as we already noted, we are at the highest level of nuclear risk since the Cold War.

Although we did not adopt an outcome document at the NPT Review Conference, we can take steps with respect to urgent and necessary risk-reduction measures, bridge-building, the search for rapprochement and renewed dialogue. We hope to make progress in parallel with the next cycle of the review process, working with political will and determination to achieve general and complete disarmament under strict verification in order to guarantee peace, international security and the preservation of life.

Colombia reiterates the need to preserve legal instruments, international law, international institutional frameworks and multilateralism. In moments of disappointment and tension, what is needed more than ever is renewed dialogue, the recognition of the integrity and dignity of others and the recognition

of ourselves and of our humanity in the humanity of others. We reiterate that it is through dialogue, solidarity and empathy — not deterrence — that we will transition into the twenty-second century. Colombia will continue to work in that direction.

**Mrs. Tran** (Viet Nam): My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Viet Nam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

The theme of this year's session of the General Assembly is apt and pertinent, especially with regard to the work of the First Committee. The nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime is facing interlocking challenges resulting from the increasingly complex international security environment and the development of new technologies. The danger of a nuclear arms race and the shadow of a nuclear war loom large over our planet. In a recent statement, the Secretary-General cautioned against the danger of forgetting the terrible lessons of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Cold War. Therefore, Viet Nam reaffirms its consistent policy of supporting all efforts on disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons with a view to achieving the total elimination of those weapons. We share the concern that the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime is under severe strain. Accordingly, it is necessary to strengthen efforts to rise up to the emerging challenges, including by establishing new mechanisms to promote strategic arms reduction and control among the major nuclear-weapon States. We join others in underscoring the need to advance legally binding negative security assurances by nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Viet Nam greatly appreciates all efforts contributing to the convening of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held last August. However, we regret that the ninth and tenth NPT Review Conferences both failed to adopt a consensual outcome document that could have provided us with greater momentum towards general and complete disarmament. We urge all Member States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to redouble their efforts to implement the Treaty, in particular article VI thereof, in the next review cycle.

In the face of such setbacks, we welcome the success of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and its adoption



of a declaration and an action plan. Given the potentially catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons to human health and livelihoods and the environment, my delegation encourages other States to sign and ratify the TPNW as soon as possible.

The universalization and early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is also important for our common goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, with the accession of the remaining States listed in annex 2 to the CTBT being critical. We also support an early start to negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Such international efforts should go hand in hand with those at regional levels. ASEAN member States are committed to making South-East Asia a zone free of nuclear weapons and look forward to working closely with the nuclear-weapon States for their early signing and ratification of the Protocol to the Treaty of Bangkok in that regard. We fully support further efforts to strengthen other nuclear weapon-free zones and to establish such a zone in the Middle East.

We stress the importance of pursuing dialogue and negotiations for peace, security and development on the Korean peninsula.

Viet Nam joins other Member States in reiterating the inalienable right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We commend the important role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a multilateral channel for promoting peaceful applications of nuclear technology. We greatly appreciate and look forward to further cooperation with and support from the IAEA.

The world can never be truly free from potential disasters made by nuclear weapons until those weapons are completely prohibited and eliminated. Let me conclude by reaffirming Viet Nam's strong commitment to contributing constructively to the efforts of the international community to establish a world free of nuclear weapons.

**Ms. Maayan (Israel):** On the nuclear front, Israel continues to support the global non-proliferation regime. Israel contributes to nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation activities, including within the frameworks of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

Israel shares the concern that radioactive sources may be used to commit acts of terrorism. In 2012, Israel signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities, including the 2005 amendment. Furthermore, Israel is a member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and endorses the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. We take part in the IAEA's Illicit Trafficking Database and participate in its Nuclear Security Guidance Committee. Israel recognizes the importance of combining legal international tools and export-control policy.

Israel values the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and recognizes its contribution to the non-proliferation regime. However, any non-proliferation regime is only as effective as the level of compliance of its members. Unfortunately, the NPT in itself does not provide a remedy for the unique security challenges of the Middle East, let alone the repeated violations of the Treaty by some of its member States. Four of the five cases of serious violations of the NPT in the Middle East have taken place since its entry into force.

For decades now, Iran has been rapidly advancing its illicit nuclear programme, and it currently possesses large quantities of highly enriched nuclear material. At the same time it has been making significant progress in processing uranium metal, as well as developing and industrializing advanced centrifuges. Those developments, and especially Iran's accumulation of irreversible knowledge, make the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action worthless from a non-proliferation point of view at this time. Iran's conduct over the past year and a half, whereby under the guise of ongoing negotiations it has continued to make rapid progress in its nuclear capabilities, indicates that it has never given up on its pursuit of military nuclear prospects, as was exposed in the seized nuclear archive. Iran views negotiations as a convenient tool for buying time. Parallel to its nuclear pursuit, Iran has continued to violate its safeguards obligations to the IAEA under its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol. For four years now it has avoided providing adequate answers to the IAEA on four investigations concerning undeclared nuclear material activity that took place at undeclared nuclear sites.

The existence of undeclared nuclear activities in Syria remains relevant and worrisome, as do the open questions related to the nature and operational status of specific sites and materials within Syria. The construction of a clandestine nuclear reactor was done in blatant violation of Syria's safeguards obligations, as it should have been reported to the Agency. Had the reactor been completed and become operational, it would have been ideally suited to producing plutonium for nuclear weapons. Syria must cooperate with the IAEA.

Some actors in the region claim that a comprehensive security architecture can be initiated in the Middle East without direct engagement with Israel, without recognition of Israel's right to exist within safe and secure borders, without reducing regional tensions or building the necessary trust and confidence among the States of the region and without regard for norms and principles that were agreed on in the relevant forums. That position is untenable. Experience in other regions demonstrates that any framework for regional security can only be the outcome of a mutual political desire of all the parties in a region to engage with one another, taking into consideration the security concerns of each and every State and reflecting arrangements freely arrived at by all the States concerned, as stipulated in the 1999 Disarmament Commission report on guidelines and principles for a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Anything other than that cannot serve as a useful base for discourse with regard to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Ill-motivated initiatives such as the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction go against the guidelines and established principles of any nuclear-weapon-free zone and are unhelpful. Israel will not participate in artificial processes that bypass established practice.

**Mr. El Mezouaghi** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Iraq, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/77/PV.11), and would like to add some comments in its national capacity.

The Kingdom of Morocco shares the concerns of the international community regarding the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, which undermine international peace and security. The renewed increase in nuclear threats and the irreversible consequences

of the use of nuclear weapons for the environment and for human lives compel us all to work resolutely to achieve the complete prohibition of such weapons. Morocco continues to believe that nuclear weapons are not a guarantee of security or stability at the regional or international level. The best guarantee for international peace and security is based not on military might or nuclear stockpiles but on peaceful coexistence, which makes it possible to create the proper conditions for development and for political, social, economic and cultural exchanges aimed at fostering the welfare and prosperity of humankind.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regimes. My country remains committed to its credibility, which depends on its universalization and the achievement of its objectives through the implementation of its three mutually reinforcing pillars, which are nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the social and economic development of countries. We must seize the opportunity of the next NPT review cycle to renew our commitments to the Treaty and guarantee the implementation of the commitments we have agreed on.

As a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Morocco signed a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol and contributes to the efforts to strengthen Agency guarantees as a State party to the Treaty of Pelindaba, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. Morocco also believes firmly in the importance of the role of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in nuclear disarmament. It is lamentable that more than 25 years after its opening for signature and despite the significant support it enjoys, with 186 signatures and 176 ratifications, the CTBT has yet to enter into force. The Treaty's verification regime has demonstrated its effectiveness and continues to make progress, and we look forward to its operationalization and entry into force. As a country committed to peace, Morocco has steadily undertaken efforts to promote the entry into force and universality of the CTBT with a view to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Morocco also encourages serious and transparent negotiations for a multilateral, universal, non-discriminatory treaty that would irreversibly and verifiably prohibit the production of fissile material for military purposes, and with a view to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime.

Zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction have a vital role to play in regional and international peace and security, particularly in the Middle East. Morocco welcomed the adoption of General Assembly decision 73/546 and the organization of the first and second meetings of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, in 2019 and 2021, under the competent leadership of our brother countries of Jordan and Kuwait. Morocco reiterates the intrinsic link between the indefinite extension of the NPT and the commitment to eliminating nuclear weapons in the Middle East in line with the 1995 resolution concerning the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons, and we will contribute actively to the work of the Conference's third meeting, planned for November under the presidency of our brother country of Lebanon.

Lastly, Morocco is convinced that the only way to achieve our ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons is through the mobilization of the entire international community and with the solid political will of all Member States.

**Mr. Romero Puentes** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

Some 77 years have passed since the United States of America, the first country to use nuclear weapons, caused death and destruction in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The devastating consequences of that criminal act demonstrated the imperative need for the total elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. Almost eight decades later, the mere existence of nuclear weapons continues to threaten humankind. It is utterly unjustifiable and unacceptable that more than 13,000 nuclear weapons still exist, with 4,000 of them deployed and ready to be used immediately. We advocate a departure from military doctrines and positions based on nuclear deterrence, strategic stability or the need to create conditions that are conducive to nuclear disarmament. We reject attempts to make nuclear disarmament conditional or to justify the status quo.

Cuba's firm commitment to nuclear disarmament has been a consistent aspect of our foreign policy, in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic. The greatest priority for Cuba is nuclear disarmament, and

that should be the highest priority in the sphere of disarmament. That is why, during Cuba's leadership of the Conference on Disarmament, one of our key goals was the promotion of nuclear disarmament. We advocate for negotiation in that forum of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument that will provide irreversible safeguards for States such as Cuba that do not possess nuclear weapons. We also advocate the negotiation of an instrument that will also prohibit fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or similar devices. We welcome the substantial work accomplished by the Conference on Disarmament this year and urge it to adopt specific recommendations on nuclear disarmament for the consideration of the General Assembly. On the initiative of Cuba and with the support of NAM, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/32, which designated 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. We recall the appeal of the Non-Aligned Movement to promote the constructive participation of all Member States in the high-level plenary meetings of the Assembly to commemorate that day, which offers a propitious occasion for interaction among nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

We welcome the participation in the elaboration and negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which is the first legally binding instrument that refers to the illegal nature of those weapons. We welcome the first successful Meeting of States Parties thereto, and we will continue to promote the universalization of that Treaty. It is also important that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty enter into force. We regret the failure of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which ended without any agreement on an outcome document, thereby undermining the credibility of the NPT and putting us further away from our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We support the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We are proud to be part of the first zone free of nuclear weapons in a densely populated area, which was subsequently designated as a zone of peace, which encourages us to continue to promote a world free of nuclear weapons.

We reiterate our commitment to, and support for, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed with Iran and reject the withdrawal of the United States from that agreement.

We condemn the unilateral coercive measures that limit or restrict the legitimate right of all States to develop, research, produce or use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

We also condemn the illegal economic and financial blockade by the United States against Cuba.

Cuba appeals for restraint and the avoidance of actions that could increase tension on the Korean peninsula. We condemn the imposition of unjust unilateral economic measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and any external interference in that country's affairs. It is only through dialogue and negotiations that we can achieve a lasting political solution on the peninsula that takes into account the legitimate concerns of all parties involved.

The following words of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz remain relevant: let us discard the dream that the world's problems can be resolved with nuclear weapons. Bombs may kill the starving, the ill and the ignorant, but they cannot kill hunger, disease or ignorance.

**Ms. Orava** (Finland): Disarmament is a gradual process, and it requires proper attention for the legitimate security concerns of all participating States. The First Committee and the international community have endorsed our common quest for a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on multiple occasions. Reaching a world free of nuclear weapons requires verifiable and irreversible steps by the States that possess nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament is first and foremost the responsibility of those States. At the same time, nuclear disarmament — or the lack of it — is a concern for every nation of the world.

The Russian war in Ukraine and the Russian threats of nuclear use undermine efforts for nuclear disarmament. We call on the Russian Federation to end its hostilities against Ukraine, withdraw its troops to Russia, respect Ukraine's sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders and cease its reckless nuclear threats.

Finland is disappointed that it was not possible to agree on an outcome document at the recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That failure is a reflection of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and is not a failure of the NPT itself. The

NPT continues to be a cornerstone of the rules-based international system. It includes a legal commitment by the recognized nuclear-weapon States to advance nuclear disarmament, and it is high time for them to make good on that commitment. The NPT Review Conference decided to establish a working group on further strengthening the review process, and that working group should aim for enhanced accountability and accelerated nuclear disarmament.

The total number of nuclear weapons today is significantly lower than it was during the Cold War, but we are concerned that that downward trend might be reversing. We must not let that happen. The world and its peoples do not need a nuclear arms race. We welcome the extension of the New START Treaty by the Russian Federation and the United States. The biggest nuclear-weapon States need to continue spearheading nuclear arms control and disarmament, and others need to follow suit. We are concerned with the apparent Chinese nuclear build-up, and we encourage China to be more responsive and transparent on the matter. All nuclear-weapon possessors need to commit themselves to nuclear disarmament, and they need to accelerate their action to that end, including through accelerated implementation of the agreed legal and political commitments for nuclear disarmament, commitment to not increasing the number of nuclear weapons or developing new nuclear weapons systems, action to address non-strategic nuclear weapons in arms control and disarmament with a view to achieving a rapid reduction of their numbers and action to enhance negative security assurances to non-nuclear weapon States and nuclear-free zones with a view to achieving an international treaty to that end.

Nuclear weapons pose a risk for every nation. A nuclear-weapon detonation would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. It is in our common interests to reduce risks for any nuclear-weapon use, intended or unintended. Nuclear risk reduction includes a wide range of measures, from political declarations to technical crisis-communication arrangements. Risk reduction is not a substitute for nuclear disarmament, but it can certainly advance it. In our view, international cooperation and agreements on risk reduction can help us close the pathways to nuclear use. Risk reduction deserves a major place in the deliberations and outcomes of the First Committee and other disarmament forums. Advancing nuclear disarmament and reaching the nuclear zero requires determined political will. It



requires serious negotiations that take into account the security concerns of all nations. Going forward and avoiding backtracking is more important than knowing the exact time of arrival. In the meantime, let us ensure that nuclear weapons will never be used again.

**Ms. Alkhalifi** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the sisterly Republic of Iraq on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes in the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the achievement of balance among its three pillars. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia swiftly acceded to the Treaty in order to contribute to international efforts leading to its universalization and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. My country attaches great importance to accession to all treaties, conventions and initiatives aimed at the elimination of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We stress the importance of the international efforts aimed at the complete elimination of those lethal weapons. The entire international community must endorse all current treaties, legal and moral frameworks with a view to establishing a world free of nuclear weapons. Peace and security will not be achieved by the acquisition of such lethal weapons. Rather, cooperation and dialogue are the basis of stability and confidence-building among States. Development and progress can be achieved only by avoiding an arms race in the production and development of nuclear weapon systems, which would reduce the risk of war eruption. My country emphasizes the importance of respecting the balance among the three pillars of the Treaty and of their equal implementation. Focus should not be placed on one pillar at the expense of others.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports international efforts aimed at empowering women in the field of disarmament and the achievement of gender balance in that field. My country has taken practical steps to support the employment at the international level of professionally competent Saudi women in the field of disarmament and in peacekeeping missions.

My country hopes that the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will break the deadlock that it faces through the establishment of a balanced

and comprehensive programme of work that would allow for the discharge of its responsibilities for the promotion of international peace and security. The Conference has been the sole negotiating multilateral forum on disarmament.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hopes that the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament will achieve concrete results and realize a world free of nuclear weapons and threats, thereby ensuring that our generation and future generations can enjoy stability, peace and security.

**Mr. Tun** (Myanmar): Myanmar associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and the representative of Viet Nam, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

Driven by narrow national interests, the international security environment that underpins the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation mechanism has gone haywire, lessening the likelihood of reducing nuclear stockpiles and strengthening the ill-advised incentives for further proliferation. We all agree that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and there is therefore no point in raising the nuclear ante. Many are of the view that nuclear deterrence is a false sense of confidence that requires a commitment to mass murder, with ample room for miscalculations and accidents. Therefore, the only way to safeguard us from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. Nuclear threats are the most serious security challenge. They jeopardize the existence of humankind and outpace and usher in all other threats, including environmental disasters, humanitarian disasters, economic crises and health problems. That is why it is now of paramount importance for us to reaffirm our faith in the First Committee and redouble our efforts on nuclear disarmament, leading to international peace and security.

We share the disappointment at the failure of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to reach consensus on a final document. Needless to say, stronger multilateral efforts and more flexibility on the part of States parties are needed to fulfil our commitments and obligations under the NPT. Myanmar reiterates its commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of the

nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We once again ask all nuclear-weapon States to fully implement their obligations under the NPT.

We welcome the successful convening of the first Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, held in June.

We are pleased to witness the increased number of State parties of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). However, the entry into force of the CTBT is still a pressing concern for all of us. We therefore call upon all annex 2 States outside that Treaty to ratify it as soon as possible.

Repeated nuclear-capable ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are a great concern for many countries, especially the countries of the region, and are a further destabilizing factor for the regional peace and security of the Korean peninsula. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect all relevant Security Council resolutions.

Myanmar reaffirms its commitment to nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It has been set as a top priority of the disarmament agenda by the elected civilian Government. However, all our efforts were rendered in vain by the illegal military coup in February 2021. History tells us that the military junta has never been a good partner in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Although we agree with the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which is in line with the International Atomic Energy Agency guidelines and the third pillar of the NPT, we wish to stress that it is important to keep a close eye on the inhumane military junta, which recently signed an agreement with a company from the Russian Federation to build a small-scale nuclear power plant in the next few years, despite the worsening economic conditions and the mass exodus of the educated workforce in Myanmar.

In conclusion, Myanmar reaffirms its full commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We will continue to work towards our shared goal of building a world free of nuclear weapons. In doing so, as stated during the general debate (see A/C.1/77/PV.7), Myanmar submitted its traditional draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament" (A/C.1/77/L.42). We express our sincere appreciation to fellow Member States for their support and co-sponsorship.

**Mr. Pereira Sosa** (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Paraguay, which belongs to the first densely populated area free of nuclear weapons, has always reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and has advocated for transparent and irreversible nuclear disarmament for all States. Today more than ever, we reiterate our concern about the danger of the existence, use and threats of use of nuclear weapons, as well as the humanitarian and environmental impact that would have. We underline the importance of the universalization of, and compliance with, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments.

We also consider that, while the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the disarmament regime, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, that instrument is complemented and perfected within the international disarmament architecture that includes the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the declarations of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In that regard, it is urgent that the States that are not party to the NPT adhere to it without further delay. It is also urgent that the annex 2 countries sign and ratify the CTBT, thereby allowing its entry into force. In the same vein, the first Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW and its robust Vienna Declaration and Action Plan, which not only proposes a series of practical measures for the full implementation of the Treaty but is also in line with the application of article VI of the NPT, are clear examples of political commitment and how we can work collectively towards the elimination of those weapons. We thank Austria for its efforts and commitment to the success of that first meeting and reiterate our commitment to Mexico as we prepare for the second. We call on States that are not party to the TPNW to sign and ratify it without delay.

In connection with our work in the Committee, Paraguay will co-sponsor and support — as it traditionally does — the draft resolutions on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons (A/C.1/77/L.16), on the nuclear weapons prohibition treaties, on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (A/C.1/77/L.52) and on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) (A/C.1/77/L.13), among others. We urge delegations to join and support those important initiatives.

As I pointed out last week in this very room (see A/C.1/77/PV.7), nuclear energy should be used only for peaceful purposes. As such, Paraguay reiterates the need to fully respect the inalienable right of all States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. States may implement programmes developed in accordance with international standards, taking into account the best practices of cooperation and harm prevention, while exercising due diligence and shouldering the environmental responsibility that entails. Similarly, Paraguay recognizes the fundamental role played by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its safeguards system in the implementation of State party obligations under the Treaty. The contribution of IAEA-developed nuclear techniques and those derived from nuclear energy to the health, agriculture, industry and environment sectors for non-nuclear and developing countries is an issue of fundamental importance for Paraguay. Once again, we recognize the efforts carried out by the IAEA, especially those undertaken to cope with the health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease and to maintain the physical and technological security of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine.

In conclusion, with an eye towards responding to the great challenges we face as an international community, I wish to reiterate my delegation's commitment to contributing constructively to our work. Nuclear disarmament must be the ultimate objective. In the process that leads us to that objective, let us agree on a regime that strengthens security, but with nuclear energy that is used for peaceful purposes.

**Mr. Tito** (Kiribati): During the second half of the past century, the Pacific region was ravaged by more than 300 nuclear tests. Two great Powers, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, devastated Kiribati when they tested 33 nuclear weapons on Malden and Christmas Islands between 1957 and 1962. Little protection was provided to the hundreds of civilians living on Christmas Island, who subsequently developed terminal radiogenic illnesses, including cancer, which continue to plague the health and lives of their children and grandchildren to this day.

As the nuclear-weapon States developed their weapons, it was our people who suffered from their devastating effects. They thought that our people would easily acquiesce to the use and testing of those weapons. They presumed that the international community would not care about the testing of nuclear weapons in

a remote part of the world. Our suffering at the hands of those nuclear-weapon States in the name of world peace has fully convinced us that nuclear weapons are evil and must not be allowed to be used as instruments of peace and security, whether national, regional or international. They must be erased from the face of the Earth if we really want to be in a better world, as envisioned by the founding fathers of the United Nations. If we are wise and if we love our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, then we have one only one choice to make: the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Due to the tragic legacy of nuclear tests in our home, Kiribati has committed itself to seeking nuclear justice for the victims and communities impacted by nuclear weapons — not only in Kiribati but in all parts of the globe. As a result, Kiribati actively participated in the lead-up to the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and is pleased and appreciative to be allowed to be a co-Chair of the informal working group on victim assistance, environmental remediation, international cooperation and assistance. We strongly support the Action Plan of the TPNW's first Meeting of States Parties, held in Vienna. As part of the Action Plan, States parties agreed on a strong set of commitments to begin implementing the Treaty's obligations on victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation and assistance, under articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty. Those commitments include facilitating the participation of affected communities, civil society and other stakeholders in the process.

In August, Kiribati participated in the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), at which we highlighted the legacy of nuclear tests. We focused on the need for States parties to address the suffering caused by nuclear weapons in the Pacific. I was dismayed by calls from certain States for us to be "less emotional" when discussing nuclear weapons. How could I be less emotional when I personally lost many close colleagues to the illnesses caused by the testing of nuclear weapons? We must talk about the humanitarian consequences of those deadly weapons. For us, it would be illogical to ignore the plight of the survivors and those who perished as a result of those tests. Due to the lack of adherence by the nuclear-weapon States to their nuclear disarmament commitments, we will continue to express our profound concern and worry

about the qualitative and quantitative advancements and modernization of their nuclear arsenals and their exorbitant spending on nuclear weapon programmes. We will continue to regard such behaviour as unfriendly, irresponsible, dangerous, heartless and inhuman.

Over the past few weeks, Kiribati monitored the developments in Geneva. Our Pacific colleagues who have missions in Geneva submitted to the Human Rights Council an important draft resolution entitled “Technical assistance and capacity building to address the human rights implications of the nuclear legacy in the Marshall Islands”, which is a neighbour of Kiribati. The draft resolution calls for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to cooperate with the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the field of human rights and to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to the National Nuclear Commission of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in advancing its national strategy for nuclear justice and determining its technical assistance and capacity-building needs with respect to its pursuit of transitional justice in its efforts to address the nuclear legacy. We fully support that initiative of the Marshall Islands.

**Mr. Vidal** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

As we pointed out during the general debate (see A/C.1/77/PV.3), we recognize the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the international disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear safety architecture. Along the same lines, we consider that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons strengthens and is fully compatible with the NPT. We insist on the need for a prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and urge those States listed in annex 2, whose ratification is essential for the CTBT to enter into force, to accelerate the signature and/or ratification of that instrument without further delay. That seems fundamental to us, because the three treaties I mentioned serve as a framework of reference for nuclear weapons to never be used again. Threats made in their name cannot be tolerated. We all agree that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, but the only way that will work is to completely free ourselves of those weapons. We reiterate the importance of immediately beginning negotiations on a treaty that

prohibits fissile material, including previously existing stocks. We must redouble our efforts to ensure general and complete disarmament, while always encouraging genuine and broad multilateral debate.

Chile adheres to the principle of the indivisibility of international security since all States, regardless of their size or power, have the responsibility of contributing to the strengthening of an international order that is based on multilateralism and cooperation and that is regulated by international law, including international humanitarian law. We share the clear concerns of a significant number of countries regarding the existence of nuclear weapons, since their use or detonation would cause catastrophic humanitarian consequences that transcend national borders; have serious implications for survival, the environment, economic and social development, food security and the health of current and future generations; and would also have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. We therefore regret that there was no consensus on a final document and as a result no consensus on an action plan at the recent tenth NPT Review Conference.

Finally, we wish once again to highlight the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in providing education and promoting the use of nuclear technology, which has allowed fundamental developments in access to various beneficial applications in fields such as medicine, industry, agriculture, the environment, industry and science.

**Mr. Makarevich** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is one of the key elements and pillars of not only the non-proliferation regime but also the international security system as a whole. The hope that a new post-Cold War system of international relations would be based on mutual respect and cooperation rather than on rivalry led to a false sense of complacency. Peace and security have come to be taken for granted, and the issues of non-proliferation and disarmament were put on the backburner and lost their value and, as we then thought, their relevance. The progressive degradation of the systemic basis of international and European security, the unprecedented escalation of disagreements among States, the ignoring of the principles of the indivisibility of security and the preoccupation with each other's problems led to a violent armed conflict in Europe. All of that has occurred against the backdrop of the ongoing dissolution of international instruments that regulate arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.



The lack of mutual trust has strengthened control and exacerbated confrontation, which inevitably leads to increased risks in the nuclear sphere. Nuclear weapons are no longer considered a political instrument for deterrence that should never be used.

Against that backdrop, the February 2021 extension of the Russian-American agreement to further decrease and limit nuclear arsenals and the joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear States on preventing a nuclear war and avoiding an arms race issued in January this year are a demonstration of a responsible approach taken by nuclear Powers that deserves unconditional support. We believe that we must now take decisive measures aimed at bolstering the NPT and progressively moving towards a world without nuclear weapons. For its part, Belarus is ready to support all constructive efforts in that area, including through the following steps.

First, we must take specific measures to decrease nuclear risks by making the nuclear disarmament process, multilateral and irreversible. A special role and responsibility in this regard should be assigned to nuclear-weapon States.

Secondly, we must ensure the rapid entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which is a critically important element in achieving nuclear disarmament goals. The Treaty, which has been ratified by 173 States, is almost universal in nature.

Thirdly, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones requires fresh impetus. In the mid-1990s, Belarus proposed the idea of creating a Central and Eastern European zone free of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, Belarus' expression of goodwill and call were not heeded at that time.

Fourthly, we should consider the development of a global legally binding agreement by which nuclear-weapon States provide non-nuclear-weapon States with unambiguous and unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The effectiveness of our efforts and long-term solutions on nuclear weapons and non-proliferation form the basis of peace, security and stability in the world, and ultimately our continued survival.

**Mr. Haddad** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): The United Arab Emirates aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Iraq, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

My country reiterates its interest in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security through the establishment of a world free from nuclear weapons. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. My country regrets the failure of the recent NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document for the second time in a row. We would also like to stress the essential role of the Review Conference in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. My country attaches great importance to the full implementation of the outcomes of all previous NPT Review Conferences. The United Arab Emirates therefore urges the States parties to undertake consultations and dialogue and to take all the necessary steps to achieve progress to that end.

My country reiterates our call to all States to commit to the international conventions and instruments on nuclear security and safety, since that will promote international peace and security. My country also stresses the importance of adopting a transparent approach to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy pursuant to relevant treaties, in particular the NPT. We look forward to participating in the third session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held in November, and we affirm the importance of the full and active participation of all parties in the Conference.

In view of the growing threats with regard to the continued existence, acquisition and development of nuclear weapons, it is the responsibility of the annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The United Arab Emirates also stresses the pivotal role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system as the credible mechanism for guaranteeing the use of nuclear material and facilities for exclusively peaceful purposes. As we are committed to the non-proliferation regime, my country concluded a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the Agency and signed its Additional Protocol. We reiterate our call to the countries concerning which there are questions about their nuclear activities to cooperate with the IAEA as needed and constructively respond to its questions, while taking all the necessary steps to address international concerns regarding their nuclear activities and restore confidence in their peaceful nature. We reaffirm our commitment to complying with the highest standards of safety and transparency in our national nuclear energy programme.

In conclusion, we believe that full and complete participation of all will lead to consensus and that adopting a multilateral approach under the auspices of the United Nations is the best means to achieve our desired objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

**Mrs. Kuzee** (Namibia): Namibia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf of the Group of African States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively (see A/C.1/77/PV.11). I would like to add a few additional points in my national capacity.

Namibia, as one of the world's largest uranium producers, does not support the use of its uranium for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices. Nuclear weapons are a source of international antagonism, instilling fear and posing endless threats of the use of destructive force to entrench international instability, and we should continue to promote their non-proliferation and elimination. The continued heightened global tensions should not discourage us from taking action to continue demanding that; rather, it should give impetus to our commitment to re-engage within the provisions of multilateralism. Namibia reiterates its disappointment that the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) failed to reach a conclusive outcome, and we also reiterate that all nuclear-weapon States, without exception, should be obliged to subject their arsenals, facilities and programmes to international scrutiny, verification and International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. We call on those who contemplate the development or production of nuclear weapons to refrain from that dangerous path, as a nuclear war cannot be won and must be avoided at all costs.

Having ratified the Pelindaba Treaty, which establishes the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, Namibia supports and is committed to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world. Nuclear-weapon-free zones represent legal and political achievements that pave the way for global prohibition and the subsequent elimination of nuclear weapons. Therefore, we reiterate our unwavering support for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with the relevant General Assembly and the Security Council resolutions. In the same vein, Namibia welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty

on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), on 22 January 2021, and the convening of the first Meeting of the State Parties thereto earlier this year. The TPNW is the only multilateral treaty that calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and in that regard complements nuclear-weapon-free zones and the NPT. Consistent with our obligations to uphold nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament global norms, Namibia ratified the TPNW on 21 March 2020.

We would like to emphasize that, while those instruments complement each other, it is important to not confuse the concepts of prohibition and elimination. The prohibition of nuclear weapons is an essential foundation for their total elimination. The former should not be hostage to the latter. According to resolution 71/258, a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons should be conceived as leading towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Namibia remains concerned that nuclear-weapon States continue to spend tremendous amounts of money to modernize, upgrade, refurbish and extend the lives of their nuclear weapons and related facilities. In our pursuit of a nuclear weapons-free world, as envisaged by the NPT and other mechanisms, no State party is too big to do it alone, and no State party is too small to make a contribution.

Last but not least, as we commemorate the twenty-second anniversary this month of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, Namibia is pleased to note the effort to internalize the gendered impact of nuclear weapons and will continue to advance the recognition of women and girls and the mainstreaming of their participation in disarmament processes. We believe that to be an acknowledgement of the value of the full, meaningful and equal participation of women in all peace processes, while continuing to keep top of mind the impact of nuclear weapons on women and girls.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

**Archbishop Caccia** (Holy See): My delegation is glad to join the discussion on the urgent need to advance progress on nuclear disarmament at a time when the risk of nuclear war is at the highest point it has been in generations. Regrettably, we have been moving in the wrong direction. Important disarmament and transparency treaties have been discarded, and the disarmament machinery remains deadlocked, with no progress towards the adoption of a treaty banning

the production of fissile material. In addition, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is in a state of legal limbo despite further ratifications. On top of that, the States that possess nuclear weapons are expanding and modernizing their arsenals, squandering resources that could address the world's hunger crisis and contribute to advance integral human development. The Holy See condemns any rhetoric that irresponsibly portends nuclear escalation, which would have devastating effects for all humankind, and not only the States directly involved in the conflict. To avoid nuclear war, the Holy See calls on all States that possess nuclear weapons to take immediate steps to reduce the operational readiness of their nuclear forces, adopt no-first-use policies and support long-term policies that establish a global ceiling on nuclear stockpiles, from which reductions can be made.

In the light of recent developments, it is unsurprising — although regrettable — that the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) failed to reach a consensus. That is another sign that some States seem to be disconnected from the collective security and peace of others. To ensure that peace is just and lasting, we must all recognize its indivisible nature. On the other hand, the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is more than welcome progress in that regard. In that Treaty, while committing to the ban on possessing nuclear weapons, States parties recognize that nuclear weapons are not guarantors of security but instruments that serve a mentality of fear with the potential to harm indiscriminately, whether detonated purposefully or inadvertently.

Conscious of that, the Holy See renews its concern regarding the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of nuclear weapons. Such effects are not abstract or theoretical. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, along with the more than 2,000 tests conducted worldwide, have shown us the very real harms that nuclear weapons inflict, including death, radiation sickness, birth defects and cancer, while also rendering certain environments uninhabitable. Indeed, working towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons means also that those responsible must redress those harms.

In that regard, the TPNW offers a pathway for redress through its provisions on victim assistance and environmental remediation. In fact, the Vienna Action

Plan, which was adopted during the first Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, calls for States to discuss the feasibility of, and propose possible guidelines for, establishing an international trust fund for States that have been affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons. Should such a fund be established, it is important that States, including those not party to the TPNW, be invited to contribute funds, share expertise and exchange information on their provision of assistance to those affected by nuclear weapons. Allowing for the broadest possible participation could help build bridges between TPNW-supporting States and those that are not yet party to it, while also facilitating the largest possible pool of resources for fulfilling the Treaty's positive obligations.

The Holy See commends efforts aimed at fostering cooperation in nuclear disarmament verification, which will not only create a culture of trust but also provide us with much-needed hope that a world free of nuclear weapons is possible. Indeed, such a world is not only possible but also necessary for safeguarding the future of humankind and our common home.

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

**Mr. Kasabri (Palestine):** The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/77/PV.11).

The State of Palestine stresses the importance of fully adhering to the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, and reaffirms that the existence, use and threat of use of weapons of mass destruction under any circumstances constitutes a grave breach of the fundamental principles of international law and the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. The State of Palestine believes that the only way to eliminate the danger and threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, is their total elimination. The State of Palestine reaffirms that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global regime on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In that regard, we reiterate our deep disappointment over the back-to-back failure of the ninth and tenth Review Conferences of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. That stalemate is one of the reasons for the erosion of the credibility of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In that

context, the State of Palestine urges all States parties to the NPT to act nationally, bilaterally and through multilateral frameworks, as well as within the sphere of the Charter of the United Nations and all international conventions and norms, in order to advance the commitments and obligations that fall on each and every one of us.

The State of Palestine is proud to have taken part in the elaboration of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to have been among the first States to join it, contributing to its early entry into force. The Treaty codifies and furthers the existing rules of international law and contributes to upholding them, including by addressing a major gap between nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction for which binding agreements have been reached, prohibiting them in accordance with the most basic rules of international humanitarian law. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons does not contradict the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but rather complements it and advances the achievement of its objectives.

The State of Palestine stresses once again the importance and contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the strengthening of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime and recalls the necessity of supporting all efforts made in that regard. In that context, we welcome the convening of the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East, which was held in November 2019 under the presidency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as well as the success of that session in reaching positive results and adopting several important substantive decisions. We also welcome the convening of the second session, under the presidency of the State of Kuwait, which succeeded in adopting the rules of procedures for the Conference and led to the establishment of an informal working committee tasked with continuing the consultations, in addition to the adoption of a final report. We look forward to a successful third session of the Conference, to be held under the presidency of Lebanon.

The State of Palestine reiterates that the Conference represents a framework that allows for the participation of all parties and takes its decisions by consensus. Therefore, the Conference does not exclude anyone, even if one party, Israel, decides to boycott it for a clear reason — its desire to continue to possess nuclear

weapons illegally — and considers that it is itself above the law and that everyone must abide by the rules while it enjoys every exception, thereby threatening the security and safety of our region and undermining international disarmament and the non-proliferation regime. The State of Palestine invites all countries to support the Conference, including nuclear-weapon States, especially the sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East region.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the observer of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

**Ms. Okeke** (International Atomic Energy Agency): As this is the first time that we take the floor, on behalf of the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, I congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. I thank you for the excellent manner in which you have been conducting the work of the Committee and assure you and the rest of the Bureau of the full support of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the execution of the work of the Committee before us.

The IAEA's statutory objective is to seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world and to ensure, as far as it is able, that assistance provided by it, or at its request or under its supervision or control, is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose. Over the six decades of its existence, the IAEA has pursued and adapted its programme of work within the framework of its statute to meet the evolving needs and developmental goals of its member States. The IAEA has firmly established itself as a unique multidisciplinary organization in the United Nations system, responsible for the international activities related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including those related to energy security, human health, food security and safety, water resource management and industrial applications.

The IAEA makes a vital contribution to international peace and security through its verification work conducted through its safeguards system of internationally agreed legal and technical measures aimed at independently verifying a State's commitment not to divert nuclear material from peaceful nuclear activities to nuclear weapons. Through early detection of any diversion of nuclear material or misuse of technology, the IAEA alerts the world of potential



nuclear proliferation. The IAEA has also responded to member States' requests for assistance in overcoming the consequences of regional or global medical emergencies, natural disasters, industrial accidents and, lately, military conflict endangering nuclear safety, nuclear security and safeguards implementation.

I note that delegations made several references to the important work of the IAEA, particularly the efforts of the Director-General to ensure the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, I would therefore like to provide a quick update on some of the Director-General's recent activities.

From the outset, the Director-General noted the seven pillars of nuclear safety and security for nuclear facilities, including those in Ukraine. The seven pillars have to do with respect for the physical integrity of nuclear facilities, whether it is reactors, fuel ponds or radioactive waste stores, and all safety, security and functionality of the equipment systems. The operating staff must be able to fulfil their respective safety and security duties and have the capacity to make decisions free of undue pressure. There must be a secure off-site power supply from the grid for all nuclear sites. There must be uninterrupted logistical supply chains and transportation to and from the sites. There must be effective on-site and off-site radiation monitoring systems and emergency preparedness and response measures. And finally, there must be reliable communications with the regulator and others.

The Director-General indicated that those seven pillars had been compromised in the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine. In that regard, he led three assistance missions to Ukraine, one to the Chornobyl nuclear power plant and exclusion zone following the withdrawal of Russian troops from the site and the South Ukraine nuclear power plant. That has led to the re-establishment of the flow of safeguards information, the measurement of radiation in the environment and the assessment of Ukraine's needs and the delivery of a preliminary batch of assistance equipment.

Recently, the Director-General yet again lead a team of IAEA experts on a safety and security assistance mission to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, while also leaving there a team of IAEA experts. I thank delegations that welcomed the presence of the IAEA experts at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and the stability it seems to have brought to the situation.

At the 6 September 2022 briefing to the Security Council by the Director-General (see S/PV.9124), he proposed the establishment of a safety and security zone around the parameters of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and environs. In that regard, he has undertaken missions to Saint Petersburg and Kyiv, where he met with President Putin and President Zelenskyy, respectively. He has also reported that discussions in that regard is progressing.

Last August, Director-General Grossi addressed the plenary of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and noted that the IAEA is the place where Member States partner with scientists, inspectors, diplomats, doctors, engineers and many other experts to bring the letter of the NPT to life every day. The IAEA is the vehicle by which the goal of the NPT — to spread the benefits of the atom while limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons — is advanced. As the NPT starts its next review cycle, the IAEA will continue to work to ensure that goal is met.

Director-General Grossi has promised that the IAEA will continue to play its supporting role in tackling the triple energy-food-climate crisis the world is presently facing. In that regard, the IAEA plans to have, for the first time in its history, a nuclear energy pavilion at the upcoming twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, to highlight the role of nuclear techniques in supporting countries in climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, namely, climate-smart agriculture, sustainable land-water use, the environment, as well as energy transition.

The Director-General is also committed to creating a more gender-balanced work force within the IAEA and in the nuclear sector more broadly. Overall, women now make up 40 per cent of the professional and higher categories at the Agency, and the goal is to reach 50 per cent parity by 2025. I also note the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, which is in its third year and has granted scholarships to over 310 females to pursue master's degrees in nuclear science and technology, nuclear law and other related subjects.

I also want to inform the Committee that the IAEA's international symposium on safeguards and international ministerial conference will be held in Washington, D.C., and I urge member States to participate.

In conclusion, I reiterate the IAEA's support for the successful work of the First Committee.

**The Chair:** The Committee has just heard from the last speaker on cluster "Nuclear weapons". I shall now call on those speakers who have requested the floor in exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I would like to remind delegations that the first intervention is limited to five minutes and the second intervention to three minutes.

I give the floor to the representative of the European Union.

**Mr. Karczmarz** (European Union): I regret that I have to take the floor in response to the statement by the representative of the Russian Federation exercising its right of reply at the end of yesterday's discussion in the First Committee (see A/C.1/77/PV.12).

The European Union (EU) firmly rejects and unequivocally condemns the illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson regions, which followed the sham so-called referendums that took place amid widespread and systematic abuses of human rights, as well as the intimidation of Ukrainian citizens, by Russia. The EU does not and will never recognize the illegal annexation, just as we have never recognized the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol in 2014. Those regions are part of Ukraine.

Last week, the General Assembly sent a clear message to the Russian Federation condemning its attempt to annex Ukrainian territory. The adoption of the resolution entitled "Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the

United Nations" (resolution ES-11/4) confirmed that the overwhelming majority of nations stand ready to defend the Charter of the United Nations and reject Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its people. The resolution demanded that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

By wilfully undermining the rules-based international order and blatantly and repeatedly violating Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, Russia is putting global peace and security at risk. Taking territory by the use of force is unacceptable. Protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all United Nations States Members, regardless of their size or power, is our collective duty and a core principle of the Charter of the United Nations.

Moreover, the occupation by Russian armed forces of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and Russia's military operations conducted in the vicinity of that civilian nuclear facility in Ukraine are unacceptable and add to the gravity of the situation. The EU condemns that irresponsible act and fully supports the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and welcomes the recent visit to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant of the IAEA inspection team.

**The Chair:** We have exhausted the time available for this meeting. The Committee will reconvene here this afternoon to hear the remaining speakers in the exercise of the right of reply, and we will begin the thematic discussions under the cluster "Other weapons of mass destruction".

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*