



# General Assembly

Seventy-first session

## First Committee

**11**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Friday, 14 October 2016, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Boukadoum . . . . . (Algeria)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)

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

**The Chair:** In accordance with the programme of work, the Committee will first hear a briefing by the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, His Excellency Mr. Thani Thongphakdi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations in Geneva. A note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Open-ended Working Group is contained in document A/71/371. Following the statement by the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group, the Committee will change to an informal mode to afford delegations an opportunity to ask questions. Thereafter, the Committee will continue listening to statements on the nuclear-weapons cluster.

Before giving the floor to Ambassador Thongphakdi, I wish to express, on behalf of the First Committee, all delegations and the Chair, my heartfelt condolences and those of the Committee to the royal family, the Government and the people of Thailand on the passing of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. His Majesty was highly respected by the international community, and we join the plenary of the General Assembly in paying tribute to him on his many outstanding achievements.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Thongphakdi.

**Mr. Thongphakdi** (Thailand): I thank the Chair for his kind gesture. I have the honour of presenting the report of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, which has been issued as document A/71/371. I wish first to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all States, international organizations, academic institutions and members of civil society that participated in the Working Group. I believe the discussions were frank and interactive. They were also deeply enriched by the experts who participated in the panels.

As Chair, I made every effort to conduct the work of the Working Group in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, consulting with all stakeholders, including those delegations that did not participate in the meetings of the Working Group. In that way, I endeavoured to keep all States and relevant international and non-governmental organizations informed of the proceedings of the Working Group.

The report of the Working Group attempts to reflect, in a fair and balanced way, the wide range of views and proposals expressed. It identifies important areas of convergence while summarizing in a factual and proportionate manner all the important ideas raised during the substantive sessions.

Part IV of the report of the Working Group addresses the substantive discussions and is structured along the lines of the mandate provided by the General Assembly in resolution 70/33.

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Section A is devoted to the general exchange of views. It is noted that deliberations were underpinned by deep concern about the threat to humankind posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any nuclear-weapon detonation. The risk of those catastrophic humanitarian consequences will persist as long as nuclear weapons exist. The increased awareness of, and well-documented presentations on, the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons compelled urgent and necessary action by all States leading to a world without nuclear weapons. The Working Group also reaffirmed the need for all States to comply at all times with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law. Section A also reflects the various positions regarding the current status of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, the notion of a legal gap in the current international framework for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and the relevance of the international security environment and current geopolitical situation.

Section B deals with the issues set out in paragraph 2 of resolution 70/33 and addresses the concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. It describes the main approaches that were considered to achieve this end, including, inter alia, the pursuit of a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination; a comprehensive nuclear-weapon convention that would set out general obligations, prohibitions and practical arrangements for time-bound, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament; and a framework agreement comprising either a set of mutually reinforcing instruments that would deal progressively with various aspects of the nuclear-disarmament process, a hybrid approach or a progressive approach, with a focus on the importance of the existing global regime, in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and consisting of parallel and simultaneous effective legal and non-legal measures.

It was noted by some participants that the various approaches were partially overlapping, not necessarily mutually exclusive, and could make different contributions to nuclear disarmament. Importantly, the Working Group affirmed that the development of any effective legal measures for nuclear disarmament could be aimed only at strengthening the nuclear-disarmament

and non-proliferation regime and at implementing article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and that such measures should complement and strengthen the Treaty.

Section C addresses other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations, including, but not limited to, first, transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons, such as the provision of standardized information at regular intervals on the number, type and status of nuclear warheads in their possession or within their territories, and measures taken to reduce risks, de-alert or reduce the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems; secondly, measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear-weapon detonations, such as practical measures to reduce the number of deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons, diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and ensure the protection of nuclear-weapons command-and-control systems from cyberthreats; and, thirdly, additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of, and interrelationship among, the wide range of humanitarian consequences that would result from any nuclear detonation. Such measures would include the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation education, the inclusion of information in history textbooks on the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as on the consequences of nuclear testing, including in the South Pacific and elsewhere, support for efforts to raise awareness at the grass-roots level about the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons across national borders and generations, including on interconnected issues such as sustainable development, the environment, climate change, the protection of cultural heritage, human rights, humanitarian action, children's rights, public health and gender, with special emphasis on the unique impact of nuclear weapons on the health of women and girls.

Other suggestions were also made, including for the immediate return to substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament through the adoption of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work; for efforts to facilitate further major reductions in nuclear arsenals, including steps to reduce levels of hostility and tension between States, particularly among those possessing nuclear weapons; for the strengthening of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the establishment of

new ones, including, as a priority, in the Middle East, through the implementation of the 1995 NPT resolution on the Middle East; and for the cessation of all efforts to upgrade and modernize existing nuclear weapons in ways that result in new military capabilities or the enabling of new military missions.

The examples I have given are indicative only of the various suggestions made by different States relating to the issues set out in paragraph 3 of resolution 70/33, which are listed in this section.

Part V includes the conclusions and agreed recommendations of the Working Group. The Working Group recommended that additional efforts can and should be pursued to elaborate the concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. It reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the commitments made therein. It further considered that the pursuit of any such measures, provisions and norms should complement and strengthen the nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regime, including the three pillars of the Treaty.

The Working Group recommended, with widespread support, the convening by the General Assembly of a conference in 2017, open to all States, with the participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society, to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. The Working Group recognized that some States did not agree with that recommendation and that, instead, they recommended that any process to take forward multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations would have to address national, international and collective security concerns. The Working Group also supported the pursuit of practical steps, in the form of parallel and simultaneous effective legal and non-legal measures, to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. The Working Group nevertheless recognized views expressed in support of other approaches.

The Working Group also recommended that States should consider implementing, as appropriate, the various measures suggested in the present report that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations, including, but not limited to, those suggested in the context of paragraph 3 of resolution 70/33.

The work of the Working Group did not take place within a vacuum. Rather, it came about nearly 40 years after the General Assembly, meeting at its first special session devoted to disarmament, agreed to a programme of action that listed nuclear disarmament as the highest priority. It has now been 20 years since the United Nations disarmament machinery last conducted multilateral negotiations on a legally binding instrument relating to nuclear disarmament. Against that backdrop, it is my sincere hope that the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group, as reflected in its report, will help take forward multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations, leading to the attainment of our shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

**The Chair:** In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I will now suspend the meeting in order to give delegations an opportunity to have an interactive discussion in an informal question-and-answer format on the introduction we have just heard.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.20 p.m. and resumed at 3.35 p.m.*

**The Chair:** The floor is now open for the remaining speakers on the nuclear-weapons cluster.

I once again urge all speakers to kindly observe the five-minute time limit when speaking in their national capacity and the seven-minute time limit when speaking on behalf of a group. The buzzer is still here; it has been installed to remind delegations that the time limit has been reached.

**Ms. Yparraguirre (Philippines):** I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my country, the Philippines.

At the outset, on behalf of the ASEAN community, I wish to convey to the Government and the people of Thailand our sincerest condolences on the passing of His Majesty the King of Thailand. A great statesman has passed from us. He was a monarch of unwavering integrity, abiding humility and steadfast dedication to his people. We offer our prayers for His Majesty's eternal rest.

We thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials for their comprehensive and informative briefings on 13 October

(see A/C.1/71/PV.10) on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of international organizations with mandates in this field.

From the day that the United Nations was established, Member States have expressed themselves on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, the threats that existing nuclear-weapon arsenals pose to the very existence of the human race, the overwhelming desire by the international community to eliminate these weapons, and the roadblocks that remain in the path towards this goal. It is in that context that ASEAN reiterates its firm commitment to the work of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. We are resolute in our belief that nuclear disarmament, together with the total elimination of nuclear weapons, is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use.

ASEAN is pleased with the conduct and the outcome of the work of the Open-ended Working Group in the meetings held in Geneva earlier this year and congratulates Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations Office in Geneva, for his competent and balanced chairmanship. In the face of the lack of progress at the nuclear-disarmament negotiating table in recent years, the Working Group offers the international community an unprecedented opportunity to inject momentum into reaching the next critical steps to move the nuclear-disarmament agenda forward. In that context, ASEAN supports the call to convene a conference in 2017, open to all States and with contributions from international organizations and civil society, to negotiate an international legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons and leading towards their total elimination.

ASEAN reaffirms its commitment to do its part in strengthening the nuclear-disarmament architecture. The Humanitarian Pledge encapsulates the principles behind our shared goal to achieve a nuclear global zero that contributes to the collective security of the human race. We continue to recognize the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, and we look forward to strengthening it further next year, in preparation for the next NPT review cycle. We call on all States parties to the NPT to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of their existing obligations under article VI of the Treaty.

ASEAN also recognizes the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a fundamental pillar of the global nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We welcome the ratification of the CTBT by Angola, Swaziland and Myanmar as important steps towards the shared goal of universal adherence. We join the call for the remaining annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible and finally realize its entry into force.

Accordingly, ASEAN expresses concern regarding the joint statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the nuclear-weapon States issued on 15 September 2016, and rejects their assertion that their nuclear-stockpile maintenance and stewardship programmes are consistent with NPT and CTBT objectives. We would like to underline that any form of voluntary moratorium on nuclear-weapon testing is no substitute for the CTBT, pending its entry into force.

ASEAN will continue to support the work of establishing zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction all over the world, in particular in the Middle East. We are committed to preserving the South-East Asia region as a zone free nuclear weapons and of all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the ASEAN Charter. Further, we stress the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Treaty, including through the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2013-2017). ASEAN, as a group and in our members' individual national capacities, is actively engaged in discussions in the First Committee on the various draft resolutions that aim to advance the discourse and action on nuclear weapons and disarmament. We will likewise actively participate in the discussions on nuclear terrorism, fissile material cut-off, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the situation in the Korean peninsula.

The global community has managed to set up a framework that paves the way for global nuclear disarmament through the various relevant legal instruments. However, this framework will remain ineffective as long as the nuclear-weapon States continue to be unwilling to fill in the gaps, address its weaknesses and pursue complementarities. We therefore call on the nuclear-weapon States to do their part and, once and for all, bring to fruition our collective efforts to achieve a nuclear-free world.

**Mr. Ayoko** (Nigeria): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

On behalf of the Group, I extend condolences to Thailand on the passing of His Majesty the King.

The Group aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.10). The full text of our statement will be posted on PaperSmart.

The total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. In that context, the Group reiterates the urgent need for our world, including outer space, to be free of nuclear weapons, as their presence constitutes an existential threat to the planet, global peace and the future survival of humankind.

Africa supports the principle of complete nuclear disarmament as a fundamental prerequisite for maintaining international peace and security. In that regard, the African Group welcomes the recent report (A/71/371, annex) of the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals for taking forward multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations, including the recommendation to convene a United Nations conference in 2017 to negotiate a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination. Such a treaty would serve as a significant step towards the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Group regrets that the ninth 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. The Group also reiterates its deep concern about the slow pace in the progress towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States to achieve the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, in accordance with their legal obligations and undertakings. The Group therefore insists on the implementation of all agreed measures and undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States in the context of the Treaty.

The African Group welcomes the third General Assembly plenary meeting in commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September 2016, and underscores the importance of resolution 70/34 as an integral part of the multilateral disarmament effort. The full implementation of this resolution undoubtedly provides

a concrete road map for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament, particularly in its call to urgently commence negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

The Group reaffirms the contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the objectives of the NPT, including nuclear disarmament across all regions of the world. In that context, the African Group reiterates its commitment to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, which reaffirms the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and provides a shield for the African territory, including by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting the testing of such weapons throughout the entire space that constitutes the African continent.

In the same vein, the African Group reiterates its deep concern that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference have not been implemented. In particular, the Group remains deeply disappointed at the inability to convene the agreed conference on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, which should have been held about four years ago, in 2012. The Group wishes to further stress that the 1995 resolution remains an integral and fundamental part of the package and the basis upon which the NPT was indefinitely extended. The Group wishes to underline the resolution's continued validity and presence on its list of objectives.

The African Group underscores the importance of continuing respect for the inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and stresses the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in that regard through technical assistance and cooperation, maximizing the use of science and technology for socioeconomic development and continuing to ensure States' commitments to the implementation of IAEA safeguards agreements.

The Group wishes to emphasize humanitarian considerations in the context of all deliberations on nuclear weapons, particularly its serious concern over the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use or detonation of nuclear weapons, either by accident or as a deliberate action. The Group wishes to further highlight the importance of resolution 70/47 and calls on all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to

take into consideration the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of these weapons on human health, the environment and vital economic resources, inter alia, and take the necessary measures aimed at dismantling and renouncing such weapons. In that context, the Group strongly supports the call for the banning of nuclear weapons, as they are the only weapons of mass destruction not prohibited by an international legal instrument.

With respect to achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and bearing in mind in particular that the special responsibilities of the nuclear-weapon States are of importance to the African Group, we call upon the annex 2 countries to ratify the Treaty and facilitate its entry into force.

While reaffirming the importance of the work entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the Group expresses its concern at the many years of impasse that have prevented the CD from fulfilling its mandate as the world's sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. The Group calls on the CD to resume substantive work, taking into account the security interests of all States, without further delay.

The African Group stresses the need to de-emphasize security dependence on nuclear weapons and considers any doctrine justifying their use as unacceptable. The Group further supports, as a high priority, the call for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances by the nuclear-weapon States to all non-nuclear-weapon States, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, the African Group has submitted the draft resolution on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. We thank delegations for their continued support for it. The Group undertakes to be constructive in its engagement with other Member States to fulfil the goal and objective of a nuclear-weapon free world.

**Mr. Biontino** (Germany): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI).

The NPDI condemns in the strongest possible terms North Korea's nuclear test conducted on 9 September 2016. The test marked the second nuclear test conducted by North Korea in only eight months, despite repeated calls by the international community to fully comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, resolutions of the International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA) and other commitments, and to conduct no further provocations, including nuclear tests and ballistic-missile launches.

North Korea's nuclear-weapon programme, including the latest nuclear test, is a clear violation of relevant Security Council and IAEA resolutions and the joint statement of the Six-Party Talks. It represents a grave challenge to the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime centred on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The latest nuclear test underscores the urgency of further strengthening the international framework for disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, including achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty at the earliest possible date, the urgent negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear devices, and the taking forward of the 2010 NPT Review Conference outcome, in particular the Action Plan.

North Korea's nuclear-weapon and ballistic-missile programmes seriously threaten regional and global peace and security, particularly given the fact that this year, also in contravention of Security Council and IAEA resolutions, North Korea has launched more than 20 ballistic missiles that could serve as a means to deliver nuclear weapons.

The NPDI calls upon States to take all the necessary measures without delay to implement resolution 2270 (2016). We welcome the Security Council's continuing efforts to respond to North Korea's continued provocations with further significant measures.

As the NPDI has repeatedly done, we again strongly urge North Korea to refrain from conducting any further provocative actions, including nuclear tests or ballistic-missile launches. The NPDI also urges North Korea to fully comply with all of its international nuclear obligations, including the relevant Security Council resolutions, live up to its commitments under the joint statement of the Six-Party Talks, return to compliance with its IAEA Safeguards Agreement and the NPT, immediately cease all nuclear activities and abandon all nuclear weapons and ballistic-missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

**Mr. Samvelian** (Armenia): At the outset, let me express our deepest and most sincere condolences to the

people and the Government of Thailand on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

*(spoke in Russian)*

Today I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) — the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Russian Federation.

The States members of the CSTO express serious concern over the growing risks, threats and instability throughout the world and the increase in factors negatively impacting global strategic stability. There has also been an increase in conflict in international relations, which has led to the erosion of principles of equal responsibility for peace and stability, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. CSTO members wish to emphasize that the deployment of a global anti-ballistic missile system, the development of conventional long-range precision-guided weapons capable of achieving strategic objectives, the threat of the development and deployment of space-strike weapons, quantitative and qualitative imbalances in conventional arms and a lack of progress in ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty are all serious threats to international peace and stability and hinder further progress in the area of nuclear disarmament.

In that context, States members of the CSTO wish to recall that, under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Code of Conduct on the Politico-Military Aspects of Security, adopted in 1994, security is indivisible, with the security of each State being inextricably linked to the security of all other States. I would also recall the commitment to refrain from strengthening one's own security at the expense of that of others. The CSTO member States reiterate their commitment to the concept of comprehensive, cooperative, equal and indivisible security and promote settling conflicts exclusively through peaceful, political means.

The States members of the CSTO welcome the conclusion of international agreements in the area of reducing and limiting nuclear weapons, which must be fully implemented by all parties. We urge all nuclear-weapon States to join the discussion on possible ways to make the process of reducing and eliminating nuclear

weapons a multilateral one in the interest of building a nuclear-free world.

The States members of the CSTO note the importance of preventing the placement of weapons in outer space in order to avoid turning outer space into an area of armed confrontation. They emphasize the relevance of the goal of developing an international legally binding agreement that would ensure that outer space remains free of weapons, based on the Russia-China draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We particularly emphasize the importance of the international initiative and political commitment on "No first placement of weapons in outer space" as the first step towards implementing the treaty and as a highly important transparency and confidence-building measure in outer space activities.

We are deeply concerned by the growing threat of terrorist organizations and criminal groups acquiring chemical and biological weapons and using them for terrorism, violent extremism and other criminal activities. To counter this threat, it is necessary to refine the relevant international legal framework. In that regard, it is especially important to continue supporting the development at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva of a convention on countering chemical and biological terrorism.

Important tools for strengthening international security and stability include arms control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. All measures in this area must be governed by the fundamental principles set out in the Final Document (resolution A/S-10/2) of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, which retain their full relevance. It is imperative that any action in the area of disarmament and arms reduction be fair and balanced and lead to the strengthening of the security of every State, rather than remain in the realm of mere words.

States members of the CSTO support the joint efforts of all countries in striving to strengthen strategic stability in all its aspects as the basis for ensuring lasting peace and reliable, equitable and indivisible security for all. To achieve that goal, we call upon the international community to urgently begin developing a comprehensive programme based on the following principles.

In the political sphere, we call for strict compliance by all States and groups of States with the principles and norms of international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations that govern the use of force and coercive measures, respect for the legitimate interests of States and peoples in dealing with pressing international issues and examining regional situations, and the inadmissibility of unauthorized interference in the internal affairs of other States.

In the military area, we call for the consistent reduction of military capabilities, developing confidence- and security-building measures and transparency measures and refraining from the threat or use of force, purposely eschewing any military build-up that could be interpreted by other members of the international community as a threat to their national security and which could force them to take commensurate actions.

The States members of the CSTO call on all members of the international community to act on the basis of the principles I have mentioned, with the aim of strengthening international peace, security and stability and with the intention of moving forward on the same basis to promote dialogue, cooperation and exchanges with all interested States, including with the purpose of reinforcing the viability of key multilateral instruments in the area of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

**Mr. Lomónaco Tonda** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before I begin, on behalf of my delegation, let me express our condolences to the people of Thailand on the passing of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

Despite the significant reductions in the arsenals of some nuclear-weapon States, more than 15,000 nuclear weapons remain in existence. Consequently, it is incomprehensible that, of those weapons, approximately 2,000 remain in a continued high state of operational alert. It is also difficult to justify the cost involved in maintaining those weapons, in particular when compared to the commitments and obligations undertaken by parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or contrasted with the commitments set out in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Recent events such as those that have taken place on the Korean peninsula, as well as frequent arguments that nuclear weapons have their use in providing security to some countries, must raise a red flag signalling the need for caution and reminding us of the urgent need

for the United Nations to make progress in the areas of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

This year we are commemorating the seventy-first anniversary of the General Assembly, the first resolution of which included nuclear disarmament as a common goal of the work of the newborn Organization (resolution 1 (I)). Seven decades later, the complete elimination of nuclear weapons continues to be the outstanding issue for the Organization.

At the current juncture, the international community faces numerous tensions and crises. That is why we reiterate the need to establish system of global security and sustainable peace that is based on prevention, the application of international law and cooperation among peoples. Weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, do not constitute a bulwark for providing security. The use of nuclear weapons would contravene the principles of international humanitarian law, violate the Charter of the United Nations and constitute a war crime. The very existence of those weapons poses a major risk to the survival of humankind, given that the only guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons and the humanitarian consequences of an intentional or accidental detonation is their complete elimination.

The year 2016 also marks the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Mexico is pleased that this legal instrument and the norms it has established exist. However, the CTBT has not entered into force, and we cannot afford to be complacent with regard to the status quo. Mexico again urgently calls upon the eight countries whose signatures and/or ratifications are essential for the entry into force of the CTBT to accede to the Treaty without delay and show present and future generations their interest in, and commitment to, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Recalling the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT brings to mind the fact that the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva remains paralysed, without having fulfilled the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). Two decades ago, the International Court of Justice affirmed in its advisory opinion on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/512/218, annex) that all parties to the NPT have an obligation to negotiate in good faith effective measures leading to nuclear disarmament on the basis of article VI of the Treaty.

After this long-standing and unacceptable impasse, the General Assembly, through the First Committee, is now assuming its responsibilities — a fact that my country welcomes.

As was agreed at SSOD-I, the responsibility for nuclear disarmament rests on the shoulders of the nuclear-weapon States. The other Members of the United Nations also have undertaken political and legal commitments and obligations in order to avoid the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and to ensure that those weapons are never again used under any circumstances.

That is why we welcome the work of the Open-ended Working Group established by resolution 70/33 and the recommendations contained in its report (A/71/371, annex). My delegation remains open to hearing all opinions and all proposals to constructively address all recommendations made by the Working Group and to move the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament forward through discussions and consideration of all views expressed in the Group's work, in particular on the launch of negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Such collaboration among the membership is part of the commitment that 127 countries undertook when they endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge to fill the legal vacuum with regard to nuclear weapons and stigmatize and ban them with a view to their elimination.

Given that my time has expired, the rest of my statement, which refers to the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco — will be available in the full version of my statement on the First Committee's website.

**Ms. Ganjanarintr** (Thailand): First of all, I wish to express the appreciation of the Government and the people of Thailand for the words of condolence and support from the Chair and various delegations during this time of grief.

Thailand wishes to align itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

It is disheartening that we are again discussing the issue of nuclear disarmament in the First Committee, the very issue that gave birth to the United Nations, for which the first resolution of the General Assembly was adopted. The existence of these dreadful weapons

is based on the nuclear-deterrence security doctrines from the past that were designed to address the international security environment of 70 years ago. Such doctrines need to be reviewed not only to address the current circumstances in which non-State actors have become more active and relevant, but also in order to not provoke the mistrust and aggression fuelled by a nuclear-arms race.

We are pleased to be at this meeting with renewed hope. The adoption in good faith of resolution 70/33 was an honest effort to break an impasse in the disarmament machinery, including the Conference on Disarmament, in order to move closer to a world free of nuclear weapons — a goal we all share. The Open-ended Working Group has successfully served as an alternative forum for discussing and addressing issues related to nuclear weapons in a comprehensive, inclusive, interactive and constructive manner.

The Working Group positively and constructively engaged more countries than ever before in the negotiations on nuclear disarmament, while building upon common values and norms and trying to bridge differences in security perceptions. I wish to commend those countries, as well as the representatives of civil society, that participated and contributed constructively to the conclusion of the Working Group. They are also encouraged to continue their efforts and participate in the upcoming negotiation process for a legal instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. The Working Group explored all possible options and elements in taking forward the negotiations on nuclear weapons. It is now time to implement the recommendations therein, with a view to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

Our joint efforts for nuclear disarmament are aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation regime by implementing article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and not at undermining it. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should be pursued together, not one at the expense of the other, in order to ensure collective security for all. According to the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/51/218, annex), there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

In implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our collective contributions and commitments to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction could substantively complement the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16. Our limited resources should be directed at achieving those Goals, rather than being diverted to the development of weapons programmes. Indeed, peace and development are mutually reinforcing and provide grounds for cultivating human and collective security for all. Weapons of mass destruction have no place in this equation.

At this critical juncture in history, it is up to us to decide whether we want to continue to live with nuclear weapons and the inherent threats posed by the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any detonation, or to move forward constructively towards a shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, which we have all repeatedly called for. The road ahead will be difficult. Member States should work together and work harder. Parliamentarians, civil society and academia have important roles to play in raising public awareness of the threats to humankind posed by nuclear weapons and mobilizing public support for the negotiation and conclusion of a legal instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Thailand believes that, in the foreseeable future, we can pave the way towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): Let me first offer my condolences to the royal family and the people of Thailand on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

On 5 April 2009, in Prague, President Barack Obama stated the commitment of the United States “to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons” and to take concrete steps to that end. The United States remains as committed as ever to that goal and to making progress on nuclear disarmament. We have made tremendous progress in reducing the number of nuclear weapons over the past 50 years. Although some are dissatisfied with the pace of disarmament, we remain convinced that the pragmatic and consensus-based approach that has successfully brought us to this point remains the right one going forward.

Some States believe that today the time has come to abandon this pragmatic and consensus-based approach and instead pursue a radically different path that would

simply declare a ban on nuclear weapons. We must evaluate this new approach using the same criteria that we apply to our current one. Will it improve global security and stability, or undermine it? Will it build a coalition for disarmament, or fracture the international community? Will it lead to real reductions in nuclear weapons, or be a treaty for political, not practical, effect? How can such an approach be verified? The United States has carefully applied those questions to the ban-treaty concept, which fails to successfully meet the necessary criteria for success on four counts.

First, let us be clear, a treaty banning nuclear weapons will not lead to any further reductions — because it will not include the States that possess nuclear weapons. Advocates of a ban treaty say it is open to all, but how can a State that relies on nuclear weapons for its security possibly join a negotiation meant to stigmatize and eliminate them?

Secondly, a ban treaty would undermine existing non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. It risks creating an unbridgeable divide between States, polarizing the political environment on nuclear disarmament and effectively limiting any future prospect for achieving consensus, whether in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) review process or at the United Nations or the Conference on Disarmament. This deepening divide could impact other aspects of the NPT, including strengthening cooperation in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy or ideas to reinforce the non-proliferation pillar, contributing to the growing tendency to treat the Treaty’s three pillars as competing priorities rather than reinforcing interests. Rejecting security considerations related to nuclear weapons leaves no room for discussion on effective measures needed to sustain nuclear-disarmament progress, thereby discouraging, not promoting, the necessary dialogue.

Thirdly, verification regimes are one of the key components of successful nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. The ability to verify provides the confidence needed to make further reductions while maintaining regional and global security. The United States is working actively to address the very real challenges of verifying future arms-control agreements, including through the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which includes both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. One thing that is clear today, however, is that we have not overcome the

challenges or built the capacity needed to effectively verify a treaty banning all nuclear weapons.

Finally, a ban treaty runs the risk of undermining regional security. We cannot deny the reality that nuclear weapons continue to play a role in maintaining peace and stability in some parts of the world. We ignore that reality at our peril. That could further foster uncertainty in some regions, as States are forced to re-evaluate their security environment. It is unrealistic to ask non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon States alike to reject their current security arrangements without addressing the underlying security concerns that led them to seek such arrangements in the first place.

Some make a false assertion of a legal gap in implementation of the NPT. In crafting the article VI obligation for “good faith negotiations”, negotiators recognized they could not prescribe modalities for eliminating nuclear weapons, given the need to account for prevailing security conditions. Successive agreements or unilateral steps to reduce nuclear arsenals and reliance on them have proved the wisdom of that approach.

The current challenge to nuclear disarmament is not a lack of legal instruments. The challenges to disarmament are a result of the political and security realities we presently face. The United States is ready to take additional steps, including bilateral reductions with Russia and a treaty ending production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, some States are currently unwilling to engage in further nuclear reductions, and others are increasing their arsenals. At the same time, violations of international norms and existing agreements are creating a more uncertain security environment and making the conditions for further reductions more difficult to achieve. A ban treaty will do nothing to address these underlying challenges.

*Mr. Isnomo (Indonesia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

For all of those reasons, the United States will vote “no” on any draft resolution establishing negotiations on a nuclear-weapons-ban treaty and will not participate in such negotiations. We strongly urge all others to do the same.

The world’s nuclear-weapon arsenals did not appear overnight, and they will not be drawn down overnight. We cannot lose sight of the fact that, while we might disagree on process, we all agree on the goal: the peace

and security of a world without nuclear weapons. In that spirit, let us all rededicate ourselves to doing the hard work together to create the conditions to make real nuclear disarmament possible.

**The Acting Chair:** Before I give the floor to the next speaker, I wish to remind delegations to kindly limit their statements to five minutes when speaking in their national capacity.

**Mr. Riquet (France) (*spoke in French*):** At the outset, I wish to express to the people of Thailand and to the royal family the condolences of France on the passing of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

At a time when debates on nuclear disarmament are focusing our attention, our collective ambition should remain, above all, to build a safer world for all. Promoting international peace, security and stability today is a heavy responsibility, especially “given the serious and worrying situation in the world” (A/71/PV.8, p. 30), as President Hollande of the French Republic stated at the opening of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. That is why France remains resolutely committed to a realistic and rigorous approach to nuclear disarmament, fully integrated with the broader efforts that my country is carrying out to resolve crises and to respond to today’s multiple security threats and challenges.

I should straightaway express my country’s deep concern that nothing positive can come from the growing recent trend of discussing nuclear disarmament while doing away with the rule of consensus and bypassing existing forums. No frustration or expectation — which are perfectly understandable — can be assuaged if legitimate processes are not adequately adapted to the real world. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of our collective security architecture. What is the sense of having a discussion on nuclear disarmament when it deliberately dismisses, or even stigmatizes, the concerns of States that directly or indirectly base their security on nuclear deterrence?

Yet, unfortunately, there was such a bias behind the creation of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. The Working Group led the permanent five members of the Security Council (P-5) last year to issue a joint explanation of vote to oppose resolution 70/33, which established it, which eventually led my country as well as others not to participate in its work.

The process promoted by the Open-ended Working Group is not an acceptable framework for negotiations. It would be dangerous to think that it is possible to delink nuclear-disarmament issues from the current security context. No tangible progress can come from ignoring deterrence policies that are the foundation of the current strategic world balance, nor can any progress come from seeking to base a future of nuclear disarmament simply on a humanitarian approach. It is important to remember that the shared concerns about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons have been well known for several decades.

I would like to talk about the Open-ended Working Group recommendation that is causing the greatest division in the international community, namely, the plan to initiate in 2017 negotiations for a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination. Such a treaty would be ineffective for disarmament and destabilizing for security. It would be ineffective for disarmament because, without the participation of the nuclear-weapon States, no nuclear weapon would be eliminated. It would also be ineffective because it tends to downplay the importance of responsibilities and concrete actions to be taken, to which nuclear-weapon States have already committed. Finally, it would also be ineffective because the prohibition treaty would not have any added value for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States with respect to existing obligations arising from Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones or even Security Council resolution 984 (1995), in which the Council endorses negative and positive security assurances.

Moreover, the instrument would have a destabilizing effect on regional and international security as well. It would be destabilizing because it will call into question the integrity of the three pillars of the NPT and generate a gap in non-proliferation. It is also destabilizing because it would be disconnected from the security environment of the States located in sensitive regions, notably in Europe and Asia. In the end, it would be destabilizing because it would increase the uneven pressure on the various possessor States.

It is urgent to reinvigorate the idea of compromise and international cooperation, which are at the very core of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of those major achievements of the multilateral system. That demanding way alone will allow for voluntary agreements to be reached, thereby

contributing effectively to the strengthening of the security architecture and international law. A consensual approach, the universalization and full implementation of existing instruments, and the principle of reciprocity — those aspects also form the basis for France's ongoing and full efforts in pursuit of its nuclear disarmament policies, through numerous current measures that it has already undertaken either unilaterally or within the framework of the NPT.

Because disarmament cannot be instituted by decree — it is constructed more through acts than words — France intends to continue to set an example both in terms of transparency of its arsenal and in terms of concrete disarmament measures, in accordance with the principle of strict sufficiency that characterizes France's policy of deterrence, which is essentially defensive.

There is no short cut possible; the step-by-step approach is the only realistic and effective path. That is why the 2010 Plan of Action remains our road map. In that respect, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remains a priority for France. The joint statement of the P-5 of September 2016 and Security Council resolution 2310 (2016) are evidence of the renewed efforts. Similarly, the launch of negotiations for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, building on the work undertaken until now, remains a priority goal. We should concentrate our efforts to resume without delay discussions at the Disarmament Conference, based on document CD/1299 and the mandate set out therein.

The active and constructive involvement of all States parties in preparing the next NPT review cycle is of the utmost importance for France. My country is determined to remain an active contributor, including by hosting the next P-5 conference, which will take place in Paris shortly before the first NPT Preparatory Committee meeting, in Vienna.

Out of respect for the time limits, I will abridge my statement by stopping now, but I would invite interested delegations to find the full text of France's statement on the Internet site *France-Désarmement*, as well as at the First Committee's e-Delegate site.

**Mr. Al-Ahmed (Qatar)** (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation thanks the Chair for his work at the helm of the First Committee.

We would like to express our condolences to the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Given potentially disastrous long-term humanitarian consequences, disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons have become priorities for the international community. We must do everything we can in our capacities as human beings to ensure peace, security and stability in the world and to save men and women from nuclear weapons. We are currently facing significant challenges in the disarmament process, which is why we must all work together to create the necessary conditions for a world free of such weapons, as set forth by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We welcome efforts to move forward in multilateral disarmament negotiations. However, the progress that has been made in this area is currently insufficient and is poorly adapted to the potential scope of such weapons. It is therefore important to emphasize that we ought to comply with the provisions of article VI of the NPT. We need to put in place a set of specific timelines for negotiations on a legally binding agreement.

We are deeply concerned by the lack of progress made in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The non-implementation of the 1995 CD decision to extend the NPT indefinitely and the 13 practical steps on non-proliferation and disarmament agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference are further failures. In addition, the action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference has not been respected, nor have nuclear-weapon States met the timelines for fulfilling their international commitments, which is a source of deep concern. The resolutions and outcomes of other NPT Review Conferences have also not been implemented, which undermines the credibility of the Treaty.

The threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East is a source of deep concern and fear for our peoples because ours is the only region where international efforts have not been made to free it of nuclear weapons. At the same time, we are seeing upheavals in the area, with an uptick in terrorism and the threat of use of nuclear weapons by terrorists. For this reason, all States must make efforts to create a zone free of nuclear weapons and implement the NPT. Without sufficient international support for the creation of such a zone in the Middle East, countries will only be encouraged to acquire and stockpile arms without

international oversight, which proves that the NPT has not been able to provide security, which in turn has had an impact on international stability and peace.

We note our disappointment at the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference and recall that the creation of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons is, in a manner of speaking, the fourth pillar of the NPT. We also recall that the decision of the 1995 NPT Review Conference to extend the Treaty indefinitely is an integral part of the agreement.

We are aware of the disastrous humanitarian impacts caused by the existence of nuclear weapons. That is why we reiterate our support for international efforts to prevent such negative impacts. My country is in full compliance with its legal obligations under international disarmament treaties, and we reiterate the importance of developing peaceful nuclear-energy programmes in a responsible manner. We believe that all the generalized guarantees promulgated by the International Atomic Energy Agency, including the most strict norms of safety, security and non-proliferation, must be respected, particularly in a world where proliferation is a real source of concern. Only then will we be able to achieve the lasting peace and security that the world so desires.

**Mr. Grütter** (Switzerland): At the outset, please allow me to offer my Government's condolences to the royal family, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand on the sad passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

*(spoke in French)*

The use of nuclear weapons, whether deliberate or inadvertent, would cause entirely unacceptable humanitarian consequences in nearly all plausible scenarios. It is therefore difficult to envision how any nuclear-weapon use could be compatible with the requirements of international law, particularly international humanitarian law. That is just one of the reasons why expectations for progress in nuclear disarmament remain high. But in sharp contrast, we see worrying trends. The nuclear-weapons reduction curve, which has been impressive in the past, has slowed down. Nuclear arsenals are undergoing extensive modernization programmes, which could lead to a nuclear arms race of a qualitative nature.

There has been only minimal progress on nuclear disarmament in multilateral forums. The growing lack of

willingness to compromise and the emphasis on national security interests at the expense of collective and global security are key obstacles. As a result, the disarmament debate has become polarized. Even the commitments entered into under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, are far from being kept. The best way to show the effectiveness of the NPT in the nuclear-disarmament field would be to realize more tangible progress.

Challenges also exist in the field of non-proliferation. While we welcome the effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and the E3+3, the two tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2016 highlight the importance of continued efforts in that direction. The twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty underlines the need for its entry into force as soon as possible.

In such a difficult context, the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations provided us with an important forum for candid discussions on the global challenges posed by nuclear weapons and the exploration of possible ways to take multilateral nuclear disarmament forward. There was agreement on a number of issues. However, the Working Group discussions have shown that views diverge about the military and political value of nuclear weapons, particularly about the way forward and timelines to follow in order to achieve their prohibition. We regret that the report presented by the Chair of the Working Group was not adopted by consensus.

With regard to the follow-up of that work, we believe that the development of new legal instruments and the implementation of practical measures must be pursued simultaneously. We also believe that the scope and effectiveness of any new legal instrument would benefit from the participation of all States, including those whose security doctrines rely on nuclear weapons.

Regardless of the ongoing differences about the future path of nuclear disarmament, we should unite where we can and redouble our efforts. As we are about to begin a new NPT review cycle, we emphasize the need for greater tangible progress, notably with regard to the implementation of commitments made in 2000 and 2010 on practical disarmament measures. Let me mention three areas that deserve particular attention.

First of all, we, along with the rest of the De-alerting Group we believe that the further reduction of operational readiness of nuclear weapons is an important and urgent interim step on the path to nuclear disarmament. De-alerting is a crucial risk-reduction measure. It is high time that we extend the period for taking decisions and take dangerous launch-on-warning postures off the table. By lowering alert levels, we would be implementing a disarmament step agreed to by consensus more than 16 years ago under the NPT.

Secondly, nuclear-armed cruise missiles are delivery systems that carry very specific risks. It is impossible for a targeted State, or a State that believes it is targeted, to distinguish a cruise missile equipped with a nuclear warhead from one equipped with a conventional warhead. The possibility of an error in identification, resulting in a nuclear retaliation with all of the associated catastrophic consequences, cannot be excluded. Yesterday, together with Sweden, Switzerland hosted a side event to look more closely at these risks.

Thirdly, achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons will require disarmament treaties that are backed by a strong verification system. We highly appreciate the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. We have introduced, together with a group of States, a new draft resolution (A/C.1/71/L.57/Rev.1) that aims to take the issue forward in relevant disarmament forums, including the General Assembly.

**Mr. Odisho (Iraq):** First of all, I would like to extend our sincere condolences to the delegation of Thailand on the passing of his Majesty the King.

*(spoke in Arabic)*

My delegation would like to express its support for the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of Arab States, respectively (see A/C.1/71/PV.10).

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), along with its three pillars, constitutes a number of interdependent and interlinked obligations of States parties, which provided the incentive for these States to accede to the Treaty. Despite the fact that it has been more than 47 years since its adoption, the Treaty's implementation has been out of balance, with the nuclear-weapon States having failed to fulfil their obligations under article VI and the principles

and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted in 1995.

All Member States should seek to strike a fair balance between the respective responsibilities and obligations of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States with a view to the final elimination of nuclear weapons. The complete eradication of nuclear weapons constitutes the main protection from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The international community must agree to achieving relevant conventions that contribute to the total elimination of these lethal weapons in a way that fosters international peace and security.

We would like to emphasize the need to continue working towards a non-discriminatory, legally binding instrument that bans the stockpiling, use and position of nuclear weapons. We welcome the efforts made and the outcomes of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, which was set up in accordance with resolution 33/70, adopted in 2015. We are prepared to work to bring about the success of the international conference to be held in 2017 in New York for the purpose of reaching such a treaty. For a long time now, international meetings and conferences on this subject have been doomed to failure. In that regard, my Government reiterates its disappointment at the inability of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final outcome document. The failure of the Conference at this delicate phase will definitely adversely affect the NPT and its credibility.

Iraq reaffirms the need to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East, which is the fourth pillar of the NPT. It will foster the efforts designed to bring about nuclear disarmament, thereby strengthening international and regional peace and security. Any effort to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East must be preceded by certain fundamental steps. Israel must undertake nuclear disarmament and accede to the NPT. Furthermore, it must subject its nuclear installations to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

We would like to express our deep concern over the failure of the efforts to establish zones free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Middle East. I wish to emphasize the need for the three depository States to fulfil their commitments in conformity with the 1995 Middle East resolution. The Government

of Iraq attaches great significance to the NPT, as it is an instrument of utmost importance for fostering nuclear disarmament.

This year, as in previous years, we have joined States backing the joint ministerial declaration issuing from the meetings held at the margins of the general debate of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will contribute to eliminating the risks and threats emanating from nuclear tests. My delegation looks forward to its signing and ratification by the eight States remaining in the Treaty's annex 2. Iraq welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 2310 (2016).

**Mr. Sene** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to present my condolences to the delegation of Thailand following the passing of their country's King.

Senegal aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively (see A/C.1/71/PV.10).

My delegation is pleased to take part in the thematic debate on nuclear weapons and the opportunity it offers to share views on these important issues, which are currently and justly the object of the international community's attention. I would also like to reaffirm Senegal's unwavering commitment to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. These weapons, which threaten the survival of humankind, are a tremendous concern for us, particularly since they could fall into the hands of terrorists. That is why my country remains convinced that their full and complete elimination is the only safeguard against their use. As a result, we believe it is important for States and other civil-society actors to work together to completely eradicate or otherwise cutback nuclear-warhead stockpiles.

Unfortunately, the failure of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to reach a consensus on a final outcome document has impeded progress in the nuclear-disarmament process, which remains now more than ever at an impasse. The few rays of hope that came from the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and the conclusion of the New START treaty by the two major nuclear Powers were dimmed by the subsequent status quo, where certain nuclear-weapon States continue to allocate substantial

resources to the manufacture and development of nuclear weapons, resulting in our deep concern about this expansion of their nuclear military programmes.

However, that failure must only propel us to work together towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. That is why my country supports the complete eradication of nuclear activities for military purposes. That is the only means to equip our world against the devastation and suffering that could result from the use of nuclear weapons. It would also ensure the survival of our planet and allow future generations to live, not in fear of the detonation of atomic bombs, but rather in a peaceful, safe and prosperous world.

To that end, Senegal believes that ridding the world of nuclear arms should now more than ever be our main goal, with the support of all States. Strengthening the NPT through its universalization remains a top priority. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the implementation of the obligations contained in the Treaty and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction are vital.

Nuclear-weapon States must agree on an irreversible, verifiable and more ambitious programme to reduce their arsenals and, simultaneously, offer security assurances through a binding instrument to non-nuclear-weapon States. There is therefore a need to hold in 2017 a United Nations conference to commence negotiations on a treaty banning the use of nuclear weapons in order to proceed to their eradication, as recommended by the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are two interdependent and equally important goals. That is why there cannot be any general and complete disarmament if, in addition to existing nuclear-weapon States, other States bypass the NPT to acquire nuclear weapons. In that regard, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has a pivotal role to play in the adoption of efficient measures to curb vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Existing nuclear-weapon-free zones must be consolidated, and others created, particularly in the Middle East.

It is important to reaffirm the right of countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and ensure the effective and secure transfer of relevant technologies to States that assume their obligations under the NPT,

which entails strengthening the authority and capacity of the IAEA.

In conclusion, I would recall that declarations of faith and statements of intent alone will not bring about a world free of nuclear weapons. It is only by fully shouldering our individual and collective responsibilities and demonstrating unwavering political will that we will achieve the desired results.

**Mr. Hajnoczi** (Austria): At the outset, I would like to express our deepest condolences on the passing of the King of Thailand, one of the most respected leaders of our era.

Austria has praised the considerable reductions in the nuclear arsenals of the most heavily armed nuclear-weapon States over the past decades. Accordingly, we regret all the more that the positive trend has come to a standstill. We have already firmly condemned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear tests in our general statement (see A/C.1/71/PV.3), and we have repeatedly spoken at length about the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The findings on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and the risks of nuclear weapons have also informed this year's Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and its excellent report crafted under the chairmanship of Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi (see A/71/371). It is now up to us in the First Committee to address its recommendations. With this in mind, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa and my own country, Austria, are submitting a draft resolution entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", containing, *inter alia*, the recommendation of the Open-ended Working Group on:

"the convening ... of a conference in 2017, open to all States, with the participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society, to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination" (A/71/371, *para.* 67).

Furthermore, Austria, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa will again be submitting draft resolutions on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and on the humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. The humanitarian pledge is today formally supported by 127 countries, which refined language in a working paper submitted

to the Open-ended Working Group, which is now reflected in the draft resolution's text.

During the discussions of the First Committee so far, a number of questions related to our draft resolutions were raised, among them the relationship between the prohibition convention and the NPT. For us, it is clear that the NPT is and remains the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, as expressed in the draft resolution that we are submitting. The prohibition convention would not only be fully consistent with the NPT, but would also constitute major progress and facilitate its implementation and, in particular, that of article VI.

For non-nuclear-weapon States, as defined by the NPT, it would make their existing commitment not to pursue nuclear weapons even stronger. While the NPT accepts the possession of nuclear weapons by five particular States, it is clear that the NPT is not meant to be a static treaty allowing for indefinite possession. Instead, the goal of global nuclear disarmament is clearly laid out. By signing and ratifying the additional norm, these countries will be living up to their disarmament obligation under article VI.

The argument is often heard that nuclear deterrence is indispensable for national security. If this were the view of all States, then more States could feel the need to follow the same logic and want to acquire these weapons, which could become a dangerous path. Some voices claim that negotiating a prohibition convention is an unrealistic option. We do not believe that a negotiating process based on the participation of the majority of States lacks credibility or realism, but we do know that similar legally binding instruments have started the same way — no convention was ever universally adopted at inception, so we cannot expect that to happen in this case either.

We are also realistic about the fact that the elimination of nuclear weapons is not something that can be achieved overnight through a prohibition convention alone. Rather, the process would lay a foundation for ensuring that its complete and verified implementation could subsequently be established. As experience with current disarmament conventions has shown, we first need to create a legal norm and only then can it be followed by concrete practical and legal steps for its implementation. The conventions on chemical weapons, biological weapons and anti-personnel mines prove this point.

Austria fully supports all legal and practical measures that contribute to the overarching goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, such as the entry into force and universalization of the CTBT, the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, the elaboration of effective verification tools and many practical measures. It is our belief that all these measures can and must be pursued simultaneously with the establishment of a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons.

It has always been clear that a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons is needed if we are to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons, regardless of the approach — the same is true for the step-by-step approach. So what do we gain by postponing the start of such negotiations? Is nuclear disarmament not urgent?

**Mr. Van der Kwast** (Netherlands): At the outset, I too would like to express our condolences to the royal family and the people of Thailand on the passing of King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

At the general debate, we stressed the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regime (see A/C.1/71/PV.6). The NPT was negotiated when arsenals were built up, crises flared between superpowers, the use of nuclear weapons in conflict was repeatedly considered, and widespread proliferation, especially in Europe, was imminent.

The NPT, which has been signed by 191 Member States, introduced the sole global norm prohibiting the acquisition of nuclear weapons. It contains the only legally binding obligations that exist in the field of nuclear disarmament. It has limited the total number of nuclear-weapon possessor States and formed the basis for reductions of nuclear arsenals worldwide.

However, this is not just about nuclear reductions or non-proliferation. Last week, two hibakusha visited my country's Parliament and Minister, which reminds us that the achievements of the NPT helped to build a more stable and secure global order that has managed to avoid the use of nuclear weapons. The NPT set out to prevent the devastation of nuclear war. It has helped spare us the horrors of another Hiroshima or Nagasaki based on the understanding that humanity and international security, like idealism and realism, are complementary concepts: two sides of the same coin.

Some argue that the current status quo is unacceptable. However, 70 years of non-use of nuclear weapons is hardly unacceptable. Rather, the status quo is imperfect, which means we have work to do. A world without nuclear weapons is the only way to guarantee that they will not be used again. No single treaty, norm or agreement can offer the same level of protection. A rule against the use of chemical weapons already existed in 1907, but we all know what happened during the First World War.

All societies have a stake in preventing a similar scenario with nuclear weapons. In the Netherlands, this fundamental truth underpins the welcome involvement of both our Parliament and our civil society on the issue. We must therefore focus, as reaffirmed by the recent Warsaw Summit communiqué of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, on effective steps and measures that will help us to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, in full accordance with all provisions of the NPT, including article VI, in a step-by-step and verifiable manner that promotes international stability and based on the principle of undiminished security for all. Allow me to highlight some of these building blocks.

First, the time for action on the treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is now. Last year, the Committee endorsed the substantial consensus report (see A/70/81) of the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. However, the Conference on Disarmament in 2016 again failed to agree on a comprehensive programme of work. We therefore strongly support the call to establish two preparatory committees to develop recommendations on the elements needed for a fissile material cut-off treaty, which would then be provided to the Conference on Disarmament for negotiation.

Secondly, this year marks 20 years since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was opened for signature. As our Minister for Foreign Affairs remarked on the twentieth anniversary of the Treaty, the CTBT is a fundamental building block for nuclear disarmament and a step towards global zero. Indeed, the CTBT has succeeded in setting out a global norm against nuclear testing, which was made possible by the fact that all relevant States subscribed to the Treaty and took part in its negotiation.

The Netherlands welcomes the adoption of resolution 2310 (2016), which calls upon all States to refrain from nuclear testing and urges them to join the NPT.

The third important building block for a world of nuclear weapons is verification. It is not only the nuclear-weapon States that will demand robust disarmament verification, but we, the non-nuclear-weapon States, will also want the same guarantees. Developing verification capacities is an important confidence-building measure as it improves working relations between countries at many levels. It also further integrates non-nuclear-weapon States in the nuclear-disarmament process.

We have recently seen promising new disarmament-verification initiatives such as the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, and we strongly support the call for further progress in this area. A world free of nuclear weapons requires the comprehensive and verifiable prohibition of nuclear weapons. A large share of countries feel that the time has come to negotiate such an instrument, or parts thereof, in the form of a ban. The Netherlands will engage constructively with that group of States to identify which steps towards global zero we can take, or which legal building blocks we can support. This means we have to look at all initiatives, plans or proposals with an open mind.

With that open mind, I shall conclude as I am out of time. The full text of my speech will be circulated to the membership.

**Mr. Dzonzi (Malawi):** Malawi adds its voice to those of the speakers who have gone before me in expressing our condolences to Thailand on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Malawi has always offered its political support for the disarmament of nuclear weapons. To this end, we have supported the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by participating in past conferences aimed at promoting the entry into force of the Treaty and voting for all resolutions aimed at nuclear disarmament in the First Committee.

As part of its efforts to achieve the eradication of nuclear weapons, Malawi hosted a national workshop on the CTBT in Lilongwe in February 2006. In this regard, we wish to affirm our commitment towards realizing a global ban on nuclear testing. I also wish to assure the Committee of our intention to co-sponsor

the draft resolution taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations to establish a mandate for negotiations in 2017 on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination.

In recent years, the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has increasingly been recognized as a fundamental and global concern that must be at the core of all deliberations on nuclear disarmament and proliferation. This issue is now firmly established on the global agenda. The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons expressed deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. Similarly, the 2011 resolution of the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement emphasized the incalculable human suffering associated with any use of nuclear weapons and the implications for international humanitarian law.

The Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo in 2013, and the subsequent meetings held in Nayarit and Vienna in 2014, presented a platform to engage in a fast-paced discussion on the impact of nuclear-weapon detonation. Drawing upon that platform, Austria issued a pledge to fill the legal gap on the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, which at least 127 States, including Malawi, have endorsed. The broad participation at the conferences reflects the recognition that the catastrophic effects of detonation are of concern and relevance to all. In the light of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons, we are past the time where we could prohibit them in the same way that chemical weapons, biological weapons, anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions have been prohibited.

It is in the interest of the very survival of humankind that nuclear weapons never be used again under any circumstances. The catastrophic effects of a nuclear-weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed. All efforts must be exerted to eliminate this threat. The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination.

At the United Nations Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in Geneva this year, it was clear beyond

a doubt that an overwhelming majority of States were committed to commencing negotiations in 2017 on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. At this 2016 session of the First Committee, we urge all Governments to support the immediate commencement of the negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

The remainder of my speech can be found on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): The full version of this statement will be placed on the website.

On 18 July, the United Kingdom House of Commons voted on a motion put forward by the Government concerning the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent. Members of the House, all democratically elected, voted 472 to 117 in support of the motion. I would like to explain three elements of the motion in more detail because they are relevant to the positions we take on disarmament and on arms control issues more generally.

The first element is the need to maintain the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent. The unpredictable international security environment we face today demands the maintenance of our nuclear deterrent for the foreseeable future. Other States continue to have nuclear arsenals, and there is a risk of further proliferation of nuclear weapons. There is a risk that States might use their nuclear capability to threaten us, try to constrain our decision-making in a crisis or sponsor nuclear terrorism.

Recent changes in the international security context remind us that we cannot rule out further shifts that would put us or our NATO allies under grave threat. In the past two years, there has been a disturbing increase in both Russian rhetoric about the use of nuclear weapons and the frequency of snap nuclear exercises. There is a threat from countries that are actively seeking to acquire nuclear capabilities illegally. North Korea has stated a clear intent to develop and deploy a nuclear weapon, and it continues to work towards that goal in flagrant violation of a series of United Nations Security Council resolutions.

There is the question of further proliferation, which could lead to nuclear threats in future that we cannot anticipate today. Our nuclear deterrent has helped keep the peace between the major Powers for decades. Abandoning it unilaterally would undermine our security and that of our allies. It would not make us safer. Maintaining our nuclear deterrent is not just

essential for our own national security; it is vital for the future security of our NATO allies. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.

The second element relates to the replacement of submarines. I would like to stress that the replacement of the four submarines is necessary to maintain the current posture of our nuclear deterrent. It is not in any way an upgrade of our capabilities. The vote does not change the salience of nuclear weapons in our security doctrine. We would employ our nuclear weapons only in extreme circumstances of self-defence, including the defence of our NATO Allies. And we continue to offer the assurance that the United Kingdom will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This assurance does not apply to any State in material breach of those non-proliferation obligations.

Thirdly, with regard to the Government's commitment on disarmament, the United Kingdom is a responsible nuclear-weapon State and as such is committed to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in line with its obligations under the NPT. We play a leading role on disarmament verification together with Norway and the United States of America. We will continue to press for key steps towards multilateral disarmament, including the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and for successful negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. And, in our shared effort to strengthen international peace and security and to address further prospects for nuclear disarmament, we welcome the Permanent Five discussion earlier this month of global strategic stability and our respective nuclear doctrines.

Looking to the future, we are committed to retaining only the minimum amount of destructive power needed to deter any aggressor. In 2010, we announced for the first time the total size of our nuclear-warhead stockpile. Last year we delivered on our 2010 commitment to reduce the number of deployed warheads on each submarine from 48 to 40. We will retain no more than 120 operationally available warheads, and we remain committed to further reducing our stockpile of nuclear weapons to no more than 180 warheads by the middle of the next decade.

Our negative security assurances regarding the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, our commitment to maintaining only the minimal credible

deterrent and our transparency about our arsenal and declaratory policy all contribute to the United Kingdom being a responsible nuclear-weapon State. There are other factors, too. The United Kingdom maintains a minimum credible level of deterrence, with a single Trident submarine on patrol, normally on several days' notice to fire. For almost 20 years now, United Kingdom nuclear weapons have been de-targeted. We have had a voluntary moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons since 1995 and have declared the amount of fissile material produced prior to the onset of that moratorium. We are a strong supporter of nuclear-weapon-free zones. We have strict accountancy and control measures for military nuclear material which are based on United Kingdom legislation and industry best practices. And we have a well-established and ongoing programme of activity to protect defence networks and the information they hold from cyberattack.

We remain determined to continue to work with partners across the international community to prevent proliferation, make progress on multilateral nuclear disarmament, build trust and confidence between States and take tangible steps towards a safer and more stable world in which countries with nuclear weapons feel able to relinquish them. As I hope all will understand from my earlier remarks in the informal session, the United Kingdom does not believe a ban on the possession and use of nuclear weapons is one of those steps. We will oppose the start of negotiations on such a treaty.

**Ms. Walder** (Sweden): First of all, we send our heartfelt condolences to the royal family of Thailand and the Thai people on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Nuclear weapons can never be the basis of sustainable security for humankind. The catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons are well-documented and irrefutable.

Sweden's basic perspective, like that of many others, is the humanitarian one. The security and welfare of our citizens and our societies must be front and centre in the deliberations of our Committee. We support any effective legal measure that would make a difference and lead to meaningful nuclear disarmament. For norms to be effective, they need to have sufficient support, provide an added value and be implemented by States. We also must bear in mind that disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin.

Progress in both areas is mutually reinforcing and will contribute to a more secure world — a world without nuclear weapons.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be seen through the lens of global development. Last year, the world managed to come together not once but three times — in Addis Ababa, in New York and in Paris — where it reached global agreements on fundamental issues concerning our joint future. International security is very much a part of this and cannot be treated separately. Nuclear disarmament is therefore not an island isolated from current world events; it is a fundamental pillar of international security.

Some may argue that because of current global challenges, the time is not ripe for nuclear disarmament. But what if it is the other way around — that the current security issues the world is facing are occurring because the necessary actions and commitments in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation have not been fulfilled?

The Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations enriched our discussion and reflected a strong commitment to making progress on nuclear disarmament, despite the ultimate lack of agreement on its report (see A/71/371). However, the report contains important proposals on how to move forward. In this context, we thank the sponsors for their draft resolution entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. This is of great importance but, operationally, it is only the trigger of a process. If adopted it would set in motion negotiations in 2017 and possibly beyond. To ensure the legitimacy and effectiveness of the process, it will be particularly important for these negotiations to be conducted in an inclusive manner, with the broadest possible participation.

At one level, the issue is clear-cut. Our ultimate goal is disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. At another, it is highly complex. Is the suggested project an effective method to achieve this goal? It is in the light of this question that we are still considering the matter very carefully. Our hope is that the future negotiations will lead to a result that will complement and reinforce existing instruments, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains the most

important legal framework in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation field.

Obligations under the NPT and commitments made during the various NPT Review Conferences need to be urgently implemented, including the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States. We will work closely with others in the process leading up to the 2020 Review Conference, a conference that must not fail.

Sweden has chosen to promote a feminist policy. This policy also has an impact on the issues before us in this Committee. Recent studies indicate that women are even more vulnerable to the consequences of nuclear detonations than men, yet women are still hugely underrepresented in multilateral forums, especially those related to security policies. Together with Ireland, Sweden is hosting the launch of the latest report on gender, development and nuclear weapons by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the International Law and Policy Institute on Tuesday next week. I hope that many participants here today will be able to join us.

The responsibility for strengthening international security by filling out the existing framework for nuclear disarmament with dynamic and constructive initiatives belongs to us. We urge all States to take it upon themselves to deliver on this fundamental responsibility. In a world of heightened tensions, the status quo implies an increased risk for all. We therefore all have an obligation to explore all measures that could bring us closer to our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

**The Acting Chair:** I would remind delegations to kindly limit their statements to five minutes when speaking in their national capacities.

I call on the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.13.

**Ms. Janjua (Pakistan):** At the outset, I would like express the condolences of the Government and the people of Pakistan on the passing of His Majesty the King of Thailand. In his message of condolence, our Prime Minister said that the world has lost and been deprived of a reformist and the father of the great Thai nation. Our sympathies and condolences go to our Thai brothers and sisters.

As the international and regional security environment worsens, the shared goal of nuclear

disarmament agreed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) appears even more elusive. The principal reason is the lack of progress made by the nuclear-weapon States in fulfilling their nuclear-disarmament obligations, while attempting to shift the focus to additional non-proliferation measures that are cost-free for their own strategic calculus.

The situation has been compounded by the creation of exceptions from long-held non-proliferation norms and rules, motivated by strategic and commercial considerations. These special arrangements not only denote double standards, but also aid in vertical proliferation by the beneficiary, undermining regional strategic stability, heightening the sense of insecurity and widening the gap between haves and have-nots.

Most nuclear-weapon States remain opposed to the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive convention on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Their security doctrines do not unconditionally rule out the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and, accordingly, they continue to stymie negotiations in the CD on negative security assurances. The asymmetries in conventional military forces, strategic capabilities and advanced weapon systems continue to widen, while a group of States rejects addressing the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The same countries also oppose the scope of a fissile material cut-off treaty to include existing stocks in a manner that would address regional and global asymmetries and contribute to nuclear disarmament.

The CD is a vital, integral and indispensable part of the United Nations disarmament machinery and its sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Regrettably, it has fallen short of expectations in fulfilling its *raison d'être* of nuclear disarmament. During the 2016 session of the CD, serious attempts were made to resume substantive work, including on nuclear disarmament. Pakistan welcomed these proposals and worked assiduously during its presidency of the CD this year to facilitate consensus on a programme of work. Pakistan supported the programmes of work proposed by Nigeria, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and Poland. We sincerely believe that these proposals were promising.

I also take this occasion to follow up on what my colleague from Sweden has said. We were proud to have

a special session on women in disarmament during our presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Women occupy a number of important positions dealing with security and disarmament issues in Pakistan. It is therefore important for us that these issues be brought up in international forums.

The frustration on the slow progress on nuclear disarmament has spilled over into a counter-movement that is attempting to shift the discourse. Essential security considerations are being excluded altogether from the debate on nuclear disarmament, attempting to recast the conversation in exclusively humanitarian terms. The existential security concerns of States are being unjustly trivialized, creating additional fissures. Efforts to force progress outside the CD, on a non-consensus basis and without all the key stakeholders on board, will only exacerbate the situation without much real change on the ground.

A rules-based, equitable and non-discriminatory international order needs to be developed to promote a comprehensive disarmament agenda. This can be achieved only by, first, addressing the security concerns of all States; secondly, making progress on strategic- and conventional-weapons limitation and reduction; thirdly, strengthening the international non-proliferation regime through objective criteria-based policies, pursuing treaties that are equitable and non-discriminatory and shunning exceptionalism driven by strategic, political or commercial considerations; and, fourthly, extending negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Certain countries continue to be guided by their quest for military domination. They possess excessive conventional military capabilities. Nuclear disarmament needs to be pursued in a comprehensive and holistic manner, in full accordance with the principles already agreed upon at SSOD-I. Pakistan fully supports resolution 70/30. We have consistently supported the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world through the conclusion of a universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear-weapon convention in the CD.

The demand for negative security assurances was raised by the non-nuclear-weapon States in the 1960s in pursuit of the security to which they have a right under the Charter of the United Nations. During this session, on behalf of a large number of sponsoring States, Pakistan will be presenting its traditional draft resolution entitled "Conclusion of effective international

arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons” (A/C.1/71/L.13). We look forward to its adoption with the widest possible support.

**Mr. Ahsan** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement during this thematic debate (see A/C.1/71/PV.10). However, we wish to make a few remarks in our national capacity.

Before going any further, I wish to express deep condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of Thailand on the sad demise of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Nuclear weapons pose an overriding security threat for all of humankind. As we see it, international peace and security cannot be premised on strategic stability based on nuclear deterrence, which is a notion that implies mutual mistrust among major international actors and stands in clear contradiction to our pursuit of general and complete disarmament. As global awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons grows, we become increasingly anxious about the risk of nuclear weapons being inadvertently used as a result of accident or miscalculation. The threat of nuclear weapons and related materials falling into the hands of terrorists and other unauthorized actors only deepens our concern over the existence of these and other weapons of mass destruction.

Bangladesh notes with concern the growing divergences that are bedevilling the current discussions within the ambit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The setback experienced in achieving a consensus at the Ninth NPT Review Conference must be reversed in the interest of the pursuit of the mutually reinforcing nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation agendas. In this context, we voice our serious concern over the recent nuclear tests conducted by a Member State and continue to urge restraint and the de-escalation of tension in the region in question.

We share with others our disappointment about the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty not having entered into force 20 years after its adoption. We hope that Security Council resolution 2310 (2016) will create further impetus towards the universalization of the Treaty and welcome the recent ratifications by Myanmar and Swaziland. The uncertainties around the existing legal regime are mirrored in the protracted paralysis in

the United Nations disarmament machinery, including the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Bangladesh remains supportive of any constructive and viable suggestions to break the deadlock and move the work on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation forward.

We underscore the need to both build on the 2013 High-level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament and convene an international conference no later than 2018 to take stock of the prevailing situation and chart a decisive way forward. We continue to align ourselves with the call for an early commencement and conclusion in the Conference on Disarmament of a comprehensive convention addressing the entire spectrum of issues related to nuclear weapons. We are particularly concerned that the work on a legally binding instrument providing assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States remains hostage to the overall dynamic in the CD. We shall in principle support any inclusive, transparent and credible initiative to make progress on the work of a fissile material cut-off treaty as long as the primacy of CD as the multilateral disarmament negotiating forum is upheld.

We considered the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, pursuant to resolution 70/33, to be a possible way around the stalemate in CD. The Working Group’s report (see A/71/371), adopted by an overwhelming majority and presented earlier in this meeting by Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi, has called for concrete action for commencing negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading to their elimination, which our delegation stands behind. We also recognize the need for further legal measures to attain a world without nuclear weapons, which would eliminate the risks of the use of nuclear weapons and enhance transparency about nuclear weapons. To this end, we indicate our support in principle for the new draft resolution in this Committee on nuclear-disarmament verification.

In conclusion, we see clear merit in renewing the General Assembly’s commitment to the humanitarian pledge to nuclear disarmament and abolition as we strive for a sustainable future for our planet and its peoples.

**Ms. Sehayek-Soroka** (Israel): Let me first express to the Kingdom and the people of Thailand our deep condolences on the passing of His Majesty the King.

I will read out an abridged version of my statement. The full version will be available on the First Committee website.

Israel maintains a policy of responsibility and restraint in the nuclear domain that is consonant with the underlying goals and principles of the non-proliferation regime. Accordingly, and wherever possible, Israel joins and brings itself closer to international norms on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. Israel signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996 and is an active contributor to the development of all elements of the Treaty's verification regime. In that regard, Israel transmits data from its certified seismic stations to the International Data Centre, an obligation which some regional States have unfortunately yet to undertake. Israel was one of the sponsors of Security Council resolution 2310 (2016) on the CTBT, which is a clear manifestation of our support for the Treaty. We had hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus in the Security Council, but unfortunately this was not the case.

Israel shares the concern that radioactive sources might be used to commit acts of terrorism. We firmly believe that such materials must remain under the full control of the competent authorities and used appropriately. The nuclear-security challenge should be addressed not only at the national level, but also through regional and global cooperation and coordination. In this respect, Israel has repeatedly stated its willingness to cooperate with any State in the Middle East in strengthening nuclear security and safety.

In connection with this threat, 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, including the 2005 amendment to it, which recently entered into force. In addition, Israel is a member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and values its hands-on approach to the implementation of tools to combat nuclear terrorism.

Israel endorses the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources promulgated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We take part in the IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database and participate in the IAEA's Nuclear Security Guidance Committee (NSGC). Israel recognizes the importance of combining international legal tools and export-control policy and has adopted a policy of adherence to

the NSGC since 2004, as well as to the other supplier regimes. Items listed in the regime's control lists are incorporated into the Israeli export-control mechanism, as well as amendments made to those lists.

Israel values the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and recognizes its contribution to the non-proliferation regime. At the same time, it is also clear that the NPT is insufficient to fully address the deliberate advancement of clandestine military nuclear programmes by States with little or no regard for the international legal obligations that they have undertaken.

Nowhere is that problem more apparent than in the Middle East. Four out of five cases of non-compliance with the NPT emanate from our region—Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya—and the fifth case of non-compliance with the Treaty, namely, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is a source of grave concern in itself, is heavily involved with proliferation towards the Middle East. Israel has joined the international community in condemning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recent nuclear tests and in expressing concern regarding the danger posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to regional and global stability.

Unfortunately, and despite its importance, the NPT has not prevented those Member States from substantially violating its obligations and has been insufficient in remedying violations once they have been discovered. Iran, which remains the most significant threat to the Middle East and beyond, is an illuminating case in point—despite the agreement reached between Iran and the five plus one group. The NPT was unable to prevent Iran from advancing its nuclear programme due to the country's concealment and duplicity. When Iran's violations were ultimately discovered, the NPT lacked the tools to recognize and address them appropriately.

Israel has always endorsed a pragmatic and realistic approach in the field of regional security and arms control policy. Our approach is rooted in the belief that the broad range of security concerns of all regional members should be taken into account and realistically addressed within the regional dialogue. This engagement needs to be firmly rooted in the regional context if it is to be realistic and meaningful.

Regrettably, at present, no regional dialogue on security exists in the Middle East, nor is there a forum to develop confidence-building measures and

defuse tension. For its part, Israel has often expressed its commitment to sincere and open dialogue with its neighbouring countries on all regional security issues. Accordingly, in 2013 and 2014 Israel participated in five rounds of high-level multilateral consultations convened by the former Finnish Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Security Policy, Mr. Jaakko Laajava, in Switzerland. While Israel demonstrated its sincere commitment to the process of direct dialogue and confidence-building in the region, our Arab neighbours have unfortunately preferred to invest their efforts in the pursuit of divisive draft resolutions, such as the one entitled “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”, submitted to the First Committee for consideration every year.

In a similar vein, Israel was disappointed to see that the draft resolution has once again been submitted this year, and that the only substantial change its authors have made to its contents is to delete the concept of “arrangements freely arrived at” — a change that is not only in stark contrast to the principle recognized by 1999 United Nations Disarmament Commission guidelines on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, but it also steers regional parties further away from direct engagement or any attempt to forge agreements among them.

**Mr. Mendoza-García** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica regrets the failure of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We also regret that, after the adoption of the 2010 Action Plan, the implementation of nuclear-disarmament obligations is lagging far behind that of related obligations in the areas of non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Nuclear non-proliferation is as important as nuclear disarmament, and both are essential to the effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Costa Rica calls for the right balance to be struck between those pillars, a task that the NPT has been unable to accomplish. The nations that are most interested in banning nuclear weapons are those that, like my country, do not possess any, as we are convinced that international peace and security cannot be based on the doctrines of nuclear deterrence and mutually assured destruction.

Today more than ever, those policies are a real threat looming over humankind. Nuclear disarmament

is not a task that is limited to nuclear-weapon States, but rather a responsibility that must be borne by the entire international community. It is not the nuclear-weapon States that have advocated for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, those who possess nuclear weapons have not met their related international obligations. It is clear that non-nuclear-weapon States are the ones that are convinced that we must urgently work towards universal nuclear disarmament, and, together with organized civil society, we have called for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. With regard to the latter, it is frustrating that despite 20 years of existence, it has yet to enter into force.

That is why Costa Rica is deeply concerned about the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament, along with statements affirming, and even promoting, the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines. This affects not only the credibility of the NPT but also the maintenance of international peace and security, and is more likely to lead to proliferation. To that end, Costa Rica has consistently promoted initiatives and, in Geneva, it presented a nuclear-weapon-ban proposal to the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. In that regard, we welcome the conclusions and recommendations of the three sessions of the Open-ended Working Group and its the mandate of developing substantive proposals to adopt concrete legal measures for keeping the world free of nuclear weapons.

Moreover, we welcome the report adopted in August at the last session (see A/71/371), which recommends that the General Assembly convene a conference in 2017 to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. We are convinced that it is the most viable way to take immediate action. Such an instrument would have a real political and legal impact in the debate on nuclear disarmament.

With that goal in mind, Costa Rica urges countries to sponsor and support the draft resolution entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. We urgently call on the international community to embark on a road towards the prohibition and, ultimately, the total and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with no possibility of turning back.

**The Acting Chair:** I now call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/71/L.10, A/C.1/71/L.11 and A/C.1/71/L.12.

**Mr. Varma (India):** India associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (see A/C.1/71/PV.10), and we convey our condolences to the delegation of Thailand on the passing of their King.

India's commitment to universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament within a specified time frame has been firm and consistent, as seen in the working paper we submitted to the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Pursuant to resolution 68/32, India has supported the NAM proposal for a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention to be negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament. India joined the Group of 21 in a working paper submitted this year. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the CD of a fissile material cut-off treaty that meets India's national security interests. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (see A/70/81) confirmed that CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein remains the most suitable basis on which negotiations should commence. We are not in favour of forum-shopping for the negotiation of this treaty.

India's position on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known and needs no reiteration. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. At the same time, we support strengthening global non-proliferation objectives. India is committed to making its contribution to strengthening non-proliferation, including through participation in the multilateral export-control regimes. This year, India joined the Missile Technology Control Regime and has subscribed to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

The international community has a vital interest in preventing terrorists from gaining access to nuclear weapons and other sensitive materials and technologies and in isolating States that harbour and provide support to terrorists based on their soil. The international community should take a united stand against those who

indulge in nuclear threats or benefit from clandestine proliferation linkages.

Recent meetings on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons generated considerable interest in addressing the most serious threat to the survival of humankind posed by the use of nuclear weapons. India participated in some of these meetings in the hope that these would help generate momentum for increased restraints on the use of such weapons. It remains our consistent position that the process should be inclusive and do no harm to the disarmament machinery. In terms of substance, it should promote genuine progress towards the goal of nuclear disarmament. We look forward to constructive discussions in the First Committee on nuclear disarmament, including with the sponsors of those initiatives, many of which we have worked closely with in the past within NAM and outside.

On behalf of its sponsors, India would like to present the draft resolution entitled "Convention of the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", contained in document A/C.1/71/L.10. First introduced in 1982, the text is one of the longest-standing resolutions in the First Committee and reflects our belief that a legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of the step-by-step delegitimization of those weapons. As such, it is firmly anchored in the humanitarian tradition of nuclear disarmament and has for many years enjoyed the support of a vast majority of Member States. We urge those States that continue to vote against the draft resolution to reconsider their position to bring it in line with their professed support for the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution "Reducing nuclear danger", issued as document A/C.1/71/L.11, highlights the need both for a review of nuclear doctrines and for steps to reduce the risk of the unintentional accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through the de-alerting and de-targeting of those weapons. We welcome the greater awareness in the international community and the objectives of the draft resolution to avoid the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction", contained in document A/C.1/71/L.12, has enjoyed strong support and a large number of sponsors and reflects the continuing concerns of the international

community with respect to the risks posed by terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. The draft resolution enumerates measures at the national and international levels to address this threat. We hope that the First Committee will adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

**The Acting Chair:** I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that the first right of reply will be limited to 10 minutes and the second right of reply will be limited to five minutes.

**Mr. Ri Tong Li** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): First of all, let me join other speakers to express our deepest and most sincere condolences on the passing of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

There is one country represented in this conference room, the United Kingdom, that has attacked the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by name. For the First Committee's information, from 4 to 10 November 2016, joint military exercises by the United States and South Korea, targeting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, will begin. As is well known, these exercises are totally different in nature, character, scale — in every way — from other countries' exercises. That is because the objective of these exercises is regime change. They are doing so in an open manner and are not hiding their intentions.

Right now, at this moment in time, as I already mentioned, a naval exercise is taking place east and west of the Korean peninsula, with the *U.S.S. Ronald Reagan*, a nuclear aircraft carrier that is accompanying groups of warships armed with the most sophisticated weapons, having as targets for its precision strikes the office building where the supreme leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is located, nuclear facilities, ballistic rockets and strategic bases. This exercise is exacerbating an already dangerous situation, which is at an extremely explosive stage. Nobody can predict when these movements will cross the line into real war. Although nobody knows when we will enter that stage, it is clear that they are in a state of readiness to do so.

At this point in time, another exercise is being planned, one in which the United Kingdom is participating, which is a very dangerous move and constitutes the equivalent of pouring fuel on a burning fire in the most dangerous part of the world. The United Kingdom's participation will add to the

growing challenges to the peace and security of the Korean peninsula, which will result in challenging the peace and security of the world at large. The United Kingdom was the country that, during the Korean War, with the United States, invaded the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. By participating in the war, they caused their innocent soldiers to lose their lives. Does the Committee know how many soldiers died during the Korean War? Have they forgotten that important lesson?

The United Kingdom also participated in the regime change operation against Iraq, thereby creating a situation in which a refugee crisis has spread all over the world, causing great problems. Again, the United Kingdom has forgotten that lesson. In the current situation, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in a situation of increased danger and threat, which it will never ever passively accept.

**Mr. Hallak** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, permit me to extend our condolences to the Government and the people of Thailand on the passing of their King.

The Israeli entity has rejected the calls of most States Members of the United Nations to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That entity violates all treaties related to weapons of mass destruction and is not a party to any of them. The Israeli entity rejects the establishment of a nuclear-weapon and weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East. The Israeli entity constitutes a threat to international peace and security, not just to the Middle East region. Israeli ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads can reach areas far beyond the Middle East region.

In this forum, we call upon all States of the world to bring pressure to bear upon the Israeli entity to abide by resolutions of international legitimacy, including those of the Security Council, and to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon party, after placing all its nuclear installations within the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Israeli terrorism, particularly terrorism emanating from all types of nuclear weapons, is the biggest danger to our region and to the entire world.

**Mr. Hall** (United States of America): The United States is exercising its right of reply to the statements made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Our annual joint military exercises are transparent, defence-oriented and have been carried out regularly and openly under the Combined Forces Command for roughly 40 years. They are designed to increase our readiness to defend the Republic of Korea, to protect the region and to maintain stability on the Korean peninsula. These exercises are a clear demonstration of the United States' commitment to the alliance. Our commitment to the defence of our allies, including the Republic of Korea and Japan, in the face of such threats remains ironclad. We remain prepared to defend ourselves and our allies using all the capabilities at our disposal.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea): I have two different ways of thinking about the statement by the North Korean representative. First, from a procedural perspective, I am not certain whether that statement was a right of reply, which is a point worth considering. Secondly, I would like to correct some facts in the statement of the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, even if it is not clear whether he was speaking out of conviction or out of delusion. First of all, with respect to who invaded whom, we all know who did what in the early hours of a peaceful Sunday on 25 June 1950.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea delegation might try to brainwash whoever does not share its logic, but it is certain that its members have brainwashed only themselves. No one in this room listens to them.

However, one point does make sense. The North Korean representative said, "the Korean peninsula is the most dangerous part of the world". We know who is making the Korean peninsula the most dangerous part of the world. I call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately cease uttering threatening words in this forum.

**Mr. Fares** (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to begin by extending my condolences to the people and the Government of Thailand.

Libya has acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and adhered to its provisions. We have made every effort to move towards disarmament in all aspects.

**Mr. Pollard** (United Kingdom): I am taking the floor to exercise my right to reply to what was just

mentioned by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The representative commented that the United Kingdom was undermining peace and security with its actions. I would like to recall that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear- and ballistic-missile programmes are the only threat to significant peace and security and regional stability and hinder the prospects of lasting peace on the Korean peninsula. We will continue to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to credible and authentic multilateral talks on its nuclear programme and abide by its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. I also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the various Security Council resolutions placed upon it.

**Mr. Ri Tong Li** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Again, the United States of America has made another attempt to mislead the First Committee and the world. Its statement was full of lies and does not express the truth of what is happening.

Just a few days ago, I kindly invited the representative of the United States to go and visit the place where smoky fires have broken out and covered the whole Korean peninsula. To justify its actions, the United States says that the military exercise is merely an annual routine. The ongoing massive accumulation of nuclear weapons is anything but routine. All kinds of strategic assets, including *U.S.S. Ronald Reagan*, and other aircraft carriers, too numerous and changing to name — they change every year — are being brought in under the pretext of exercise. They are bringing in nuclear submarines capable of launching nuclear weapons. They are also bringing in strategic bombers — B-1B strategic nuclear bombers — which recently they brought very close to our border, to the military demarcation line. I repeat: they flew fully armed B-1B strategic nuclear bombers close to our border.

The United States of America continues to say it is routine — an annual routine it has engaged in for 40 years. That is a ridiculous argument. The danger is increasing. We have no other option but to go nuclear. That is why we became a nuclear Power. By changing our status to a nuclear-weapon State, we are in a better position strategically, just like the United States. As long as the United States of America continues to threaten the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with nuclear weapons, we will remain steadfast as we persistently

build our nuclear forces in quality and quantity, in line with our State's national policy of going nuclear.

With regard to the representative of the United Kingdom's remarks, I want again to ask the question I asked earlier. If gangsters accumulate a massive amount of nuclear weapons on your doorstep, what are you supposed to do? Will you say something other than "we are going to take action to defend ourselves"?

To South Korea, with regard to the Korean War, the representative of South Korea has no legal grounds to talk about that. The Republic of Korea is not a party to the Korean Armistice Agreement.

**Mr. Hall** (United States of America): From missile launches to nuclear tests to continuing to ignore

Security Council resolutions, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the one that is threatening peace on the Korean peninsula and in the region. We continue to call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to end its destabilizing and threatening behaviour and abide by its international obligations and commitments. The latest comments by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are delusional.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea): I simply, flatly, reject what the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has just said. He will know the reason. The more he opens his mouth, the more delusional he sounds. We all know that.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*