



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

## First Committee

24<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 27 October 2022, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

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

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

### Agenda items 90 to 108 (continued)

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

**The Chair:** I would like to warmly welcome to the rostrum the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, Mr. Xolisa Mfundiso Mabhongo, who will make a presentation as part of our panel today.

In accordance with the programme of work, the Committee will first hear a briefing by our panellist. The Committee will then shift to an informal mode to engage in a question-and-answer session. Thereafter, the Committee will continue its thematic discussion under the cluster “Disarmament machinery”.

The Committee will now view a video message from the President of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Emilio Rafael Izquierdo Miño.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the Conference Room.*

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, His Excellency Mr. Xolisa Mfundiso Mabhongo.

**Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa), Chair, United Nations Disarmament Commission: It was my privilege to serve as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission this year, particularly as it held its substantive session for the first time in three

years. Pursuant to decision 76/518, the Disarmament Commission convened its 2022 session in person from 4 to 22 April and concluded it successfully by submitting a substantive report (A/77/42) to the General Assembly at its current session.

It was particularly important for the Disarmament Commission to resume its substantive work this year, as it had been unable to hold a substantive session since 2018 owing to the contentious issue of visas, the outbreak of the coronavirus disease pandemic and the absence of a nomination for the Chair.

Despite the hiatus, the Disarmament Commission swiftly addressed all organizational issues necessary for commencing its substantive work at its organizational session on 4 April. The Commission elected the Chair and a Vice-Chair for the 2022 session and adopted the same agenda items for its three-year cycle from 2018 to 2020, namely, “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Preparation of recommendations to promote the practical implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities with the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space, in accordance with the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities.

The Disarmament Commission also decided that 2022 would be the second year of its three-year cycle, picking up where it left off in 2018. The Commission elected Mr. Kurt Davis of Jamaica as Chair of Working Group I, on the agenda item on nuclear disarmament and

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non-proliferation, and Ms. Szilvia Balázs of Hungary as Chair of Working Group II, on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space.

Following an absence of three years, it was important to ensure that the Commission got the resumed three-year cycle off to a good start. Five years had elapsed since the Commission had achieved a successful outcome to the previous cycle in 2017. As Chair during the renewal of the cycle, I was keen to create and sustain an atmosphere conducive for delegations to engage in constructive and cooperative dialogue. I am pleased to report that, thanks to the active participation of delegations, the Disarmament Commission managed to build firmly on its previous work and re-establish the possible path towards achieving a successful outcome in the last year of the cycle, in 2023. That is a significant achievement, as the Commission had found itself mired in an organizational morass and unable to commence substantive work for three years. It also allowed delegations to renew their commitment to the Commission as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, and to consider various problems in the field of disarmament and submit concrete recommendations thereon to the General Assembly.

Delegations set to work with renewed energy and rigour as the Commission finally returned to the pre-pandemic working mode, which created a fresh dynamic for their interaction. We held the full three weeks of substantive in-person deliberations, with both Working Groups holding 10 meetings each. Both held extensive deliberations on their respective agenda items.

Working Group I began discussion on the previous Chair's paper from 2018. Delegations exchanged views and made various proposals on that paper, and subsequently on the current Chair's non-papers.

Working Group II began a general exchange of views and heard presentations by the Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, which had been established in the previous year pursuant to resolution 76/231. Thereafter, the Working Group began a discussion on the provisions contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189). The Working Group then heard presentations by representatives of

international organizations and non-governmental organizations and exchanged information on national space policies, hearing presentations by representatives of 11 countries. Working Group II discussed the outcome of the work and concluded its work with the introduction of the Chair's paper.

As that was the second year of the cycle, neither Working Group put forward recommendations to the General Assembly, but they agreed to continue their discussion on the respective Chairs' papers at the next session of the Commission.

Looking forward, the Commission will complete its three-year cycle next year. I sincerely hope that both Working Groups will adopt consensus recommendations on their respective agenda items at the 2023 session, to be held next April. With a successful outcome, Working Group I will be able to provide valuable inputs into a new review cycle for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Having agreed on its recommendations on the practical implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, Working Group II will create further impetus for the work of the Open-Ended Working Group to make recommendations on possible norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours relating to threats by States to space systems. The Commission's success will greatly contribute to revitalizing the disarmament machinery and reinvigorating the work of other disarmament bodies, which is of critical importance for reversing the downward trend in the international security landscape.

I would like to conclude my remarks by thanking delegations for all their trust and confidence in me as Chair of the Disarmament Commission for 2022. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Secretariat for its support and readiness to respond to the needs of the Chair and all representatives to enable the Commission to get back on track. I therefore wish the incoming Chair the best of luck for a successful 2023 session, with a consensus adoption of recommendations to the General Assembly.

**The Chair:** I now invite the Committee to view a pre-recorded statement by Ms. Elissa Golberg, Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the Conference Room.*

**The Chair:** I now invite the Committee to view a pre-recorded statement by Mr. Robin Geiss, Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the Conference Room.*

**The Chair:** In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I will now suspend the meeting to afford delegations an opportunity to have an interactive discussion on the briefings we just heard, through an informal question-and-answer session.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.45 p.m. and resumed at 3.50 p.m.*

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

Before I open the floor, I would like to remind all delegations that, in accordance with the decision taken yesterday, the time limit for statements during the thematic segment under this cluster is four minutes when speaking in a national capacity and six minutes for statements on behalf of several delegations. Delegations wishing to exercise the right of reply will be able to do so at 6 p.m., after we release the interpreters.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): I am happy to be back at this very important Committee. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), on behalf of which I am speaking, recognizes that the First Committee is the most inclusive platform for comprehensive discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation. Dialogue in the First Committee must strive to be constructive, relevant and in good faith, and we call on Member States to exercise flexibility and compromise for the success of the Committee’s deliberations.

However, the work towards nuclear disarmament has been slow, and at many junctures is at an impasse. ASEAN remains extremely concerned by the threat to humankind posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. The situation in the realm of nuclear disarmament continues to be characterized by an alarming impasse. The nuclear-weapon States have not made progress in eliminating their nuclear weapons. The role of nuclear weapons in their security policies has not diminished, but is seemingly expanding. ASEAN expresses its concern at the qualitative and quantitative improvements in existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the key instrument in efforts to halt the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are counting on the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT to lead us to a progressive and meaningful outcome after more than 12 years of waiting. However, it is disappointing that, despite constructive engagement among delegations, there was yet another failure at the tenth NPT Review Conference in terms of producing a substantive outcome document. Nevertheless, ASEAN remains hopeful and stands ready to engage in future discussions and negotiations in a constructive, transparent and inclusive manner.

ASEAN recognizes the important role of the Conference on Disarmament and reiterates its call on the Conference to agree by consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work without further delay, taking into account the security interests of all States.

ASEAN remains engaged with the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and appreciates the convening of the substantive session of the UNDC in April. I acknowledge the good work done by the Chair of the Commission. The fact that it met in April after its postponement for three years is a good sign. ASEAN believes that the UNDC, with its universal membership, continues to have a unique role in building trust and confidence among Member States on various issues in the disarmament sphere.

The regional centres for disarmament are valuable contributors towards global disarmament, and ASEAN therefore reaffirms its support for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific in promoting regional disarmament priorities and bridging needs and posturing cooperation in our region. We also encourage taking into account the analysis and recommendations of think tanks and research institutions, such as the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, to enhance disarmament efforts at the local, regional and global levels.

ASEAN emphasizes the need to ensure that the disarmament machinery will keep pace with the rapidly evolving security landscape and advancements in science and technology, including developments in cyberspace and outer space. ASEAN reaffirms its readiness to coordinate and cooperate with other Member

States and regional and international organizations to promote international peace and security and search for solutions to regional and international issues, including those on non-proliferation, disarmament and weapons control, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

ASEAN acknowledges the necessity of utilizing a multi-stakeholder approach in our work, as that has proven to be an important catalyst in moving forward important discussions and actions on disarmament. In that context, we welcome enhanced engagement with civil society, the private sector, academia, women and young people.

In conclusion, we see disarmament and non-proliferation issues as a cross-cutting matter that involves such issues as political, security, economic, social and cultural issues. With that in mind, the First Committee can count on ASEAN to constructively engage and collaborate with all stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery and advance our common aspiration for general and complete disarmament, within the larger view of achieving a safe, secure and peaceful world.

**Mr. Francese** (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations chairing or presiding over the disarmament conventions, namely, Colombia, as Chair of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention; Iraq, as President of the Cluster Munitions Convention; Poland, as President of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons; the Republic of Korea, as Chair of the Arms Trade Treaty; and my own country, Italy, as President of the Biological Weapons Convention.

We wish to highlight the seriousness of the financial difficulties affecting the disarmament conventions, which hamper the proper functioning of the disarmament machinery. As we all know, in recent years a number of meetings that had been agreed to by all States parties were curtailed due to a lack of funds, which included sacrificing interpretation for our meetings and the translation of official documents. In addition, the precarious financial situation also threatens the very existence of some implementation support units, which are essential for implementing and strengthening the conventions that they service.

Given those problems, we deeply appreciate and commend the efforts undertaken in the past by the successive presidents and chairs of those conventions to address the financial crisis. They led inclusive and

transparent processes aimed at the adoption of new financial measures to discourage non-payment and keep the conventions afloat.

Although those efforts are welcome, financial problems have been recurring, and it is widely recognized that temporary measures are inevitably and ultimately insufficient. The financial issues that are endangering the advancement of our work and the credibility of the disarmament conventions require a lasting solution. The only sustainable option is to address non-payment and make sure that arrears are paid on time and in full.

We recognize that States are required to pay in advance of meetings for the latter to take place. For the conventions serviced by the United Nations, that is part of the current system that has been devised and agreed to by Member States, including the use of the enterprise resource planning system, Umoja, and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) for United Nations finances. Umoja and IPSAS were introduced to increase the transparency and sustainability of the United Nations financial system. Their introduction is not the reason that our work has been hampered.

In that context, we would like to recall that some measures have been considered by States parties to discourage non-payment. We will continue to monitor with concern the financial status of the conventions. We will encourage State parties to consider additional measures with a view to ensuring a financially sound disarmament architecture.

Ultimately, we once again call upon States to ensure that they pay on time and in full, and that all debts to the instruments concerned be settled as soon as possible. As long as there are arrears, financial problems will persist; hence the importance of measures to address the issue of non-payment specifically.

**The Chair:** I now call on the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Lomaia** (Secretary of the Committee): Ireland will speak on behalf of the following States: Andorra, Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan.



Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay and the United States of America.

**Ms. Moran** (Ireland): I have great pleasure in taking the floor on behalf of the States just referred to by the Secretariat, with our thanks.

The integration of a gender perspective into the work of the First Committee and across the disarmament machinery should continue to be strengthened. As the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament explicitly recognizes, a gender perspective makes for more effective arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. We are also encouraged by commitment 5 of the Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), that is, to place women and girls at the centre of security policy.

Gender perspectives provide key insights into how women, men, girls and boys can be differentially affected by armed conflict and weapons. It is a cross-cutting issue with direct relevance to the implementation of broader peace and security efforts and contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the related Beijing +25 process.

The differential gendered impacts of armed conflict on women, men, boys and girls are a critical consideration. For example, while men make up most direct casualties from the use of small arms and light weapons, such weapons are often used to facilitate acts of gender-based violence against women and girls, resulting in long-term physical, psychological and socioeconomic impacts. Applying a gender lens to our work allows us to devise more sustainable, comprehensive and targeted policy solutions that are inclusive and more consequential. The pursuit of a gender perspective in our work strengthens the diverse, effective and meaningful participation of women and men in all aspects of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

The continued research by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research into such issues highlights the fact that women continue to be underrepresented in arms control and disarmament forums, particularly in leadership roles. We strongly encourage specific and targeted actions so that women and men are equally represented in our work and decision-making in order to help to achieve effective and sustainable outcomes. Diverse perspectives can bring new insights and improve the functioning of our disarmament machinery, and we urge States to improve gender balance in their delegations.

We welcome the significant work that has been done in recent years to advance such issues within the broader disarmament machinery, including the increase in the number of First Committee resolutions that consider a gender perspective; efforts to achieve a gender balance in the bureaux of disarmament and non-proliferation conferences; efforts to implement the decisions taken regarding gender and gender-based violence in the context of the Arms Trade Treaty and the outcome of the Biennial Meetings of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects; the focus on gender considerations at the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions; the Women in Cyber fellowship and the increased engagement of women diplomats in the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security; efforts to achieve gender parity in the selection of members of the Groups of Governmental Experts; and the work of the Geneva-based International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, including the publication of a gender resource pack for multilateral practitioners.

There is no doubt that civil society has played a pivotal role in raising awareness on a gender perspective in disarmament. Civil society provides advice and ideas that spur us on to meaningful action. We are thankful for their commitment and look forward to continued collaboration.

In conclusion, we urge States to collectively incorporate a gender perspective into all efforts within disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Such engagement can only improve the functioning of the disarmament machinery and strengthen international peace and security.

**Mr. Karczmarz** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the countries of the European Free Trade Association Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Georgia, Monaco and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

The EU reiterates its support for the three mutually reinforcing forums of disarmament machinery — the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. Promoting effective multilateralism and rules-based global governance is, in fact, the cornerstone of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. The EU will continue to do its utmost to protect the integrity of the rules-based international system, which is key to our collective security.

The EU is deeply concerned about the deteriorating security environment, as well as the continued erosion of the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine has further exacerbated the situation. We will continue to counter any and all attempts to undermine the integrity of international bodies and blatant breaches of international law, such as Russia's violations of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law and subsequent repeated nuclear threats. It is therefore essential that the First Committee focus on identifying concrete measures to further advance disarmament and non-proliferation goals to address the major challenges to international security and peace. Consideration should be given to reviewing the practices and working methods of the First Committee, including a biannual or triannual basis for resolutions. In order to build global confidence and trust, we call on all States to improve dialogue and enhance transparency. We stress the need to prevent further polarization occurring as a result of divisive new initiatives within the First Committee.

The EU is deeply concerned by the ongoing deadlock within the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and deeply regrets that it was unable to reach agreement on a substantive report this year owing to the refusal by Russia to acknowledge the security challenges posed by its armed aggression against Ukraine. That situation is not tenable given the significant security challenges that we face today.

Our long-standing priority in the Conference on Disarmament is to immediately commence the negotiations of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. We support starting such negotiations in accordance with document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. Moreover, the EU supports the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament, which currently comprises only 65 members. We call for the urgent appointment of a special coordinator who could lead substantive consultations on the expansion of the membership and set out concrete scenarios for the consideration of CD members.

The EU is pleased that, after three years, the Disarmament Commission was able to resume its work. We trust that next year, at the end of this cycle, we can find further common ground in order to adopt recommendations by consensus on both nuclear and other outer space issues. We encourage engagement with civil society, academia, industry and research institutions, as well as affected communities, in all disarmament forums and would welcome further relevant initiatives in that regard.

The United Nations disarmament machinery and its various instruments cannot function properly without sound finances. We express our deep concern over the critical financial situation across the United Nations system and its bodies, treaties and conventions.

Once again, we strongly urge those States that have not yet done so to pay their contributions in full and on time and to settle their arrears, thereby enabling the effective functioning of the multilateral institutions and instruments on which we all depend. We highly value the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as a stand-alone, autonomous institution of the disarmament machinery producing high-quality research and implementing initiatives that can help to move disarmament processes forward.

**Ms. Kristanti** (Indonesia): Indonesia associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/77/PV.22) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The current global security landscape requires us to work together in the spirit of multilateralism to strengthen our efforts in maintaining peace and security. We must also not forget that one of the ultimate objectives of the establishment of the United Nations is to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Therefore,

reinvigorating our commitment to disarmament is central. We cannot afford any regression. In this regard, our delegation would like to offer three pertinent points for our reflection.

First, flexibility and greater political will are essential to our success in further strengthening the United Nations disarmament machinery. The lack of political will by nuclear-weapon States to achieve a clear elimination of their nuclear arsenals has been a major hurdle for the disarmament machinery's inability to produce outcomes. We realize that changes will not occur overnight. We therefore call on all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to display the needed political will and work together to ensure concrete advancement on all issues before the disarmament machinery.

Secondly, we must transform our commitment into action. At this stage, we need the United Nations disarmament machinery to reinvigorate its work so that the heightened focus on disarmament translates into tangible results. While welcoming the convening of the 2022 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), we also urge all Member States to achieve progress on recommendations of the two working groups in the UNDC's next session. However, we would like to emphasize once again that the realization of the work of the United Nations disarmament machinery will not be meaningful without nuclear-weapon States undertaking their given commitments on disarmament.

Thirdly, enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery is a collective responsibility. The disarmament machinery should be optimally utilized to attain our collective aims, inter alia, a nuclear weapons convention, negative security assurances, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices. We also look forward to the beginning of the new cycle of the review conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The working group that we have agreed to set up before the preparation committee convenes should open up the possibility of having better working methods and processes for the next review conference.

We must redouble our efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Let us work together resolutely to help build a safe and peaceful world for all humanity.

**Mr. In den Bosch** (Kingdom of the Netherlands): In addition to the aligning itself with the statement

made by the representative of the European Union in its capacity as observer, the Netherlands would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

The illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia has fundamentally altered our discussions at the United Nations on the disarmament machinery. We condemn the dangerous and irresponsible Russian nuclear rhetoric in the strongest possible terms. In the light of this, the discussions in the First Committee therefore remain of the utmost importance, and we need to take steps to reduce nuclear and other security risks and to increase transparency and accountability. This requires an effective and constructive multilateralism through a functioning disarmament machinery that is responsive to the challenges of today's world.

The Netherlands is a strong advocate of effective multilateralism because it offers the best guarantee for security, peace and sustainable development. We therefore underline the important work being done by the officeholders of the various treaty bodies based in Geneva. Especially now, with the rules-based order under immense pressure, we must continue to invest in the multilateral system and uphold international law, including the United Nations Charter. We need a pragmatic approach to move the disarmament agenda forward, as well as to ensure adequate financing for the United Nations disarmament machinery and its various instruments.

The Netherlands is deeply concerned by the continued stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). To overcome the inability to reach an agreement, an in-depth examination of the *modus operandi* of the CD is urgently needed. More generally, to tackle the multifaceted challenges in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, we need a wide range of actors working together towards positive outcomes. Bringing together different perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge will enable us to find more creative and innovative solutions.

The multi-stakeholder approach through engagement with civil society, academia, industry and research institutions is therefore essential in this respect. We appreciate the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research's substantive contributions at various disarmament forums. To counter the lack of substantive progress in the CD for more than two decades, different voices and perspectives are needed.

The Netherlands is a proud supporter of a feminist foreign policy. Part of this policy is ensuring our actions include gender perspectives in all aspects of foreign policy and diplomacy. In this regard, we support the important work that has been conducted in this field, beginning with the adoption of the historic Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. This has resulted in a large body of research and knowledge-sharing and in the adoption of 103 national action plans.

Furthermore, the increasing number of First Committee resolutions that take gender perspectives into account is encouraging. The Netherlands welcomes efforts to address the gender impact of the use of threat of use of weapons of mass destruction at the review conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as in the conferences held in the field of conventional weapons like the Anti-Personnel Mines Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Let me conclude by stating that effective and constructive multilateralism requires the time and willingness of delegations to build a broad middle ground to make collective progress towards a more safe and secure world. In her opening statement, the High Representative Nakamitsu referred to the Secretary-General's report entitled "Our Common Agenda", which calls for a new agenda for peace (see A/C.1/77/PV.2). The Netherlands is fully committed to engaging constructively in discussions on the development of a vision for the future to achieve sustainable disarmament, peace and security.

**Mr. Elhomosany** (Egypt): Egypt assigns immense importance to the United Nations disarmament machinery and considers disarmament and arms control to be an essential pillar of the United Nations mandate to preserve international peace and security, which remains the reason d'être of the Organization, particularly in the light of the international tensions at present. The stalemate in disarmament efforts is not necessarily the result of defects in the machinery itself as much as a reflection of the lack of political will by some States that seek to maintain absolute military dominance and believe in deterrence rather than collaborative and collective security.

The failure of the Conference on Disarmament to adopt a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for over 25 years requires immediate action to rectify the situation. We believe that this can only be achieved through launching negotiations on the verifiable and irreversible total elimination of nuclear weapons with specific benchmarks and timelines. There is also a need for similar efforts to revitalize the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and allow it to adopt recommendations on nuclear disarmament. We look forward to the successful convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament as a landmark event that is urgently needed to address the alarming stalemate in disarmament and to go back to the drawing board to revisit the current design of the machinery.

We continue to value the role of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. We reiterate our call for more financial independence for UNIDIR to allow it to continue to generate new ideas and promote practical actions on disarmament. Furthermore, seeking better synergies and coordination among the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament, UNDC and UNIDIR may contribute to a more efficient and effective functioning of the machinery. We also encourage the active role and contributions of non-governmental organizations and civil society in support of the United Nations disarmament machinery, taking into consideration the intergovernmental nature of any negotiation process.

Finally, I was hoping to conclude my statement at the First Committee during this session on a positive note. However, I am obliged to raise an important issue. Egypt regrets that the latest volume of the *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, launched by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, has used the phrase "States possessing nuclear weapons". We have clarified several times before that that term represents a violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as the Treaty recognizes only five nuclear-weapon States. Egypt urges the Office for Disarmament Affairs to use the correct term, which is "nuclear-weapon States". Let me put it on the record once more: Egypt will not, under any circumstances, recognize any nuclear-weapon State apart from the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the NPT.



**Ms. Petit** (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

The disarmament machinery and its institutions, which emerged from the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, provide us with a solid framework, which is essential for achieving any progress towards general and complete disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament remains the sole multilateral forum for the negotiation of universal disarmament treaties. Next May, I will have the honour of presiding over that forum, which is essential to our work, and I can assure the First Committee of my commitment, in concert with the other presidencies, as one of the Conference's six Presidents of the year, to making tangible progress towards disarmament, in particular towards establishing a cut-off treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. That subject, which is a priority issue for France, is very ripe for negotiation. We also support any proposal that would improve the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament and incorporate more continuity into the maintenance of strategic dialogue. We will carry forward the efforts undertaken under by the Canadian presidency to update the Conference's rules of procedure to make them gender-neutral.

While we know that that forum is often criticized, we must not give into one delegation's attempt to exert pressure. By opposing the facts, Russia is discrediting itself — not the Conference on Disarmament. It was Russia that blocked the adoption of a substantive final report, or the mere mention of discussions on Ukraine, because it is waging an illegal and unjustified war there. We owe it to the Conference on Disarmament and the bodies that preceded it to conclude instruments that form the basis of our non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty — to all of which France reiterates its strongest commitment.

Russia's persistent obstruction of disarmament forums is not new, and we deplore its behaviour aimed at preventing our forums from functioning properly, which undermines the credibility of our collective work. By instrumentalizing those forums for disinformation purposes, twisting our rules of

procedure and abusing its speaking time, Russia seeks to exhaust our efforts to make concrete progress in strengthening international peace and security. That strategy of obstruction is unworthy of a permanent member of the Security Council, and we call on Russia to cease that unacceptable blockade and to respect the rules and practice of multilateralism.

Allow me to insist on two other fundamental points.

First, France remains deeply concerned about the financial deficit that the disarmament forums have been experiencing for years.

Secondly, multilingualism is being threatened by that unstable financial situation, while it remains necessary for each State to be able to have experts participate who can express themselves in their language of choice.

Finally, France underscores its commitment to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, whose work contributes to our collective reflection on the major challenges to disarmament.

**Ms. Lipana** (Philippines): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22), and by the representative of Singapore, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

At a high-level segment held last month, my President raised concern about the profound lack of trust that is putting enormous strain on our multilateral system. He stressed that, amid challenging global tides, the rules-based international order remains an important ballast that stabilizes our common vessel. It is in that spirit that we affirm our commitment to the spirit of multilateralism and the work of the United Nations disarmament machinery. Multilateralism must remain based on international law and the principles of equity and justice, and must be pursued with inclusivity and transparency. We must reject any attempt to reject or revise our common understanding of the principles that underpin the global governance regime, including the United Nations disarmament machinery.

The Philippines is pleased that the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), having been confronted with challenges over the past three years, resumed its annual session last April. We look forward to working together with delegations to be able to agree on a concrete recommendation on the two items on the

Commission's agenda: nuclear disarmament and outer space. The UNDC is an important platform, as it brings all Member States together to discuss and address important issues related to enhancing international peace and security. We also recognize the important role of the Conference on Disarmament and, echoing many other delegations, we reiterate our call to the Conference to agree by consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work without further delay.

My delegation also aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Canada on behalf of a cross-regional group of Member States on the importance of applying the gender perspective in the disarmament machinery. The Philippines, as a known gender champion, strongly supports the call for States to collectively incorporate gender perspectives in all efforts within arms control and disarmament. The Philippines has in place an existing national action plan on women and peace and security, which provides ways and measures to uphold gender inclusion in consultative meetings and meetings and planning activities, serves as a response to various international instruments on women and peace and security and supports the implementation of national mandates on women and gender equality, as well as peace and development.

We also welcome the work that has been done in recent years to advance those issues in the broader disarmament machinery. The multi-stakeholder approach has played a vital role, not only in raising awareness on gender perspectives but also in the broader work of arms control and disarmament. Civil society, academia and young people, among other groups, stimulate discussions that allow us to have more meaningful dialogue, not only in the First Committee but in all forums. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and other think tanks improve the functioning of the disarmament machinery, and we call on States to take advantage of its analysis to enhance disarmament efforts at the local, regional and global levels.

**Mrs. Jayawardana** (Sri Lanka): At the start of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned of the dangers of the accumulation of rust in the multilateral disarmament machinery. Twenty years later that rust has developed to such an extent that the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission have not gained the traction that was envisaged.

Sri Lanka has noted with concern, together with many delegations to the First Committee, the steady deterioration of cooperative and constructive dialogue in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, which is essential to ensure international peace and security.

The global security tensions have not been eased by our inability to agree on a common understanding of the core values and objectives in those fields. We note with regret the failure of two consecutive NPT review conferences to reach consensus. The seeming erosion of political will in cooperating on global peace and security measures must be addressed. Sri Lanka reiterates the importance of continuing serious dialogue in good faith among all parties concerned in the interest of the security of all peoples. In that environment, taking measures to collectively protect and strengthen the existing machinery of mechanisms, treaties, obligations and commitments are of vital importance.

In that regard, Sri Lanka notes the priority and relevance of the negotiations that take place through the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral deliberative body tasked with negotiating multilateral treaties and the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body reporting to the General Assembly. We assure our readiness to engage with issues on the disarmament agenda through those platforms. Sri Lanka welcomes the reports of the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament and underlines the need for those mechanisms to work with renewed vigour.

Sri Lanka emphasizes the need for equitable geographical representation in the staffing of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. It was well noted by one delegation, during a previous debate in the First Committee, that one geographical region outnumbered the combined number of those from four other regions. In that context, Sri Lanka supports the regional disarmament mechanisms and processes to promote dialogue, create trust and build confidence at regional and subregional levels. Those regional centres are of greater relevance in the global security environment. They are encouraged to work with the Governments of the regions, as well as other stakeholders, to address issues unique to each region and contribute towards the global disarmament agenda.

There is an argument that the current disarmament machinery would work properly if there were sufficient political will for it to do so. Is that simply an excuse for

inaction? As one commentator has said, it is not political will that is lacking; it is agreement on direction that does not exist right now. The political will that does exist is pulling with equal force in opposite directions — a sure recipe for staying stuck in one place. The multilateral machinery, especially for something as fundamental as disarmament negotiations, should be designed to work in all conditions. Working on the machinery is not just tinkering at the edges while we wait for the political winds to change.

Finally, Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitment to strengthening the existing disarmament machinery and to working with all Member States to achieve concrete results and fulfil the goal of general and complete disarmament towards maintaining international peace and security.

**Ms. Moyo** (South Africa): The disarmament machinery plays an essential part in achieving the world envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations and in the current global environment. It is therefore essential for the disarmament machinery components to be able to fulfil their respective mandates. While we remain concerned that the Conference on Disarmament remains unable to engage in substantive work, we welcome that at least the Disarmament Commission was able to resume its consideration of matters related to outer space and nuclear disarmament under the Chair of Ambassador Xolisa Mabhongo, after not having met since 2018.

We note that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was negotiated and adopted by the General Assembly. We also note that the Open-ended Working Group mechanism is increasingly being considered to take key issues forward, and we support the fact that those are inclusive, transparent and consensus based. While we support the disarmament machinery, there is no gainsaying in recognizing that both those negotiating and deliberative avenues have created space to give effect to the aspirations of a majority of States long frustrated elsewhere in the procedurally and often politically deadlocked disarmament machinery.

We share the frustration and concerns of many Member States about the inaction in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in 2022 which did not meet expectations of an end to the protracted impasse. South Africa remains committed to a functioning Conference on Disarmament that is mandated to negotiate multilateral disarmament instruments, and it

is regrettable that in the 26 years that South Africa and 22 other countries were admitted as members of that body, it has not discharged its basic mandate with the exception being the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The inability of the CD to deliver on its responsibility as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum ranks high among the serious challenges facing international disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts.

We therefore urgently need to attend to the current state of the Conference on Disarmament. We can no longer engage in the repetitive past activities that have not brought the Conference closer to an agreement on a programme of work. That has distracted the CD from starting negotiations and, in so doing, effectively turned the Conference into a deliberative body as opposed to a negotiating forum, while creating the illusion that substantive work is being done. We have said many times that the continued impasse is not sustainable. It is also diminishing the credibility of the Conference on Disarmament and will increasingly affect the relevance and stature of the CD.

South Africa, as the Chair of the Disarmament Commission for 2022, welcomed the resumption of the substantive session having not met formally to conduct its substantive work since 2018. As the deliberative body in the disarmament machinery, the Commission is uniquely placed to find much needed common ground. The Working Group on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the Working Group on preparation of recommendations to promote the practical implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities with the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space produced updated Chair summary papers and are a firm basis for the continuation of discussions next year. South Africa trusts that the delegations will continue to deliberate on those important issues to find common ground.

South Africa also acknowledges the work done by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and would like to commend the institute for conducting high-quality independent research and convening timely discussions on issues in the field of disarmament.

In conclusion, my delegation joins the call to ensure the equal engagement and meaningful participation of women across multiple disarmament forums, prioritize

a gender perspective on disarmament and international security discussions and expand our knowledge and understanding of challenges with a view to greater progress on disarmament.

**Ms. Chariah** (Austria): Austria fully aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union. We would like to add the following points in our national capacity.

We are of the firm conviction that disarmament measures are needed most when tensions are high in order to avoid catastrophic consequences of armed conflict with potential global effects. In order to arrive at and implement such meaningful disarmament measures, a strong and functioning disarmament machinery is essential.

No one in this room will deny that global tensions are high and that geopolitical risks are as acute as they have been in decades. Therefore, the need for effective disarmament measures is evident. Yet — and this is a sad state of affairs — our disarmament machinery is in acute crisis. The crisis goes beyond the well-known and lamentable stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament, which has failed to produce any substantive work since the negotiation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in the mid-1990s.

The crisis has extended to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which, despite the best efforts of representatives at successive Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty, has not been able to agree on outcome documents to help us implement further steps towards our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Even if the consensus in August had not been blocked by one State, the outcome document in front of us represented a profoundly inadequate, lowest-denominator approach, which is simply not commensurate with the urgency that we face with regard to the NPT and the nuclear weapons issue in general.

The crisis extends to bodies, which, while on paper they work as intended, are hamstrung by tendencies to abuse the consensus principle. That principle, when applied in good faith, should guide us to seek solutions and outcomes that are acceptable to all. However, the present-day application of that principle often amounts to using procedural manoeuvres in an attempt to prevent substantive exchanges and productive work or, if productive work is undertaken, to block its reflection in documents, thereby stifling any meaningful process. Multilateralism and our disarmament machinery

cannot work when States interpret consensus as a license to operate with a veto mindset. Those short-sighted policies are to the detriment of most Member States and to our disarmament machinery as a whole, at a time when we need it more than ever before.

Last but not least, the crisis concerns concerted attempts by some to systematically push out civil society, academia and industry from all our deliberations. The adoption of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (see A/74/77) and the conclusion of the most recent Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems provide two stark examples to that effect.

The evidence is clear — broader stakeholder involvement yields better results. Despite that, most of our disarmament machinery is woefully behind when it comes to including those affected by our work. We therefore need to withstand the numerous attacks on stakeholder involvement and take concrete action to improve their participation in all processes.

Against the backdrop of that crisis, Austria remains convinced that it is in the vital security interests of all to strengthen our institutions, stay firm on our established norms, fully implement our treaty obligations and continue to shape the future multilateral disarmament regime. We call on all States to join us in that endeavour.

Gender equality and the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in disarmament and arms control forums remain a particular concern for my delegation. That includes this year's First Committee, in which we would have liked to see a more equal distribution of statements. But we should not stop at that. We need to ensure that the gender-specific impact of certain weapons are taken into account in all of our disarmament endeavours. We therefore fully subscribe to the joint statement delivered by the representative of Ireland and hope to see progress on that important issue in the future.

**Mr. Sarwani** (Pakistan): The multilateral disarmament machinery has been in a state of paralysis for more than two decades. That state of impasse is a function of realities on the ground, as the machinery is affected by the international and regional security environment. That paralysis is also both a cause and consequence of competing strategic priorities and the relentless pursuit of maintaining military advantages and discriminatory policies by some States.



Their messianic zeal, arbitrary priorities and self-serving notions of rightness, which disregard the foundational arms control principle of equal security for all, have reinforced the disarmament machinery's deadlock. Pakistan reiterates its view that the arms control machinery remains sound in its design, procedure and methods of work. After all, the same machinery was able to conclude several landmark treaties in the past when fundamental principles were adhered to.

Solutions to the deadlock in the machinery lie within its respective membership and in compliance with the fundamental principles of arms control, as enshrined in international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-1), of 1978. At that session, the General Assembly established the United Nations disarmament machinery by consensus. The key principle set forth by SSOD-1 in the context of that machinery is:

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

The unfulfillment of that cardinal objective requires that any legally binding measures be considered and agreed strictly on the basis of consensus, with the participation of all stakeholders allowing all States to safeguard their vital national security interests.

Some States oppose the commencement of negotiations on new treaties, simply because they clash with their strategic calculus. On the other hand, some of those very States champion cost-free and inherently discriminatory proposals that they know would naturally be rejected by the States whose security such initiatives undermine.

The reality today is that there is no consensus on the start of negotiations or on any issue on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Among the oldest agenda items, the vast majority support substantive work on the issues of nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. A handful of States seem obsessed with a partial non-proliferation measure in the form of a fissile material cut-off treaty, which, without addressing the existing stocks, will make no meaningful contribution to nuclear disarmament.

The challenges confronting the disarmament machinery are not exclusive to the CD. The First Committee and the Disarmament Commission face similar polarization in the face of the most pressing peace and security issues at the global and regional levels. The growing polarization and ensuing breakdown of existing agreements is creating a further burden on the already stressed machinery. Overcoming the impasse remains a challenging task. However, seeking pathways outside established forums, especially when pursued on a non-consensual basis and without the participation of all stakeholders, would be even more counterproductive. Only in the CD, where all militarily significant States participate on an equal footing and are able to protect their vital security interests under the consensus rule, can meaningful progress be achieved.

Finally, Pakistan has called for reviving the arms control consensus. We presented a detailed road map at the CD and in the First Committee. That revival must be anchored in a faithful adherence to, and respect for, international law, based on non-discrimination and centred on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and SSOD-1.

**Ms. Shestopalova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): A central role in addressing matters related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as international peace and global security, is assigned to the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The tasks of strengthening existing regimes and developing new regimes in that area should be carried out either within existing treaty mechanisms or within the United Nations disarmament machinery. That principle alone can ensure genuine multilateralism in the area of disarmament. In that regard, the global community should pay particular attention to the continuing attempts of Western States to disrupt the multilateral disarmament forums and use the United Nations for their own mercenary ambitions, without taking into account the interests of the remaining Member States, above all the interests of the developing countries.

Those States continue to politicize the work of the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. They openly call for the revision of the current arms control disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, based on the norms and principles of international law, and for it to be replaced by non-binding rules that are

aimed at the further dominance of those States. We believe that such actions are completely unacceptable. They are confrontationally loaded and could divide the global community, increase tensions, undermine trust and divert attention from the real problems of international security. Such steps provoke the further erosion of the existing international legal system in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, undermining international security in general and rendering impossible any progress along the path of complete and general disarmament.

A clear example of all of those destructive trends is the recently concluded session of the Conference on Disarmament. In violation of the Conference's mandate, Western States are using that forum to settle political scores and enshrine their irrelevant preferences in the disarmament platform. Attempts are being made to drag issues into the Conference on Disarmament that are not directly related to its mandate or agenda. The reason for that state of affairs lies in the reluctance of our Western colleagues to undertake what was entrusted to them by the decisions of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, namely, to negotiate the development of international arms control and disarmament instruments. That is the reason for the low efficiency in the work of the Conference this year.

We are convinced of the need to consolidate the international community around a creative and constructive agenda in order to maintain and improve the existing system of agreements in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Guided by those goals, we have submitted a biennial draft resolution entitled "Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements" (A/C.1/77/L.66), which is designed in the spirit of a unifying agenda, and we look forward to its adoption by consensus.

For its part, Russia will continue its efforts to improve the efficiency and coherence of the disarmament triad. It is important to oppose any attempts to revise the United Nations disarmament machinery under any pretext whatsoever. The work of the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission should be results-oriented and carried out in full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, as well as other norms of international law and the mandates assigned to them. Ideas about reforming the basic working methods and rules of procedure of United Nations disarmament forums are counterproductive.

We would like to recall our ongoing initiative on the development of an international convention against acts of chemical and biological terrorism, which was launched in March 2016 to overcome the two decades of stagnation in the negotiating work of the Conference on Disarmament and remains relevant. We are convinced that the Conference, by virtue of its unique status as the single negotiating forum in the field of disarmament, is capable of making a significant contribution to normalizing the international security situation and building confidence among States.

**Mr. Kulkarni (India):** The United Nations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. India is committed to the ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to multilateralism in pursuit of those ideals. A reformed and effective United Nations is essential for it to successfully discharge its functions. India attaches high priority to the work of the United Nations disarmament machinery as laid out by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I), consisting of the triad of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the First Committee and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), which continue to be the ideal forums for deliberation and negotiations on matters related to disarmament, non-proliferation and international security.

India accords high priority to the Conference on Disarmament as the world's single disarmament negotiating forum. The CD has the mandate, membership and rules for negotiating legally binding instruments on the core items on its agenda. Despite its best efforts, the CD has been unable to adopt a programme of work. Instead of questioning the relevance and effectiveness of the CD and looking for alternative forums, States must demonstrate political will and focus their efforts on the CD's negotiating mandate. This year, India participated constructively in the work of the subsidiary bodies at the Conference. However, much work remains to be done. The CD must be allowed to discharge its important mandate to negotiate. India has expressed its readiness and commitment to work with other Member States on all the core items on the CD's agenda, including a fissile material cut-off treaty on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

India is pleased that the Disarmament Commission was able to resume a substantive session this year after a gap of almost three years. As the main deliberative

body within the United Nations on disarmament issues, the Commission's role as a platform for dialogue and cooperation, bringing together the universal membership of all Member States, is significant. The Commission has made several important achievements in its past, having successfully adopted guidelines and recommendations. India attaches high importance to the UNDC's work and hopes that the Commission will achieve substantive recommendations next year on the issues on its agenda.

India looks forward to the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which is long overdue. It could be a useful opportunity to take stock of the progress made in the disarmament machinery and to look at ways to further revitalize it. India also values the important efforts of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in various areas of our work. India's Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship demonstrates the high priority we attach to promoting disarmament education.

The First Committee, which is mandated by SSOD-I to deal with questions related to international peace and security, is an important platform that brings together all United Nations States Members to contribute their views. India hopes that our work this year at the First Committee will galvanize the disarmament machinery in its pursuit of collective solutions on matters related to disarmament and international security. India stands ready to contribute to that process and to work with fellow Member States in a collective endeavour to safeguard global peace and security.

**Mr. Noor Rahimin** (Malaysia): Malaysia associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22), and the representative of Singapore, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

While the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture has played a crucial role in safeguarding the world from the horrors of weapons of mass destruction, its continued integrity and credibility cannot be taken for granted. In times of heightened tension, the disarmament machinery must continue to function effectively. That is vital for ensuring the full implementation of obligations and commitments pursuant to existing treaties, as well as the negotiation of new instruments, as we work tirelessly to achieve

general and complete disarmament. In the wake of the consecutive failure of two Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we must intensify our efforts to address common challenges together.

The First Committee embodies the long-standing endeavours of the United Nations membership to address salient issues in the field of disarmament and international security. It is a universal platform in which all Member States have a say, as draft resolutions are generally considered and adopted with a view to reaffirming key principles and making progress in various areas. Malaysia welcomes the resumption of the Committee's in-person deliberations following the hiatus caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic. We underline the need to move forward in the spirit of mutual respect through dialogue and diplomacy, in the interests of peace, security and sustainable development for all.

*Mrs. Balázs (Hungary), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

To realize the role of the Conference of Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament-related treaties, it is imperative for that body to overcome the prolonged impasse vis-à-vis its programme of work. Failure to do so will only have adverse effects on the credibility of the Conference, amid a range of emerging challenges in the disarmament arena.

Given the institutional deadlock afflicting the CD, it is nonetheless heartening that a landmark instrument — the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons — was successfully negotiated at a United Nations conference in 2017. The entry into force of that Treaty in 2021 and the convening of its first Meeting of States Parties, earlier this year, demonstrate that progress on disarmament is indeed possible when there is sustained political will.

My delegation further underscores the importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the multilateral disarmament machinery, tasked with considering various disarmament issues and submitting concrete recommendations to the General Assembly. We welcome the convening of the substantive session of the UNDC in April 2022 following successive postponements in recent years. The session witnessed timely discussions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the

prevention of an arms race in outer space. Malaysia also reiterates its strong support for the work of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, including in our own Asia-Pacific region, which are vital for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation objectives in the interest of maintaining peace and security at the national, subregional and regional levels.

The prevailing strains on the disarmament machinery must be acknowledged and addressed expeditiously. In order for the global disarmament architecture to survive, recover and thrive, we as Member States must safeguard and enhance the machinery that permits it to function.

**Mr. Li Song** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the President of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the Chairs of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Bureaus of the relevant treaty processes for their efforts in advancing the multilateral disarmament process. I thank High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, under her leadership, and Mr. Robin Geiss and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, under his leadership, for their support for and contributions to the multilateral disarmament machinery.

Currently, the international political and security situation is undergoing complex and profound changes. The Cold War mentality is running rampant. The obsession with the so-called great Power strategic competition is exacerbating relations among major countries. They are having a grave impact on global strategic security and stability and international peace and security. In the face of such a grave situation, China remains a firm advocate of meaningful multilateralism and actively promotes the multilateral disarmament machinery process in a principled, responsible and constructive manner. In January, as the first rotating President of the CD for this year, I actively worked to promote the depoliticization of the CD, effectively resolved the issue of observer participation and made comprehensive efforts to reach consensus by all parties on the organization of the work of the CD for the entire year. That is a clear demonstration of China's dynamic practice of true multilateralism and represents a victory for the latter.

While we should not blame the weather, we should continue our efforts concerning the security environment and political climate. For the foreseeable

future, the multilateral disarmament machinery will continue to face the impact of the Cold War mentality, competition among the great Powers, ideological divides and other approaches and actions that are out of step with the trends of our times. The challenges facing the multilateral disarmament machinery cannot be blamed on the machinery itself.

With regard to how to fully leverage and strengthen the multilateral disarmament machinery, China would like to make three recommendations.

First, we must promote and practise genuine multilateralism. We need to resolutely safeguard the authority and effectiveness of the multilateral disarmament machinery and make full use of the platform's machinery to carry out all possible exchanges, dialogue and substantive work in a practical manner. We need to actively advocate for the new security concept that is common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable and is based on equality, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, and we must persistently work towards fostering mutual trust, while avoiding misgivings and forging consensus.

Secondly, we must firmly stand against politicization. The multilateral disarmament machinery is a platform for promoting common security, not a battlefield for political confrontation. Certain countries use the multilateral machinery to suppress others with differing views and heighten confrontation and division, while seriously interfering with the normal work of the machinery, which we should resolutely oppose and reject. All parties should adopt a constructive approach, work in strict accordance with the mandate of each mechanism and gradually steer the multilateral machinery back onto a healthy, pragmatic and professional track.

Thirdly, we must be vigilant and avoid taking actions that abandon international consensus and undermine multilateral mechanisms. As an example, this year the Western countries that sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.47, on a fissile-material cut-off treaty (FMCT), insisted on making disruptive changes to the text in an attempt to build momentum for a new process. Such an initiative is by no means constructive. It will not be conducive to launching FMCT negotiations and will lead only to an impasse. In the process of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, will the Western



countries listen sincerely to the voices of developing countries and commit to achieving the overall goal of the prevention of an arms race in outer space? We will wait and see.

As it is overshadowed by the Cold War mentality, great Power competition and bloc confrontation, the prospect of taking advantage of the multilateral disarmament machinery does not allow for much optimism, and the international non-proliferation regime faces the risk of a breakdown. China will continue to work in an open and constructive manner to inject principled positive energy into the multilateral disarmament machinery. Let us join hands and forge ahead with confidence and fortitude.

**Mr. Molla** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22) and would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

Bangladesh remains an ardent proponent of multilateralism in the pursuit of general and complete disarmament. The complex security challenges in today's world has left no alternative to multilateralism. Enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery is a shared objective. We reiterate our support for the three mutually reinforcing forums of the disarmament machinery, namely, the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). The international community bears the collective responsibility to ensure that those forums deliver on their agreed mandates.

We share our profound frustration, like many other delegations, over the prolonged state of paralysis in the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. We deeply regret that the CD has not been able to reach consensus on a programme of work for more than 25 years. The protracted deadlock in the CD reflects the lack of political will on the part of Member States. Bangladesh calls on Member States to show the utmost flexibility and genuine political will to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work so that the CD can deliver on its mandate to negotiate multilateral disarmament instruments.

We attach great importance to the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as the sole deliberative body of its kind, with universal

membership, to build and foster consensus on critical issues concerning general and complete disarmament. Bangladesh reiterates its call on Member States to enable the Commission to advance discussions on outer space, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Bangladesh welcomes the convening of the substantive session of the UNDC in April and reaffirms its full support for the Commission's work. We look forward to the 2023 session of the UNDC with the hope that it fulfils its mandate.

Bangladesh considers that the work of the First Committee should focus on non-proliferation and disarmament. It is therefore imperative that we review the working methods and streamline the work of the First Committee to make it more efficient and fit for purpose by reducing duplication and overlapping. We highly appreciate the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and commend the Institute for its high-quality independent research and timely discussions on issues within the area of disarmament. We stress the need for ensuring enhanced and predictable resources for the Institute to deliver on its mandates. We also recognize the useful learning resources developed by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Lastly, we reaffirm our support for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament at an early date. We believe that will give Member States a new opportunity to demonstrate their collective will to reinvigorate the overall disarmament machinery.

**Mr. Costa Filho** (Brazil): The world's worst-kept secret is that the disarmament machinery is failing. Nevertheless, by no stretch of the imagination is it the only problem that confronts us. The lack of political will and the deteriorating international security situation play a significant role in the sorry state of affairs. We need just to look at the outcome of the work of the First Committee — of the 29 draft resolutions submitted this year under cluster 1, a recorded vote was requested on 23 of them. In such a situation, not even the best-oiled machinery would be enough to ensure results. That does not mean that we should shy away from an in-depth look at what plagues the disarmament machinery, have a serious discussion about it, develop a clear diagnosis of the problem and set out to work on a joint proposal to address it. As all of us are aware, of the three special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD) — held in 1978, 1982

and 1988 — only SSOD-I adopted a Final Document (resolution S-10/2), which established the so-called disarmament machinery and remains to this day an essential source of principles in the area.

The disarmament machinery should perform three main tasks to promote sustainable peace: first, it should promote verifiable effective disarmament; secondly, it should prevent conflict, while precluding the use of weapons of mass destruction; and thirdly, it should address the strategic root causes of an emerging conflict to make way for a peaceful solution as quickly and effectively as possible. In a sober assessment, little has been achieved over the past two decades. We are resigned to acknowledging that respect for the Charter of the United Nations is at an all-time low. Consecutive Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have failed to produce a consensus outcome. Moreover, the consensus culture is slowly but surely being eroded in the chemical, biological and conventional weapons regimes. Even the Missile Technology Control Regime failed to adopt a consensual report at its thirty-fiftieth anniversary. Finally, we are not consistently tackling the challenges posed by emerging technologies and their application to weapons of mass destruction. Simply put, the seriousness of the challenges I have mentioned are sufficient to justify an effort to carry out a comprehensive review of the most critical aspects of disarmament and to sensitize and mobilize the international community.

In the case of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of its kind — reaching consensus has eluded us for almost three decades. Throughout that period, we have obviously had instances of convergence. More recently, despite the auspicious decision worked out under the able presidency of Ambassador Li Song, we agreed to create five subsidiary bodies. Unfortunately, the dénouement of the 2022 session was rather underwhelming. The CD had trouble adopting a merely factual report, which was made possible only after the intense efforts of the Ecuadorian presidency, led by Ambassador Izquierdo Miño, whom I commend. His considered and solemn remarks today are to be taken very seriously, and are very much in line with the views of the Brazilian Government.

That is where we stand — the combination of a deteriorated environment and a machinery that does not facilitate or make any easier the fulfilment of its

negotiating mandate. It is difficult to deny that the CD is neither as agile as it should be, as it is a group of limited composition, nor is it sufficiently democratic, as it is not universal. Its methods of work are somewhat cumbersome and actually compare unfavourably even with those of the Security Council. Indeed, that highest-level organ, which is responsible for collective security and endowed with exceptional powers, including the power of the veto enshrined in its methods of work, counts on rules of procedure that are more adaptable and agile than those of the CD. The perpetuation of that situation frustrates members, but the extent of the discontent is uneven. We understand the political realities that sustain that unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Fortunately, we have the needed tools at our disposal. The First Committee will take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.6, entitled “Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament”, which was submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. In paragraph 4, the resolution

“Encourages Member States to continue consultations on the next steps for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament”.

We believe that we should seize the opportunity to initiate a process of informal consultations on the convening of the preparatory committee for the fourth special session on disarmament by the time the General Assembly convenes its seventy-eighth session.

**Ms. Saggese (United Kingdom):** Russia’s illegal war of aggression against Ukraine has placed the disarmament machinery under unprecedented strain. The 2022 session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) was a low point in the history of that body. While the United Kingdom supported the creation of subsidiary bodies, their indistinct mandates, the lack of time available owing to the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the bad faith shown by some delegations while negotiating the reports meant that they did not live up to their potential. The bad faith was also on display when it came to the adoption of the CD’s annual report. The Russian delegation’s attempt to airbrush the criticism of its invasion of Ukraine and its resort to desperate procedural manoeuvres were shameful and unacceptable. However, the official documents submitted by Member States and the

verbatim records of the proceedings of the Conference are there for all to see. Russia cannot rewrite history, however hard it might try.

The uniquely poor behaviour on display this year is part of an unwelcome trend. The consensus rule in the CD is a recognition of the fact that States need to know that their fundamental interests are protected in negotiations on issues of the highest sensitivity. But some delegations now use it to avoid even engaging in discussions on the difficult issues that we face. On top of the growing habit of reverse-engineering in twisting the rules of procedure or established practice to fit their positions, it is becoming all but impossible to hold serious discussions. Such behaviour imperils the effectiveness and continued centrality of the CD.

The United Kingdom was pleased that the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) was able to resume its substantive work this year. We welcome the positive discussions on ways to promote practical transparency and confidence-building measures with the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space. There was a rich exchange of views, supplemented by the presentations of civil society and non-governmental organizations, which enhanced our knowledge and collective understanding. The United Kingdom was also pleased to present its views on resolution 76/231 and the new approach to preventing an arms race in outer space and to hear from other delegations. We hope that we can continue to build on those fruitful discussions next year.

Discussions in the UNDC on nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons were also timely ahead of the NPT Review Conference. However, too often discussions centred on areas of disagreement. The UNDC is a unique forum, with a truly global membership. Against the deteriorating security backdrop, it is more important than ever that we make use of it for the purpose it was established: to discuss issues, find common ground and make recommendations to the First Committee and the CD. We recommend that the Chairs consider how best to structure discussions to achieve that end and call on delegations to engage in a spirit of consensus to maximize the chances of producing practical and constructive outcomes next year.

It is not the shortcomings of the disarmament machinery itself that prevent Member States from negotiating effective measures on disarmament, but

the prevailing security environment, the lack of trust among States, the bad faith of some delegations and our collective failure to identify our common interest. But we can, and we should, ensure that the machinery is ready for when times are better. The United Kingdom therefore welcomes initiatives and proposals on making the machinery more streamlined and fit for purpose, while remaining true to the principles that underpin it. We hope for a more constructive and productive approach in 2023.

**Mr. Albai (Iraq)** (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Iraq aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Arab States and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22).

Iraq believes in the importance of a multilateral approach in many areas, including disarmament. Therefore, we stress the vital role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral forum for disarmament, which has a successful record. It is no secret that the more than 25-year-old deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament is the result of the failure to reach an agreement on a comprehensive balanced programme of work that responds to the needs of all Member States, in line with the Conference's rules of procedure, so that it may achieve progress on the issues before it. In that regard, Iraq reaffirms the need for the member States of the Conference to fully shoulder responsibility for demonstrating the necessary flexibility and political will so that the Conference can continue its role in negotiations, end the stalemate and contribute to reaching positive outcomes in order to strengthen regional and international peace and security.

Iraq stresses the important role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) as the multilateral deliberative body responsible for disarmament issues within the United Nations. Iraq emphasizes the need for enhancing its sessions because of the vital role that they play in adopting recommendations and exchanging views in order to contribute to future negotiations, especially those on nuclear disarmament. Accordingly, Iraq welcomes the fact that UNDC has resumed its work and held its second session. We look forward to reaching consensus on its recommendations at its upcoming session in order to respond to Member States' concerns. Iraq reaffirms the important role of the multilateral mechanisms in the field of disarmament in achieving the relevant objectives of the United Nations.

**Mr. Sánchez de Lerín (Spain)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make the following comments in my national capacity. The full version of my statement is available on the e-Statements portal.

At a time marked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and by tensions and uncertainties in the areas of security, disarmament and non-proliferation, Spain reiterates its unconditional support for the multilateral disarmament bodies — the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee. Spain firmly believes in the complementarity of the three forums and their suitability for finding solutions to the problems affecting global security. But as States, it is our responsibility to ensure that they adequately, effectively and credibly fulfil their mandates.

That is why we deeply regret that certain States maintain a counterproductive attitude within those bodies, while the international disarmament machinery remains far-removed from the expectations of the important role that it should play in the area of global security. We are especially concerned about the serious level of paralysis that the Conference on Disarmament has been suffering for decades and its inability to agree on a programme of work that would allow it to fulfil its mandate as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

The claim by some delegations that such a programme of work can be based only on a negotiating mandate is completely unfounded. In that context, Spain regrets that the Conference on Disarmament has not begun negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices, as was made clear in the proceedings of the subsidiary body established this year, which I coordinated. At the same time, we believe that the start of negotiations on productive security guarantees is a realistic cornerstone of the Conference on Disarmament. We are concerned that the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly is increasingly insubstantial.

My delegation has warned for years that the main reason for the paralysis lies in the misunderstanding of the consensus rule, which certain States abuse in their interpretation of it as a non-existent right of veto to block every type of agreement, including in plenary meetings. That situation is not sustainable, especially given the

global security situation. We must reflect on that and resume substantive work as soon as possible. We have also seen such polarization in the First Committee, as a result of the submission of new draft resolutions and new language that move us further away from achieving the necessary consensus. And it can and is affecting the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which is being undermined by the situation. Any failure in those forums is a failure on our part as representatives of our countries. We must therefore be constructive and seek realistic and effective solutions, including dialogue and respect for differences and especially taking into account the current difficult time. That is why we must return to the international disarmament machinery and restore its authority, mandate and prestige, which depends solely on our willingness and ability.

**Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Since 1997, the Conference on Disarmament has failed to negotiate a multilateral instrument and has not even agreed on a programme of work with a negotiating mandate. International disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts are facing major challenges. As various delegations have already pointed out, year after year the United Nations Disarmament Commission notes the erosion of the disarmament machinery. At its most recent session, the polarization resulting from the most serious international security situation since the end of the Cold War was added to almost three decades of stagnation, which was reflected in its discussions and negotiations on its final report. In that regard, we underscore the message conveyed at the beginning of this meeting via video-teleconference by Ambassador Emilio Izquierdo Miño, in his capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, which was also acknowledged by the representative of Brazil, whom we thank for his kind words.

Rest assured that, in that difficult context, Ecuador assumed as constructively as possible the responsibility of facilitating draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.25, on the report of the Conference on Disarmament, as its main sponsor in its capacity as rotating President of the Conference. The text before the First Committee is the product of extensive consultations that were initiated in Geneva and continued without pause here at Headquarters in New York. In facilitating those consultations, I sought at all times to ensure an inclusive and transparent process. I would like to acknowledge the interest demonstrated and the very valuable contributions made by all the delegations that participated in those consultations.



An effective disarmament machinery is key to the survival of humankind, as reflected by the current international circumstances. In that regard, Ecuador will continue to promote and defend respect for international law and the rules-based international order. International cooperation and confidence-building hinge on States genuinely implementing their obligations.

Finally, the delegation of Ecuador aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22).

**Ms. Lee** (Republic of Korea): In the face of this year's particularly challenging security environment and prevailing tensions over the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, the trinity of the disarmament machinery — namely, the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) — must operate hand in hand to facilitate mutually reinforcing discussions and outcomes.

While the CD was able to agree on the establishment of subsidiary bodies and to resolve the issue of observers — thanks to the leadership and efforts of its first President of the year, China — it fell far short of expectations in terms of advancing its substantive work, and even further short of expectations in terms of breaking the stalemate on the commencement of negotiations. The unprecedented brevity of this year's annual report speaks loudly about the abject state into which the CD has fallen over recent decades. Such repetition had led many to question the *raison d'être* of the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. However, paragraph 10 of the Final Document (resolution S-10/2) of the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament recognized that

“Although the decisive factor for achieving real measures of disarmament is the ‘political will’ of States, especially those possessing nuclear weapons, a significant role can also be played by the effective functioning of an appropriate international machinery designed to deal with the problems of disarmament in its various aspects.”

A loss of the relevance of the CD, especially at this defining moment, would incur a high cost beyond the field of disarmament. It is time to follow up the long-overdue implementation of the 1995 Shannon Mandate consensus to begin negotiations on a comprehensive,

balanced and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty for the cessation of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices. That will be a step in the right direction, and the Republic of Korea is ready to work with all other Member States committed to revitalizing the CD's work.

My delegation is fully committed to the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which is the sole and unique deliberative body for submitting recommendations to the General Assembly. Bearing in mind its broad mandate, we expect it to continue to play a vital role in facilitating the sharing of views among Member States and the production of outcomes on the various disarmament agendas, including nuclear disarmament and outer space. We welcome the successful resumption of the UNDC's substantive session after the three years of postponement caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic. We hope to build on that momentum in the coming years.

My delegation also believes that the active contributions of civil society and research institutions can create positive momentum in our joint endeavour. We especially appreciate the role of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for its in-depth research across a wide range of disarmament issues, including areas such as cybersecurity, outer space and chemical and biological threats, as well as gender and young people's issues in the field of disarmament. The work of UNIDIR carried out through its research, seminars, networks and publications provides meaningful assistance for the CD and for furthering the discourse on disarmament. In that light, we will contribute \$270,000 to UNIDIR's Space Security Programme this year, on top of the \$180,000 we contributed in the preceding year to support UNIDIR's Youth Engagement Programme. The Republic of Korea looks forward to working closely with UNIDIR and other Member States to advance young people's disarmament and non-proliferation activities and platforms and to support the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda. We also expect that the Institute will collaborate closely with the Office for Disarmament Affairs in that manner.

**Mr. Aydil** (Türkiye): Türkiye aligns itself with the statement on gender and disarmament delivered by the representative of Ireland on behalf of a group of States. I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

Multilateralism, disarmament and the arms control architecture have suffered to a great extent recently. Nevertheless, if we wish to achieve collective security, we need more than ever to utilize the United Nations disarmament machinery efficiently and protect its integrity. My country reaffirms its strong support for the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as they constitute the three main pillars of the machinery. In our view, those pillars are complementary and mutually reinforce each other.

The First Committee remains a significant component of the machinery and a valuable forum in which to consider disarmament and non-proliferation issues. While we always welcome efforts to introduce draft resolutions to the Committee as a valuable exercise, we must also caution against unnecessary duplication — or even worse, putting forward competing draft resolutions. Our collective goal must be to preserve the Committee as a relevant and efficient forum for our deliberations. That situation is particularly relevant this year, as we have a record number of draft resolutions to consider.

As the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament has been at the centre of the endeavours to ensure international security since its inception. We believe that the CD possesses the necessary mandate, rules of procedure and membership composition to deliver on its duties. In our view, the CD could return to its crucial role in negotiating legally binding international treaties if all the members demonstrate the necessary political will.

We started this year with renewed hope by adopting a decision to create subsidiary bodies to advance substantive work at the Conference. We saw the full engagement of the members of the CD in the process and heard a great many insightful arguments. Nevertheless, we managed to adopt only the third and fifth subsidiary bodies' reports. Given the delicate situation of international stability, it is high time to overcome such polarization and realize the CD's full potential. In the period ahead, what is needed most is to create an atmosphere of trust and flexibility and to demonstrate the political will needed to reach consensus on a programme of work for the 2023 session of the Conference. Türkiye will maintain its active and constructive approach in the activities of the Conference. We hope to be able to adopt the CD resolution by consensus at the First Committee this year.

Türkiye very much welcomed the resumption of the work of the Disarmament Commission this year, after a three-year hiatus. The Disarmament Commission plays an important role as the only specialized deliberative subsidiary body of the General Assembly that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues. My country attaches priority to keeping the Commission functional, as it plays a vital role in ensuring a robust disarmament machinery. We want to achieve progress towards producing concrete recommendations for the remainder of this cycle. As in the past, Türkiye will stand ready to contribute to the work of all the components of the disarmament machinery so that they can fulfil their respective mandates.

**Mr. Padilla González** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22).

Cuba fully supports the central role of the United Nations in promoting multilateralism as a basic principle and as the only effective approach to conducting international negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation. We support the work of the Organization's disarmament machinery. We draw attention to the need to preserve existing agreements on disarmament and arms regulation and to deepen international cooperation to ensure their strict observance, in addition to strengthening multilateral negotiations. We oppose any attempts to erode the disarmament architecture or to weaken and put an end to multilateral negotiations on the subject.

Member States must renew their commitment to the Conference on Disarmament. We are encouraged by the decision taken to revive the work of that body, which is a key component of the United Nations disarmament machinery. It is now necessary to fulfil its negotiating mandate, ensure its vitality and preserve its rules of procedure and practices, in particular the consensus method, as the fundamental basis for its work. If the Conference is to make a decisive contribution to the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament, it will depend on the political will of all the Member States of our Organization. We are convinced that the Conference has the capacity, first, to simultaneously negotiate a legally binding instrument prohibiting an arms race in outer space; secondly, to provide security guarantees for States that, like Cuba, do not possess

nuclear weapons; and thirdly, to prohibit the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other devices of the same nature.

We welcome the resumption of the substantive work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission this year. We urge it to adopt specific recommendations on the issues under its consideration, particularly in the area of nuclear disarmament. Cuba will continue to promote the preservation and strengthening of the disarmament machinery, in strict adherence to multilateralism, as well as the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

**Mr. Makarevich** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to note that ensuring the sustainable development of peace and security are interconnected goals, the realization of which will affect humankind's future. We regret the deterioration of the international security architecture, which has negative consequences for development and the entire world order. We reiterate the initiative of the Head of the Belarussian State on the need to work out clear and transparent agreements on the rules of a new world order, which would provide security assurances for all members of the international community. We note the importance of restoring trust, consolidating the international community and resuming the negotiating process on disarmament issues.

We underscore the positive contribution of Belarus, which voluntarily renounced its nuclear weapons and also implements in good faith its arms reduction commitments made within the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. We are working towards the elimination of our stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines and are engaged in activities to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We call on States to take urgent and effective measures towards general and complete disarmament.

We commend the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for the studies it has conducted on the relationship between disarmament and development and for regularly informing Member States about the outcomes of that work.

**Mr. Sajjadih** (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.22).

Iran reaffirms the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. We strongly believe that nuclear weapons continue to pose an existential threat to the world, and as such the international community must continue to focus on achieving the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world in a manner that is verifiable, irreversible and transparent. That goal will not be achieved until and unless the nuclear-weapon States and their advocates honour their legal obligations.

The major problem in the United Nations disarmament machinery with respect to nuclear weapons, in particular the Conference on Disarmament (CD), is the lack of genuine political will on the part of certain nuclear-weapon States and their supporters. However, the continuous nuclear disarmament deficit, which was highlighted, among other things, by the consecutive failures of the ninth and tenth Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in 2015 and 2022, will have a significant negative impact on the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture until the right step is taken towards nuclear disarmament.

In that context, it is imperative to preserve and reinforce existing treaties and agreements, sustain the assertion of the norm against the testing, proliferation and use of nuclear weapons, eliminate the role of nuclear weapons and promote verifiable and irreversible actions towards nuclear, chemical and biological weapons disarmament. In that way, all opportunities must be explored and utilized for considering the revitalization of the United Nations disarmament architecture and machinery in order to chart a course towards the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction at the global and regional levels. Coping with the danger of Israel's weapons of mass destruction and threats must therefore be a priority.

Specifically regarding the United Nations disarmament machinery, it should be noted that the Conference on Disarmament is the single multilateral disarmament negotiations body, whose role and mandate should be strengthened, especially through the resumption of its substantive work. Emphasizing the vital importance and continued validity of the Final Document (resolution S-10/2) of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, we strongly support the early commencement of negotiations in the CD on a comprehensive nuclear

weapons convention. We welcome the resumption of the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and hope that, following the very rich discussions held during this year's cycle of the Commission, it will successfully conclude the circuit next year.

In the First Committee, the frequent and consistent negative votes of the United States and Israel continue to damage the wider practice of consensus decision-making, while demonstrating the American approach to disarmament. The main priority of the disarmament machinery should be to achieve consensus decision-making instead of furthering divisive topics. Furthermore, the United States arbitrary compliance reports on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and commitments should not only be stopped but also rejected, as they are undermining the authority of the relevant international instruments and organizations.

Last but not least, the composition of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs should reflect an equitable representation of the international community. We attach great importance to United Nations follow-up programmes on disarmament processes.

**Mr. Brady** (Ireland): Ireland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

The First Committee is a vital component of the disarmament machinery and helps to set the agenda for future progress on key issues. We welcome the improvements in the working methods of the Committee but are concerned that the proceedings are often marked by significant divergence on procedural matters that can restrict the time available to address substantive issues.

We must also work to increase the diversity of voices in disarmament forums. It has now been over 20 years since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The full, equal and meaningful participation of women and men across all parts of the disarmament machinery needs to become the norm. We know that a diversity of voices results in more efficient and effective policies. Integrating disarmament considerations into the women and peace and security agenda, and vice versa, must be a top priority. The tenth review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was the first to consider gender issues from the start of the cycle. We must build on that work to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective through

the next review cycle. Ireland is proud to chair the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group in Geneva and will keep working to integrate gender perspectives and gender-sensitive approaches across all areas of disarmament.

We deeply regret that the report of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) this year (A/77/27) does not include any substance, referencing only the date range during which the Conference met in 2022 and its dates for next year. That is a totally unacceptable state of affairs. The decades-long stagnation within the CD is neither credible nor sustainable. The CD should be at the core of our work in defending and strengthening the international disarmament machinery, but that is currently far from the reality. It is vital that multilateral engagement and cooperation on disarmament issues prevail over tension and distrust. We cannot neglect our collective responsibilities in that regard, and we must have the courage and leadership to look at what is required to reinvigorate the work and effectiveness of the CD.

Ireland also strongly supports the important role of the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body of the General Assembly.

Civil society is a vital partner in the disarmament machinery, and we have seen the valuable role that it can play in disarmament campaigns in recent years. Ireland remains a strong proponent of civil society, advocating for an inclusive approach to the disarmament machinery to ensure its robust engagement and participation across all forums. In the same vein of inclusiveness, Ireland strongly advocates for proactive engagement with young people in the context of disarmament machinery, ensuring their participation and that their voices are heard. Disarmament education is a key facilitator of inclusivity.

The disarmament machinery cannot function without sustainable funding. We again call upon all States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. Ireland recognizes the important contribution of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to all of our work in that regard via its valuable research on disarmament and international security. We are proud to continue to provide funding to support that work. We remind States that UNIDIR also holds a vital technical competence and provides essential input to our work in a range of disarmament bodies. Its financial stability is therefore in our collective interest.



The links between disarmament and international peace and security remain as clear as ever. In the current gravely challenging multilateral environment, we must redouble our efforts in ensuring progress in disarmament. That cannot be achieved without the constructive engagement and willingness to compromise of United Nations States Members. A fully functioning disarmament machinery will bring us closer to achieving a peaceful and secure future.

**Mr. Larbaoui** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation stresses the importance of preserving existing disarmament agreements and the multilateral disarmament forums, which embody the achievements of international cooperation and multilateral negotiations over past decades in addressing the challenges facing humankind. Seeking solutions and agreements within the framework of multilateralism, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, is the only sustainable way to address issues relating to disarmament and international security. The disarmament forums provide States with the opportunity for consultation and cooperation among themselves, and for resolving any problems that may arise within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter. That would in general promote international cooperation, the peaceful settlement of disputes, dialogue and confidence-building measures, thereby contributing to strengthening friendly multilateral relations among States and peoples.

In that context, my country's delegation stresses the importance of the multilateral disarmament machinery comprising the Conference on Disarmament, as the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum; the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as a universal deliberative body and a subsidiary body of the General Assembly; and the First Committee. We deem it important to maintain and strengthen the role and mandate of all United Nations disarmament mechanisms.

We believe that the stalemate in those mechanisms is due to the lack of the necessary political will to advance along the path towards disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, and not to the performance of those mechanisms or their working methods and procedural rules. Algeria welcomes the convening of the substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in April 2022 and reaffirms its full support for the mandate of that body. We call for promoting the required political will in order to adopt recommendations on the issues before the Commission during its 2023 session.

Promoting political will is also required at the level of the Conference on Disarmament, which has not been able to deliver on the negotiating mandate entrusted to it for more than two decades. Therefore, we call on all Conference members to facilitate its work by agreeing on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that addresses all of the items on its agenda, foremost of which is nuclear disarmament.

My country's delegation welcomes the work of the First Committee and its comprehensive mandate and agenda, as well as maintaining the principles and objectives of multilateral diplomacy. We call on members to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation in a constructive manner in order to reach agreements on disarmament-related issues with the aim of reversing the growing trend of putting forward competing proposals that deal with the same topics under the same agenda items. Such cooperation would unify collective efforts to achieve the objectives of the Committee and the disarmament machinery as a whole.

In conclusion, my country's delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/77/PV.22).

**The Acting Chair:** We have heard the last speaker on the list for the thematic debate. I shall now call on those delegations that have requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to five minutes for the first intervention and three minutes for the second.

**Ms. Shestopalova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We resolutely reject the accusations made against Russia in the context of the activities of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). This year, the already complex situation at the CD escalated to a point where tensions could leave that forum unable to perform its functions, even at a minimal level. The large-scale anti-Russian campaign staged by Member States representing the collective West in the Conference on Disarmament has become an obstacle to the regular functioning of that forum. It was thanks only to the efforts of the Russian delegation and a number of other responsible States that it was possible to preserve the viability of the CD.

Throughout the entire 2022 session, we — unlike our Western colleagues — demonstrated a constructive approach and the desire to cooperate in order to

develop common understandings on various aspects of arms control and disarmament, as well as a readiness to search for common ground on issues on the CD's agenda. However, Western States once again made an attempt to subordinate the work of the CD to their own interests, turning it into an instrument for advancing unilateral priorities and imposing functions on the forum that are not within its scope.

To do so, they used various cunning schemes and manipulations, ranging from putting pressure on the Chairs and coordinators of the subsidiary bodies to committing gross violations of the rules of procedure, including the rule of consensus that is so fundamental to the activities of the CD. An egregious example in that context is the organization and convening of the plenary meeting on 3 March, where delegations that insisted upon holding such a meeting shamelessly scorned not only the positions of a number of States that objected to it, but also the rules of procedure.

In that gross violation of the rules, Western countries dealt a crushing blow to the foundations and pillars of the Conference on Disarmament. They are now striving to consolidate that most dangerous precedent for the activities of the CD in the relevant documents, including in the relevant draft resolution (A/C.1/77/L.25). In doing so, it risks putting a document traditionally adopted by consensus to a vote. That development would have extremely serious negative consequences for the future work of the CD, as well as affecting the prospects of the draft resolution next year.

Against that backdrop, this year we are yet again witnessing one delegation or another insist on bringing issues into the CD that do not directly relate to its mandate or agenda under a variety of pretexts, for example, the need for a technical update to the CD's rules of procedure. In that connection, it seems that, for Western States, the Conference has long ceased to be a body for negotiating the most pressing issues relating to disarmament and arms control. In contravention of its mandate, those States are using the CD to settle political scores with their opponents. That ongoing trend threatens to further exacerbate tensions, depriving the Conference of its integrity and leading to the further degradation of its activities.

All of that could lead to the collapse of that important forum. We urge Western States to consider the possible detrimental consequences of their actions for the integrity and stability of the CD.

**Mr. Turner** (United States of America): I take the floor to respond to Russia's disingenuous claim to be a devoted guardian of our disarmament machinery, as well as its claim that somehow the West is responsible for the current state of affairs. The reality, as alluded to at the beginning of today's meeting, is that Russia is openly, blatantly and actively repudiating disarmament cooperation.

At a time when we need tangible action and results to make our disarmament machinery work, the Russian Federation wasted our time this year with never-ending procedural rebuttals in the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours. It abused the consultation provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention. It repeatedly engaged in blanket disinformation and ensured that the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons could not deliver a final report.

Let there also be no doubt as to who was responsible for the Conference on Disarmament (CD) session ending so poorly: it was the Russian Federation. With its last-minute insertions to the subsidiary body draft text; its disrespectful behaviour towards the Colombian presidency of the CD; its denial of the fact that the CD met on 3 March to discuss the impact of Russia's aggression in Ukraine; and its refusal to allow the CD final report or the associated draft resolution for consideration by the General Assembly (A/C.1/77/L.25) to reflect any substance whatsoever, Russia has made a mockery of all of us and of our efforts in Geneva.

Contrary to the individual words contained in Russia's draft resolution on strengthening arms control (A/C.1/77/L.66), the author and a few of its partners have not enhanced, but clearly abused, the consensus nature of multiple disarmament bodies. We call on Russia to live up to the values it purports to espouse.

**Ms. Shestopalova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We resolutely reject the allegations just made against us by the American delegation. If the assertions of Western States about their desire to comprehensively strengthen the activities of the Conference on Disarmament are sincere, we propose that they back up their words with actions and do not violate the consensus nature of the draft resolution (A/C.1/77/L.25), which has been adopted without a vote for many years.

**The Acting Chair:** The Committee will reconvene tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m. in this conference room to begin the third and final phase of its work, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items.

In that regard, the Committee will be guided by the informal papers that will be issued by the Secretariat containing the draft resolutions and decisions on which actions will be taken each day. Informal paper 1 was circulated online yesterday, and informal paper 1/Rev.1 today, with further revisions expected should there be

any developments. We will take action on the draft under each cluster listed therein. The Secretariat will revise the informal paper on a daily basis in order to update the drafts that are ready for action at each of our meetings during this stage.

In keeping with past practice, at the start of our meeting tomorrow afternoon, the Chair will explain the procedure that will guide our work during the action stage.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*