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First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Pieris(Sri Lanka)

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

Agenda items 90 to 108 (continued)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chair: This morning the Committee will continue to take action on all draft resolutions and draft decisions submitted under agenda items 90 to 108. We will be guided by the same procedure agreed upon at our meeting on 28 October (see A/C.1/77/PV.25). We will begin by continuing to hear delegations in exercise of their right of reply from yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.28). Thereafter, I will give the floor to those wishing to explain their vote after the voting on cluster 4, "Conventional weapons", as contained in informal paper 2, Rev.3, following which the Committee will take up the remaining draft resolutions and decisions in that informal paper. Time permitting, the Committee will consider proposals contained in A/C.1/77/INF/3, which has been circulated to delegations electronically.

I now call on those who had requested the floor yesterday afternoon in the exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I should like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to five minutes and the second to three minutes.

Mr. Sharoni (Israel): I wish to exercise my right of reply in response to the statement made yesterday by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic (see A/C.1/77/PV.28). Any attempt to divert the attention of delegations in this room from her country's deplorable

acts will not succeed. It is evident that the residual chemical capabilities of Syria must be fully dismantled. Any other course of action will allow Syria to continue its shameful pattern and eventually rehabilitate its chemical weapons programme.

Mr. Turner (United States of America): I take the floor to respond to Russia's explanation of position after the voting on cluster 2 yesterday morning (see A/C.1/77/PV.27) as well as its exercise of its right of reply following cluster 3 in the afternoon (see A/C.1/77/PV.28). I regret the fact that rights of reply have been delayed in such a way that they do not always take place at the end of the relevant cluster. It is important that if one delegation is allowed to speak, others have that same right.

With respect to cluster 2, Russia continues to accuse the United States of plans to develop and use or encourage the use by others, such as Ukraine, of biological and chemical weapons without, however, offering a shred of evidence to support its outlandish claims. At the same time, Russia continues to deny that it used nerve agents in the United Kingdom against the Skripals and inside Russia against Mr. Navalny. Russia continues to refuse to cooperate with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the international community in this regard. This is another example of Russia's irresponsible behaviour, its contempt for international organizations and its unrelenting campaign of disinformation.

Russia's not only completely baseless but also shameless allegations cannot and must not be taken seriously. Russia's actions since its invasion of Ukraine

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have posed the gravest threat to international peace and security since the Second World War. The international community must stand firm and united in its response to Russia's aggression.

With respect to outer space, our Russian colleagues have once again raised accusations about the space activities of the United States. Like many of the other issues brought before this organ, Russia refuses to note its own culpability in making space less secure. Russia has never addressed the question of how it plans to use the ground-based anti-satellite missile that it tested last year and how it believes the development and testing of such a system contributes to preventing an arms race in outer space. If anything, such a system is a further sign that the Russian military plans to fight a future war in outer space.

Finally, I would also like to note as a point of order that the Russian representative, in his harangues, has repeatedly and brazenly exceeded the time period allotted. I clocked his last right of reply at one minute and 30 seconds over the allotted time. That is yet another example of Russia's disrespect for norms.

Mr. Aydil (Türkiye): I take the floor in relation to the reference made by the Syrian representative to my country yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.28). The use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime has been part of its brutal war against its own people, with devastating humanitarian consequences. Emboldened by a growing sense of impunity, the regime has repeatedly resorted to chemical weapons.

In its futile effort to deflect blame for its heinous crimes, the regime has fabricated a number of false accusations. The Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has confirmed that all of the regime allegations are unfounded. We therefore invite the Al-Assad regime to leave aside the specious allegations and instead focus on taking steps towards compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr. Al Ashkar (Syria) (*spoke in Arabic*): I apologize for taking the floor again. I am compelled, however, to respond to the statements made by the representatives of Israel and Türkiye. I promise to be brief.

The reality is that, when the representatives of Israel are in a weak position, they always take a desperate course to divert attention from their entity's ugly face of supporting terrorism and its aggressive history, which

is full of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Such theatrical attempts by the current representative of Israel will not succeed in erasing his entity's long history of contempt for international law and the resolutions of international legitimacy. They will not also succeed in hiding the fact that his entity is based on occupying the land of others and on committing acts of aggression in defiance of the resolutions of the United Nations. We advise the representative of Israel to save his efforts and concentrate on the need for his entity to accede to the treaties related to weapons of mass destruction instead of practicing hypocrisy before the First Committee and wasting its precious time.

As for the statement by the representative of Türkiye — I am calling his country by its proper name, in contrast to his non-diplomatic behaviour, in which he uses inappropriate terms when referring to the name of my country — what he said is full of false and baseless accusations against Syria, in an attempt to divert attention from his country covering up and protecting terrorist organizations, such as the Al-Nusrah Front, Da'esh and other organizations and entities that are listed by the Security Council as terrorist entities. With Türkiye's assistance, those terrorists use chemical weapons to target Syrian civilians and the Syrian Arab Army.

It seems that the representative of Türkiye did not read the reports on the use by Da'esh and other terrorist groups of such horrible weapons because Türkiye is in a strong alliance with such terrorist organizations. Türkiye has transformed its policy, going from zero problems to nothing but problems with its neighbours. That reflected negatively on peace and security in the region and the world. Moreover, Türkiye is still providing support and training to foreign terrorists in addition to facilitating their crossing into Syria in order to commit crimes against the Syrian people.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are once again compelled to use our right of reply owing to the continued attempts by the United States to refuse to further clarify the specific and founded accusations made by my delegation. Moreover, we wish to reject all baseless accusations made against us under the topics of chemical and biological weapons, as well as with regard to security and outer space.

Regarding chemical weapons and outer space, we gave a complete explanation yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.28) and do not see the need to repeat it today.

We wish instead to focus on the military and biological activities, in particular those of Washington, in the territory of Ukraine. Our founded and specific questions were presented to that delegation in full accordance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction in the relevant forums, including the Security Council. We categorically reject any attempt to challenge those convincing arguments and evidence that were provided during the consultative meeting of the States Parties, under article 5 of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and to the Security Council under article 6 of the Convention.

We wish once again to recall that during the special military operation in Ukraine, the Russian Federation received a number of documents and pieces of evidence that shed light on the true actions of the Pentagon and their Ukrainian contractors in the sphere of biological weapons. Those materials show that both the United States and Ukraine are in violation of the provisions of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

We simply do not understand what alleged disinformation the United States representatives are referring to. If that programme is indeed peaceful, as they state, then I ask them to please give us the necessary specific explanations and respond to our questions and complaints. Give the States parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention the opportunity to receive information following an investigation on the territory of Ukraine. That would be even more appropriate, given that Ukraine and the United States have hidden those facts in their national declarations in the context of the Convention confidence-building measures. Meanwhile, in such a case, an investigation of the facts that we presented would simply confirm the alleged innocence of the United Nations and its allies. We therefore do not understand why the United States delegation is so afraid that it is blocking the attempts by the Russian Federation to reach the truth and is not responding to our well-founded and specific questions in that area.

Mr. Aydil (Türkiye): I take the floor a second time in order to exercise my delegation's right of reply in relation to the baseless allegations made against my country by the representative of the Syrian regime.

Türkiye rejects the delusional statement of the Syrian regime's representative in its entirety. It is unacceptable that the Syrian regime, which lost its

legitimacy long ago, continues to misuse the General Assembly First Committee to distort the facts.

The Chair: I now call on the representative of Syria on a point of order.

Mr. Al Ashkar (Syria) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to kindly ask you, Mr. Chair, to remind the current speaker of the need to use proper diplomatic terms when naming countries and to respect the proper diplomatic language in this Committee.

The Chair: I would urge all representative to respect that custom.

Mr. Aydil (Türkiye): Let me rephrase that even if it does not make any difference. This is a desperate attempt to divert attention from the enormous destruction of human suffering in Syria.

Syria is responsible for the death, mutilation, abduction, starvation or forced disappearance of millions of Syrians. Its crimes against humanity, violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes have been documented in countless United Nations reports. Therefore, the Syrian regime is not in a position to lecture anyone on counter-terrorism or compliance with international law. Türkiye has been at the forefront of efforts to fight Da'esh and other terrorist organizations.

The Chair: I now call on all delegations that wish to speak in explanation of vote after the voting, beginning with those that requested the floor yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Padilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.48, entitled "Transparency in armaments". Despite the views expressed by a number of Member States, as has been the case in previous years, the text remains unbalanced, with an emphasis on small arms and light weapons to the detriment of other categories of weapons. We do not support partial approaches that neglect the serious issues associated with the production, modernization, use and sale of highly sophisticated conventional weapons, including effects that are considerably more destructive than those of small arms and light weapons. We do not support the expansion of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms beyond the seven categories of arms that are currently included in it. In Cuba's view, any initiative to broaden the scope of the Registry should begin with the inclusion of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Furthermore, we do not support the

fact that an issue that is so relevant to all of us continues to be discussed and decided upon by a small group of experts. Similar issues with important implications for national security and the legitimate defence interests of many States should be examined in inclusive and transparent formats that are open to all Member States, participating on an equal footing.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.50, entitled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects”, we would like to place on record the continuing validity of the views of the Cuban delegation at the time of the adoption on 1 July of the outcome document of the eighth Biennial Meeting 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. In that regard, we would like to underscore the following points.

First, it is up to the review process to decide by consensus the future steps to be taken with regard to the recent developments in the manufacture, technology and design of small, modular and polymer weapons and 3D-printed weapons.

Secondly, we are concerned about the increasing emphasis on the creation of synergies between the Programme of Action and other instruments that do not have international consensus. We are also concerned about the excessive emphasis on issues related to specific indicators with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals, human rights and gender-based rights — which should be considered within their own platforms — to the detriment of other aspects of cooperation, assistance and capacity-building in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. We do not support the inclusion of language on risk-associated assessments or ambiguous or politically manipulated criteria concerning, for example, international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the documents of the biennial meetings on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Our delegation joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.50 as a whole, based on Cuba’s unwavering commitment to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to

Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Mr. Wong (Singapore): I take the floor in explanation of Singapore’s votes in favour of draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.40, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”, and A/C.1/77/L.68, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions”.

Singapore’s position has been clear and consistent. We have traditionally voted in favour of previous iterations of those two draft resolutions. We firmly support all initiatives against the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines. In May 1996, Singapore declared a two-year moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines without self-neutralizing mechanisms. That moratorium was expanded in February 1998 to include all manner of anti-personnel landmines and has since been extended indefinitely. We also support initiatives against the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions, especially when targeted at innocent civilians, which is why Singapore declared an indefinite moratorium on the export of cluster munitions in November 2008. Singapore supports the work of the Conventions I mentioned by regularly attending the meetings of States parties to those Conventions. However, as a small State, Singapore is firmly of the view that the legitimate security concerns and the right to self-defence of any State cannot be disregarded. In that regard, a blanket ban on cluster munitions and anti-personnel landmines of all kinds may be counterproductive. Singapore has supported and will continue to support international efforts to address humanitarian concerns related to the use of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions, and recognizes the adverse impact that such weapons could have on civilians. We affirm our commitment to working with the international community towards a durable, effective and inclusive solution.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation takes the floor in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.39, entitled “The Arms Trade Treaty” (ATT). We continue to assess the complementarity of the Treaty and have carefully examined the outcome of the eighth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Geneva in August. As seen in the outcome documents, no significant results or breakthrough

were achieved. We expect the member States of the ATT to carry out its provisions regulating the creation of stable national systems that control the transfer of conventional weapons. Those systems are not yet in operation in all States. We must note that the principle of transparency enshrined in the Treaty and that of responsible behaviour in the international arms trade are not being fully followed and generally fall far short of the standards adopted within the systems of military and technical cooperation between the Russian Federation and other leading arms importers and suppliers. For example, the ATT does not include a direct ban on the unlicensed production and transfer of weapons to non-State actors, or provisions regulating the procedure for the re-exporting of military goods only with the consent of the original exporting State. In addition, the Treaty contains significant shortcomings that make it difficult to effectively block the channels through which weapons enter into illicit circulation, which leaves the door open for an ambiguous and dubious interpretation of the Treaty's provisions. We also have serious questions about the Treaty's implementation in practice.

It is unacceptable for individual States parties to the Treaty to continue to directly or indirectly provide military equipment to zones of armed conflict. A clear example of that is the large-scale provision of weapons and ammunition to the Kyiv regime by NATO and European Union States. Those weapons are then used to commit barbaric attacks on the peaceful citizens of Donbas and other territories of the Russian Federation. The decision-making process within the Treaty — which is conducted not on the basis of consensus but by a two-thirds majority vote — is also unacceptable. We believe that such a process could lead to the even more blatant pressuring by specific groups of States of other States parties to the Treaty. In the light of the above, the Russian Federation does not plan to accede to the Arms Trade Treaty in its current state or to participate in any events under its auspices as an observer. That is why we abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.39.

Our abstention in the voting on the eighth and ninth preambular paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.41, entitled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”, is not motivated by some far-fetched political reason, but is purely in line with our position on the language used in these paragraphs. We clearly laid out that position at the Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention

on Certain Conventional Weapons and repeatedly explained it during the various rounds of informal consultations held on the sidelines of the current session of the First Committee. We reiterate that our position has nothing to do with politics or the sponsor of the draft resolution. That is well-known. The Russian Federation does not see any basis for stating the supposed differences between those involved in countering improvised explosive devices (IEDs) with regard to their gender or their age. We have yet to hear any convincing arguments on that issue. The understanding reached in the draft resolution about the full involvement of women in countering IEDs is not in line with current Russian realities. There are currently no women participants in the relevant Russian units, and we do not plan to change that in the near future. The eighth preambular paragraph therefore runs the risk of interfering in the domestic affairs of States, which would contravene the founding principles of the United Nations. Moreover, we consider it sufficient to include language on gender issues only in specific gender-related resolutions of the General Assembly. We do not see any need to include identical language in various resolutions of the First Committee.

Mr. Sharoni (Israel): I take the floor in explanation of vote after the vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.50, entitled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects”, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.39, entitled “The Arms Trade Treaty”, and draft decision A/C.1/77/L.51, entitled “Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus”. Israel supported draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.50 and A/C.1/77/L.39 and draft decision A/C.1/77/L.51. Nevertheless, Israel would like to reiterate its position on ammunition. We recall our statements that the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects does not have the mandate to address the issue of ammunition. Another venue, namely the Open-ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition, has been chosen in that regard.

Mr. Hegazy (Egypt): I take the floor in explanation of vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.41, A/C.1/77/L.48 and A/C.1/77/L.68.

As it did for previous iterations, Egypt joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.41, entitled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”, which attempts to address that important

threat, especially given that improvised explosive devices (IEDs) increasingly represent a preferred weapon of choice by terrorists and illegal armed groups. However, in spite of our support for the draft resolution in its entirety and for its overall objectives, we would like to reiterate our strong reservations about the fifteenth preambular paragraph, which imposes language that largely undermines the value of the draft resolution and could be interpreted as justifying terrorism and the use of IEDs by terrorists. We hope that the co-sponsors will take that into consideration in the future. We also reiterate that the provisions of the draft resolution should not be interpreted in a manner that would affect the legitimate transfer of dual-use items or technologies, thereby exceeding the scope of the draft resolution, which is the prevention of the acquisition by terrorists of IEDs and their components.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.48, entitled “Transparency in armaments”, Egypt supports transparency in armaments in order to strengthen international peace and security. We believe that if transparency mechanisms are to succeed, they must be based on balanced, transparent and non-discriminatory fundamental principles that strengthen peace for all States at the national, regional and international levels and are in conformity with international law. We also believe that the scope of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms should be broadened to encompass all information related to sophisticated conventional weaponry and weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons and advanced technology. That could give the Register a more comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory nature and thereby allow for increased systematic involvement in its activities. The Middle East region, in which the lack of qualitative equilibrium in armaments is obvious, represents a special case in that regard. We cannot guarantee transparency and confidence unless we take a comprehensive and balanced approach. For those reasons, as it did for previous iterations, Egypt abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.48, in line with the position we have maintained in that respect for several years now.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.68, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions”, Egypt abstained in the voting in the light of the selective and imbalanced nature of that instrument, which was developed and concluded outside the United Nations. It lacks an equitable and clear definition of

cluster munitions in a manner that was deliberately designed to fit the specific production requirement of a number of States.

Ms. Kunz (Switzerland): I take the floor in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.41, entitled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”. Switzerland is deeply concerned by the growing humanitarian challenges of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The prevention of the unlawful use of IEDs is essential. Although we joined the consensus on the draft resolution, my delegation wishes to note the following considerations. First, concerns over humanitarian consequences or the unlawful use of IEDs are not dependent on the status of the actor or its labelling — that is to say, whether a legal or illegal armed group or even a State actor used an IED in an unlawful manner. Secondly, when preventing or combating the use of IEDs or their proliferation, any measures taken must comply with international law, as noted in the draft resolution. Switzerland would like to reiterate that whether an actor is labelled as terrorist, criminal or illegal in a given situation cannot prejudice or affect the application of, the fulfilment of or respect for international law, especially international human rights law and, in situations of armed conflict, international humanitarian law.

Ms. Joniec (Poland): I take the floor in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.40, which Poland supported.

By delivering this statement, Poland underlines its commitment to the implementation and universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. As States parties, we are required to meet our obligations under the Convention, especially those that are pending. Through ongoing efforts in the clearance of mine-contaminated land, we can achieve progress and assure the proper development of our nations. However, reaching that goal could be a very challenging task. We see such a picture developing in Ukraine, where according to the background briefing by Human Rights Watch, Russia is using land mines, including anti-personnel mines, to deny access to civilian homes, infrastructure, transportation routes and agricultural land. It further states that agricultural production is being affected by the use of landmines in fields and on paths and roads. We support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.40, but at the same time we regret that its text does not deal with the complexity of the threat that Ukraine is facing because of the blatant violations of international humanitarian

law by Russian troops and their indiscriminate use of not only anti-personnel mines but also victim-activated booby traps against civilians.

To conclude, although Russia is not a State party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, it has violated commitments resulting from the Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Conventional Weapons, which contains prohibitions and restrictions on mines, booby traps and other devices. We would like to call on Russia to adhere to the first Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, customary international humanitarian law and the prohibitions against deliberate, indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks against civilians.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting on the measures adopted under cluster 4, “Conventional weapons”. The Committee will now turn to cluster 5, “Other disarmament measures and international security”.

I shall first give the floor to delegations wishing to make either a general statement or to introduce new or revised drafts under cluster 5.

Mrs. Petit (France) (*spoke in French*): France has the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, “Programme of Action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security”, which is co-sponsored by 73 Member States from all regional groups. Since we are unable to name all the sponsors in the time available, we would nevertheless like to warmly thank them.

Since 2020, France, together with Egypt, its partners from the European Union and a large trans-regional group of States, has been promoting the establishment of such a programme of action focused on concrete projects to build resilience for States at their request, while bridging the growing digital divide among States. The implementation of the programme of action would occur only after the discussions of the current Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 have been held. The programme of action would enable the exchange of good practices. It would support States in their efforts to implement the normative framework for responsible behaviour. It would also enable consultations with other stakeholders, including the private sector, given its role in building resilience against cyberthreats.

The proposal for a cyber-related programme of action enjoys consensus. In fact, it is one of the recommendations in the reports of the OEWG and the Group of Governmental Experts adopted by consensus in 2021. In line with those recommendations, it must still be discussed at the forthcoming meetings of the OEWG. France submitted draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73 in support of those discussions aimed at establishing a cyber-related programme of action, while also respecting the central role of the current OEWG. The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which served as a reference for the draft resolution and the usefulness of which is not disputed, took nearly three years for States to put it in place. We therefore submitted our draft resolution this year in order to foster discussions on the matter with the concrete objective of establishing the programme of action by the end of 2025. To achieve that, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report, without budgetary implications, after gathering the views of States on the content of a future programme of action and the possible modalities for its implementation. In order to avoid any duplication, the Secretary-General is invited to take into account the views expressed by States during the forthcoming meetings of the OEWG and to allow those States that are not able to participate in the meetings to make their views known to him.

Our objective is for the Secretary-General’s report to be as inclusive as possible. That is why it will also take into account regional consultations, which the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs will be invited to organize according to its usual practice, in cooperation with the relevant regional organizations. We call on the Secretariat, in accordance with past practice, to closely involve the Chair of the OEWG in those consultations, which will surely complement those planned within the OEWG on confidence-building measures. Their funding will be ensured by voluntary contributions and will not entail any additional budgetary burden. France is ready to contribute its national capacity in that regard, and we have also received confirmation that the European Union is prepared to do the same in order to support regional cooperation.

The report should be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session. It may also serve as the basis for further discussion within the OEWG on the proposed programme of action. The draft

resolution therefore promotes synergy with the work of the OEWG on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021–2025 and seeks to foster and deepen further discussions in the working group towards the establishment of a programme of action without creating a parallel negotiation process or pre-empting the outcome of those discussions.

We would like to thank all the States that participated in the informal consultations held in recent weeks. The text of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, which is based on agreed language, reflects the constructive proposals that were made during the consultations and was drawn up in a spirit of inclusiveness and compromise. We hope it will be able to garner broad support.

Mr. Li Song (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”, which was co-sponsored by 21 countries, including China.

Peace and development are the themes of our times. All countries are passionately striving to maintain world peace, and developing countries share the long-term pursuit of promoting common development. After decades of discussion and practice, the international community has established the basic principle of peaceful uses, not only to effectively prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery but also to guarantee the right of all countries to use science and technology for peaceful purposes and engage in international cooperation. However, for many years, adequate attention has not been given to the right of developing countries to the peaceful uses of science and technology, without discrimination, in addition to their right to international cooperation. As the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has pointed out, developing countries still face unreasonable restrictions to their regular access to materials, equipment and technology.

Last year, China worked with the Member States to facilitate the General Assembly’s adoption of resolution 76/234, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”, the first resolution of its kind. It reflects the international community’s interest in issues related to peaceful uses and highlights Member States’ expectations for an open, inclusive dialogue process to promote non-proliferation, peaceful uses and export

control in a balanced manner, within the framework of the United Nations.

This year, China has once again taken the lead in submitting draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56. My team and I have worked openly and transparently to engage extensively with all parties in detailed communication and have taken on board reasonable proposals to further refine the draft resolution. Before we proceed to take action on the draft resolution, I would like to emphasize the following two points.

First, the draft resolution reflects the common interests of developing countries. Its core language, which comes from the final document of the Non-Aligned Movement summit held in Baku, represents the common position and expectations of developing countries and embodies the important principles and spirit that the countries of the Group of 77 and China have long championed and actively promoted on the issues of peaceful uses, international cooperation and sustainable development. Co-sponsoring and supporting the draft resolution are therefore crucial for ensuring a sustained and steady dialogue process within the United Nations framework and safeguarding the long-term common interests of developing countries in the areas of international peace and security and sustainable development.

Secondly, the draft resolution reflects true multilateralism. Everything is above board, open and transparent, whether in terms of its contents or the way in which its sponsors have worked in the process. Its purpose is to generate mutually reinforcing and complementary dynamics with regard to peaceful uses and export control through multilateral dialogue, based on equal and mutual respect. I would like to stress that supporting the draft resolution is not an act of taking sides. Rather, it means supporting meaningful multilateralism and siding with the common interests of developing countries and the promotion of international cooperation on peaceful uses. Accordingly, China calls on all countries to co-sponsor and vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56.

In that regard, I am obliged to mention draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, which China sponsored. A certain country has once again requested a recorded vote on the second preambular paragraph in relation to its wording on a community of shared

future for humankind. China firmly opposes such overbearing and exclusionary practices. I call on all countries to reject that and vote in favour of the second preambular paragraph and the draft resolution as a whole. Yesterday, motions of the same nature made by a small group of countries were twice defeated by an overwhelming majority of Member States (see A/C.1/77/PV.27 and A/C.1/77/PV.28). We urge the countries concerned to stop such senseless and tiresome manoeuvres. They should let go of their Cold War mentality and ideological bias and return to mutual respect and genuine multilateralism on the path ahead.

Mr. Padilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba would like to make a general statement under the cluster “Other disarmament and international security measures”. We call on all delegations to support the draft resolutions submitted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries under this cluster, namely, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.4, entitled “Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control”, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.5, entitled “Relationship between disarmament and development”, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.8, entitled “Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation”, and draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.10, entitled “Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium”.

The Cuban delegation also sponsored and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, in which the First Committee and the General Assembly affirms its support for the work of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025. The OEWG is the only inclusive and transparent process available to Member States to consider on an equal footing the issues related to cybersecurity, including proposals on all aspects of the mandate conferred upon the group, while taking into due account the points of view and legitimate concerns and interests of all States.

We also call on Member States to support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security” and to vote in favour of those paragraphs that will be put to the vote separately. That draft resolution is particularly important in a

context in which undue restrictions on international cooperation for peaceful purposes persist, contrary to the commitments and obligations undertaken under multilateral disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments. Cuba believes that multilateral dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations is crucial for defining actions that threaten traditional exchange and international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the context of international security. In that regard, we emphasize that disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation agreements must guarantee that no undue prohibitions or restrictions are imposed on access to the materials, equipment or technologies for peaceful purposes that the countries of the South require for their sustainable development.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Under the cluster “Other disarmament and international security measures”, we would like to make the following statement. We are convinced of the need to rally the international community around a creative and constructive agenda in order to preserve and improve the existing system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. As we are guided precisely by those goals, we have introduced draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.66, entitled “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements”, in the First Committee. We are disappointed that the draft resolution has once again been put to the vote, which appears to have been done for purely political reasons, as we had fully taken into account all the suggestions proposed to us to amend the text.

The Russian Federation has always advocated ensuring international information security on the firm legal basis of the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. To that end, every year since 1998, we have introduced a draft resolution on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. This year is no exception. The purpose of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, which was introduced by Russia, is to delegate to the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 the role as a key negotiating platform on the whole range of security issues in the use of information and communications technologies

(ICT) under the auspices of the United Nations in order to ensure the continuation of negotiations in fulfilment of its mandate. The draft resolution encourages States to further develop national initiatives on ICT security issues within the framework of the OEWG. It provides specific provisions for capacity-building and reiterates the need to decide on the future format of a regular institutional dialogue on the topic within the framework of the existing Open-ended Working Group. Furthermore, the new mechanism can be launched only upon the completion of its activities in 2025.

The draft resolution we have introduced is simple and straightforward. It is factual, non-confrontational and depoliticized. It is based on the provisions of previous General Assembly resolutions previously adopted by Member States and the consensus reports of the OEWG. It complements and reinforces draft decision A/C.1/77/L.54, which was submitted by Singapore to endorse the group's first interim report, and welcomes the Chair's tireless efforts, which we fully support. Any attempt to portray our initiative as undermining the work of the OEWG and its Chair is untenable and untrue. A loving parent would not harm their child. The same sadly cannot be said of our Western colleagues, whose words often differ from their deeds. While publicly stating that they fully support the activities of the OEWG, they are in reality promoting an alternative document aimed at replacing the group with a format that meets their interests. At the same time, they are trying to erase from the Russian draft resolution the key points on preserving the central role of the OEWG and other fundamentally important provisions on the prevention of conflicts in the information space and the development of legally binding norms. Is it possible that those points, like the draft resolution as a whole, were put to a vote only because Russia is the penholder?

We regret that the international information security agenda is becoming increasingly politicized every year. As all can see, that is by no means our fault. It is important to base our decisions on the long-term national security interests of States, rather than on fleeting geopolitical circumstances. We urge United Nations Member States to support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1 as a whole and each of the contested paragraphs. We would like to stress that a vote for the document we submitted is not a vote for Russia but rather a vote for the continuation of the work of the OEWG, as well as its Chair, and for results-oriented negotiations in the interests of

strengthening peace and security in information and communications technology. Now, just as at the time of the creation of the Group, it is important to unite in defence of this mechanism, which is an asset for the entire global community.

Mrs. Kasymalieva (Kyrgyzstan): Kyrgyzstan submitted draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.14, entitled "International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness", by which 5 March would be declared an international day.

This year, the First Committee is meeting under challenging geopolitical circumstances. My country remains firmly committed to diplomacy and respecting the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Commitment to the policy of disarmament and prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is one of the fundamental principles of my country's foreign policy. The international community takes special note of the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction and the need to raise awareness about them, especially among young people. We firmly believe that the annual commemoration of the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness will contribute to raising the salience of disarmament and non-proliferation education. Therefore, a timely reminder is provided for representatives of national Governments, international organizations, academia, civil society and media to consider concrete and practical measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), as welcomed in resolution 57/60, adopted by consensus. I am proud to inform the Committee that during the consultations with representatives of academia and civil society, they were very supportive of this initiative.

We believe that the commemoration on a regular basis of the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness will provide another opportunity for everyone to develop the knowledge and critical thinking skills essential for achieving concrete disarmament and non-proliferation measures and fostering a more robust rules-based international order. We would like to thank all Member States for their active support of the initiative from the beginning, their flexibility during the consultations and negotiations, and their further support for the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.14 by consensus. Their valuable support underscores the sincere intentions

and aspirations of humankind to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. We are confident that they will continue to support our initiative, and we invite them all to join as sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.14. By supporting this initiative, we believe that their countries will contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security and will increase the likelihood that one day future generations will live in a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Balouji (Islamic Republic of Iran): I take the floor to make a general statement on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”.

My delegation appreciates and strongly supports the Chinese delegation’s initiative in the First Committee to promote international collaboration on peaceful uses. In fact, it is a globally accepted norm that all countries have the right to participate in the greatest possible exchange of equipment, materials, science and technology for peaceful purposes. But unfortunately, as proven by the operation of numerous export control regimes established by small groupings of countries over the past decades, the track record of putting that theory into effect is far from perfect. Undue restrictions on non-proliferation or national security grounds, established contrary to international obligations and treaties and based on selective and discriminatory approaches, some of which have been exaggerated or are even completely false, have greatly impeded genuine exchanges in science and technology for peaceful purposes. That situation has heightened the tensions among countries and expanded the scientific and technology divide between the developed and developing countries. The unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States of America are just one example in that regard of restrictions that hamper the development of targeted countries.

As reflected in our input to the report of the Secretary-General (A/77/96), Iran strongly supports the premise underlying that proposal and believes that future editions will take into account and reflect the views of the great majority of the world. Along with non-proliferation concerns, my delegation emphasizes that the sheer existence and advancement of weapons of mass destruction pose a threat to international peace and security.

Ms. Alkhalifi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country’s delegation would like to thank the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago for introducing draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.18, entitled “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will join the consensus once again this year, as it has done in previous years, by voting in favour of that resolution. We are convinced that the role of women is important in disarmament and non-proliferation and in taking the necessary steps to maintain the security and safety of societies from the dangers of those weapons.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken several steps to strengthen women’s roles in all areas without exception. We have provided many jobs for women on an equal footing with men, and we treat women and men equally from a financial perspective. Women have reached the highest positions in my country. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted many laws and rules that protect women and women’s rights on an equal footing with men. We have created a work environment suitable for women and in accordance with Islamic law, which preserves women’s rights and dignity. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports promoting the role of women in disarmament and non-proliferation and continues to ensure suitable employment for Saudi women, who are qualified for employment by the United Nations, relevant international organizations, and peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.

Mr. Siddique (Pakistan): I take the floor to make a general statement on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”.

We thank China for this important initiative in the First Committee. Science and technology are critical enablers for the achievement of socioeconomic development. The technology revolution has permeated every aspect of life, thereby acting as an accelerator of sustainable development. Pakistan is a strong advocate of harnessing science and technology for peace, progress and prosperity for all. We have therefore consistently called for an equitable, non-discriminatory and criteria-based approach to advance the universally shared goals of non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful uses of technology, materials, equipment and scientific information. We believe that considerations of safety and security actually facilitate — and do not hinder — the pursuit of the peaceful use of technology towards the promotion of

the development agenda. Recovery from the devastating socioeconomic impacts of the coronavirus disease pandemic, countering the daunting threats posed by climate change and accelerating the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals are contingent in large measure on the application and absorption of new technologies. Those shared objectives will be possible only if access to advanced technologies in all relevant affairs is available to developing countries, without any discrimination or unjustified restrictions

It is unfortunate that developing countries continue to face considerable obstacles for legitimate access to uses of and exchanges in science and technology for peaceful purposes. Derogation from non-proliferation norms and discriminatory exceptions for political and strategic interests have undermined the credibility and legitimacy of the existing export-control regimes. Those troubling developments underscore the need for a change in the status quo so that the increasing technological gap among States can be bridged.

It is against that backdrop that we see the added value of the draft resolution, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in context of international security”. The draft text highlights the significance of safeguarding the legitimate right of all States to peaceful uses and urges all Member States, without prejudice to their non-proliferation obligations, to take concrete measures to promote international cooperation in materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

We agree with the draft resolution highlighting the urgent need for a comprehensive and holistic approach to striking a proper balance between non-proliferation efforts and promoting peaceful uses of science and technology for the benefit of all nations and peoples. We also support the encouragement towards the continuation of dialogues on promoting peaceful uses and related international cooperation, including by identifying gaps and challenges, as well as ideas and opportunities for strengthening cooperation and exploring possible ways forward.

The United Nations remains the most representative multilateral institution, and it should play a central role in the context of promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security.

In view of those key considerations and our principled position on the subject of peaceful uses, my

delegation sponsored the draft resolution. We encourage all Member States to vote in favour of it.

Mr. Francis (Trinidad and Tobago): I have the honour to formally introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/77/L.18, entitled “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”, under sub-item (g) of agenda item 99 under the cluster “Other disarmament measures and international security”.

The draft resolution, of which Trinidad and Tobago is the main sponsor, was first introduced in the First Committee of the General Assembly in 2010. It underscores the valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures in the prevention and reduction of armed conflict and violence, as well as in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

The draft resolution now before us builds on previous iterations of the resolution, highlighting the recent progress made in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It encourages Member States to better understand the negative effects of armed violence, in particular the impact of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons through, among others, the collection and collation of disaggregated data.

The draft resolution also urges Member States to support and strengthen the full, equal, meaningful and effective participation of women in the field of disarmament at all levels. Furthermore, it reiterates the call to all States to empower women, including through mentoring, networking, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building efforts, as appropriate, to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts. As has been the practice in previous versions, the draft resolution also recognizes the instrumental role played by civil society organizations in promoting women’s involvement, as well as their meaningful engagement in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

My delegation takes this opportunity to express its deepest appreciation to all Member States for the highly constructive spirit shown by delegations during the consultations and, most especially, for their valuable contributions, which have certainly enriched the draft text. We are extremely gratified by the extraordinary show of goodwill that the text has received from Member States and other stakeholders.

Trinidad and Tobago once again requests the support of all Member States for this draft resolution, given the vast importance of women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control to the international community in maintaining peace and addressing global challenges in relation to international security.

Mr. Hegazy (Egypt): I take the floor to deliver a general statement on cluster 5, in particular on the cyber-related proposals contained in draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.32, A/C.1/77/L.54 and A/C.1/77/L.73.

Egypt believes that the use of information and communication technologies represents great opportunities from which all States could benefit towards their development. However, leaving them without establishing a reliable regime based on agreed rules might lead to another arms race in that domain and would also pose security threats, as well as further challenges for all parties, in particular developing countries.

We welcome the significant progress within the framework of the Open-ended Working Group (OWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies, established pursuant to resolution 75/240, benefiting from its universal and inclusive membership and building on what has already been agreed in the previous OWG and Groups of Governmental Experts (GGEs). It is therefore crucial to all States to continue the constructive participation and support to the OWG towards a successful conclusion of its mandate.

The OWG witnessed many creative ideas and constructive proposals, including on the future of regular institutional dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations, such as the possible establishment of a United Nations programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security, which Egypt has co-initiated along with France since 2020, and has been developed with a transregional group of sponsors from almost 60 delegations since then. Those delegations have been actively discussing and pushing forward the proposal in all forums, including the 2021 OWG and the 2021 Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security, as well as the ongoing OWG. That proposal was reflected in the consensus-based outcome reports of both the 2021 OWG (see

A/75/816) and the 2021 GGE (see A/76/135) processes, in addition to the first annual progress report of the current OWG (see A/77/275).

Egypt is a developing State, and we fully understand the difficulties in participating effectively in parallel processes. We therefore share the view of establishing the programme of action in accordance with the views of all Member States and after full consideration within the OWG in a manner that would avoid any duplication.

We look forward to further developing the proposal for the programme of action, in line with the recommendations of the first annual progress report, which allows for focused discussions on the proposal at the fourth and fifth sessions of the OWG, as well as the draft resolution on a cyber-related programme of action, of which we see the merit and which is limited to requesting a Secretary-General's report that contains Member States' views on the programme of action's mandate, modalities and establishing process, all to be discussed at the OWG.

For the reasons I just mentioned, Egypt decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution on a cyber-related programme of action, contained in document A/C.1/77/L.73. We will support all cybersecurity-related proposals.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

Mr. Dvořák (European Union): I have the honour to deliver a general statement on cluster 5 on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Andorra, Monaco and San Marino.

In this statement, I would like to address some general positions with regard draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.66, entitled "Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements", introduced by the Russian Federation.

The European Union member States and the European Union are fully committed to upholding and strengthening the global arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. However, the circumstances under which this draft resolution was presented are deeply concerning. The EU provides,

and will continue to provide, significant political and financial support to multilateral institutions to uphold and strengthen international treaties and agreements, promoting universal adherence to them and helping to build capacities in partner countries for effective treaty implementation. Even if the rules-based international system is confronted with multiple challenges, the EU will remain a strong, consistent and reliable partner of the United Nations. We call on all States Members of the United Nations to demonstrate their support for multilateral cooperation in these critical times, not only in words but principally through actions.

As we face one of the most significant challenges to global peace and security — Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine — upholding the rules-based international order established in the United Nations Charter is more important than ever. Threats to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of any State, under any pretext, are a concern for us all. To allow this to go unchallenged would mean accepting an international order based on the use of force.

Russia's unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal war of aggression is an affront to everything we work for at the United Nations. In its operative paragraph 1, draft resolution L.66 submitted by Russia is no exception: While the draft resolution

“urges all States parties to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements to implement all provisions of such treaties and agreements in their entirety”,

Russia, as its main sponsor, is already currently the biggest violator of the norms that constitute the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

By its aggression against Ukraine, Russia has obviously committed the following violations, just to name a few. Russia has repeatedly issued reckless nuclear rhetoric, which runs counter Russia's commitments and is completely unacceptable. We condemn this behaviour in the strongest possible terms, and we urge Russia to stick to the commitments taken by leaders of the nuclear-weapon States in January 2022. Russia has also violated the security guarantees set forth in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. Through its occupation of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and its military operations in the vicinity of civilian nuclear facilities, Russia has violated norms developed by the International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA) on nuclear safety and security. Russia has used anti-personnel land mines and cluster munitions in clear contradiction of international humanitarian law and of such relevant instruments on conventional weapons as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

The propaganda and dissemination of unfounded claims by Russia aims only at further undermining the existing norms. We have seen these ill-intended efforts by Russia in various disarmament forums, including the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction.

In its operative paragraph 8, the draft resolution

“expresses the need to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency as well as the consensus-based nature of the relevant multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”.

However, Russia abuses the consensus rule, turning it into a veto power to block any developments in and strengthening of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. This was the case at the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), where Russia — single-handed and isolated — blocked the adoption of the outcome document. It has also behaved in this manner in the CD.

We are also gravely concerned about some other States' continued non-compliance with their international obligations in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The international community must ensure accountability, end impunity for violations and uphold global norms. Ending impunity and ensuring accountability is crucial to restoring the integrity of the established norms. However, we regret that the main sponsor of draft resolution L.66 has not included these compliance-related issues in the text.

The repeated attempts by a few States, including Russia, to challenge the authority and integrity of such international organizations as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), including in the debates at this session of the First Committee,

are deeply concerning. The EU continues to support the OPCW diplomatically, technically and financially to ensure the full and effective implementation of and universal adherence to the CWC. We have full confidence that the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW are fulfilling their duties in a professional, objective and impartial manner. In this context, we denounce the Syrian Arab Republic's continued violation of its obligations as a State party to the CWC as well as any use of chemical weapons.

In conclusion, the EU and its member States remain firmly united in the promotion of strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements, as the title of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.66 suggests. Yet, at the same time, we remain united in denouncing the Russian Federation's gross violations of the very principles of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation that Russia claims to promote.

Mr. Al Ashkar (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to make a general statement on the thematic cluster "Other disarmament measures and international security", particularly on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled "Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security".

At the outset, my delegation commends and thanks China for its efforts to introduce the draft resolution. My country attaches great importance to promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses as we believe in the urgent need for the international community to adopt a comprehensive and general approach to advancing the goals of non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of science and technology by establishing an appropriate balance between security and sustainable development. That will enable all States, regardless of their level of scientific and technological advancement, to have access to science and technology for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

Draft resolution L.56, which is introduced in that context, will assist in stepping up efforts aimed at promoting peaceful uses of science, technology and related international cooperation. It will further enhance dialogue among members of current multilateral systems in charge of export control to ensure that those systems are able to better serve the aims of international security and common development.

The United Nations is the most representative international organization. It can therefore play a central role in launching comprehensive and transparent negotiations among all Member States, especially developing countries, to identify their interests and search for solutions that serve the common interests of the international community as a whole.

The basic idea behind draft resolution L.56 is to address unnecessary constraints to international cooperation, thus reflecting the common interest and aspirations of all States, in particular developing countries. Export-control systems in the area of non-proliferation must enhance international peace and security, as well as international cooperation in peaceful uses. The excessive and unnecessary constraints on international cooperation or their misuse, along with the negative effects of illegitimate unilateral measures imposed on a number of developing countries, constitute constraints on international cooperation in general, and on cooperation for peaceful uses in particular. Those constraints cannot be overlooked as they hamper developing countries to develop their economies and increase their ability to benefit from technologies for peaceful uses. They also negatively affect certain basic human rights, such as the right to health and the right to development.

In conclusion, we stress that the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons must not hinder international cooperation for the peaceful uses of scientific and technological material and equipment. The goals behind their peaceful uses must not be taken as a cover for any restrictive measures in that context. Based on that, my country is one of the main sponsors of the draft resolution. We therefore urge all States to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56 and its various paragraphs.

Turning to the statement made by the representative of the European Union, I would like to briefly stress that Syria does not breach its commitment to cooperating with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Those who politicize the work of the Organization are the ones who prevent progress from being achieved on resolving outstanding issues.

Mr. Makarevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus would like to express its support for draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, introduced by the People's Republic of China, on promoting international

cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security.

In the voting to follow, we think that it is important to further bolster international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security. Global efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their vectors should not hamper international cooperation in exchanging material, equipment, information and technology for peaceful uses.

One of the most serious obstacles to international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security is the practice of specific States or groups of States taking unilateral coercive measures against third parties. Those measures can be varied in nature, such as the prohibition of exports of materials, equipment and information, or economic limitations so that exporters refuse to export to those countries under sanctions.

The Republic of Belarus categorically rejects unilateral coercive measures, considering them to be a flagrant violation of the norms and principles of international law. We will continue to combat such practices.

The Chair: Before the Committee proceeds to take action on the draft resolutions and decisions in cluster 5, we will hear from delegations wishing to explain their positions on those drafts. I will therefore proceed to hear explanations of vote before the voting.

Mr. Fetz (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I take the floor on the draft resolution introduced by the Russian Federation, entitled “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements” (A/C.1/77/L.66). Canada will vote in favour of this draft resolution. We want to make clear that this vote in no way indicates support for Russia’s activities and tactics.

We will vote in favour because we believe in the importance of a rules-based international order and upholding the commitments of disarmament and arms control agreements. It is important, regardless of who proposes the language, to focus our energy as an international community on doing everything we can to ensure these agreements remain strong and relevant.

Russia’s insistence on abusing consensus procedures, however, as evidenced at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at the beginning of the year, is diametrically opposed to the language in operative paragraph 8 of this draft resolution. Consensus is not a code word for veto, nor does it encourage hostage-taking of decisions and resolutions for narrow national interests. If Russia wanted to strengthen these treaties and agreements, it would end its illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine and comply with the rules and regulations that the vast majority of the international community follows.

A more detailed exposition of Canada’s position can be found in the joint explanation of vote of Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.

(*spoke in English*)

As for draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”, Canada does not support this draft resolution and associates itself with the explanation of vote delivered by the representative of the European Union.

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of Australia, New Zealand and my own country, Canada (CANZ) in order to explain our countries’ votes on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, presented by the Russian Federation.

The CANZ countries believe in the importance of a free, open and secure cyberspace for all and have been actively engaged in the ongoing Open-ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021–2025. We were pleased that the Open-ended Working Group was able to adopt by consensus an interim report and welcome the decision brought forward by the Chair to endorse that report. The CANZ members will continue to work constructively with all partners, in the spirit of cooperation and in good faith, to take practical, concrete and meaningful action to enhance peace and stability in cyberspace.

We engaged constructively along with others in the negotiations, but we regret that the spirit of cooperation, which resulted in a consensus resolution in 2021 (General Assembly resolution 76/19), was not replicated this year and that significant and legitimate concerns of a large group of Member States were erroneously dismissed as politicization. We remain

concerned about draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, presented by the Russian Federation, as it appears to be intended to create division among Member States. The draft resolution cherry-picks language taken from other resolutions and contains controversial paragraphs that the sponsor knew that several States could not accept. In that context, the sponsor could have taken agreed language from last year's resolution, but chose not to do so.

We conclude that this draft resolution is deliberately divisive and undermines the Open-ended Working Group and the progress made by all Member States in that context. For those reasons, the CANZ countries will vote against that draft resolution and against its second, fourth and seventh preambular paragraphs.

Mr. Hegazy (Egypt): My delegation wishes to explain its vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled "Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security".

Egypt intends to vote in favour of this draft resolution owing to the high priority we place on the inalienable right to peaceful uses. Egypt is a strong advocate for the promotion of international cooperation on peaceful uses in an inclusive, transparent and effective manner. Our strong desire for closer cooperation in the nuclear field is premised on two major underpinnings.

First, there is a need to uphold the inalienable right to develop research and application for peaceful uses, without discrimination, including the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information.

Secondly, we recognize the significant and indispensable role of the relevant specialized and other international organizations in promoting and developing the application of science and technology in the pursuit of sustainable development, in particular the International Atomic Energy Agency. Export control arrangements should be transparent and open to participation by all States and should not lead to the establishment of a discriminatory and selective regime. Accordingly, we support every effort to promote the inalienable right to peaceful uses, including the dialogue called for in draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56.

In addition, we recognize the flexibility of China with regard to the language of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56. We hope that the First Committee will

be able to achieve consensus on future iterations of the draft resolution. We believe that the First Committee is the best place to deal with that issue, as long as the main disarmament treaties lack the universal membership of all Member States.

I would also like to explain my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.14, entitled "International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness". Egypt intends to join the consensus on that draft resolution. However, we are of the view that we should refrain from establishing more international days related to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as that might lead to Member States losing interest in participating in such meetings, given the annual convening of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. Sivamohan (Malaysia): Allow me to deliver Malaysia's explanation of vote on the two draft resolutions and one draft decision submitted under agenda item 94, "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security".

My delegation would have preferred the consideration and adoption of a single document under the agenda item so as to maintain the spirit of consensus, cohesion and common purpose evidenced at the last session of the First Committee. Notwithstanding that position, Malaysia would like to record its appreciation to France and the Russian Federation for submitting draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.73 and A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, respectively. We value the constructive approach taken by the main sponsors of those draft resolutions, including through several rounds of open informal consultations, as well as through outreach to the permanent missions and capitals of Member States. In our view, the two proponents have demonstrated flexibility and readiness to improve their draft resolutions by incorporating input from other delegations, including Malaysia.

My delegation's decision to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, on the proposed programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security, which was introduced by France, is predicated on the potential value of that initiative in the domain of information and telecommunications security. Nonetheless, as we emphasized during the informal consultations, it is imperative that the programme of action not detract

from the progress made and the important work being undertaken by the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) 2021–2025.

Given the early introduction of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73 on the proposed programme of action, several years in advance of its targeted establishment, there are elements of principle and practicality that will require careful consideration by all member States as we move forward. That will ensure that the process of establishing the programme of action is able to deliver its intended outcome of operationalizing the commitments of member States relating to cybersecurity. Based on consultations with France as the main sponsor, Malaysia understands that in the implementation of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, primacy will be accorded to the OEWG as the principal forum for deliberation and action on various ICT security issues under its mandate. We also welcome the assurance of the main sponsor that close consultation with the Chair of the OEWG is envisaged at the implementation stage so as to ensure streamlining and prevent any duplication of work or diversion of scarce resources.

Malaysia will also vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, submitted by the Russian Federation, given the importance that my delegation attaches to the work of the OEWG. It is important that an exchange of views on regular institutional dialogue on ICT security, including the most effective future format for such dialogue, be held under the ambit of the OEWG, as stipulated in the draft resolution.

Malaysia fully supports draft decision A/C.1/77/L.54 on the OEWG, which was submitted by Singapore. Member States have made significant investments in the OEWG, from its inception, in terms of time, resources and personnel. Now that the work of the OEWG is well under way, it is vital for us to ensure the fulfilment of its mandate in its entirety. Despite the divergent views on the particular initiatives and mechanisms put forward at this year's session of the First Committee, it is clear that all parties recognize the value of the OEWG and the imperative of preserving its integrity and credibility.

The United Nations membership will have to decide whether and how to bring about multilateral deliberations and action in the field of ICT security that are closer to consensus, as was proved possible through the adoption of a single General Assembly resolution

in 2021 (resolution 76/19), as well as the adoption of the 2022 annual progress report of the OEWG (see A/77/275). The alternative is a potential unravelling of hard-won progress, marked by division and polarization. Beyond the debate at hand, let us not lose sight of our common endeavours to preserve and enhance cybersecurity in the face of numerous challenges for the collective benefit of all Member States.

Mr. Sánchez Kiesslich (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico will vote in favour of resolution A/C.1/77/L.66, entitled “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements”, because we agree that all mechanisms that make up the disarmament and non-proliferation regime should be strengthened as their provisions are fully implemented, without exceptions, by all parties.

It should be noted that, although we support the objective of the draft resolution, we believe that the language contained in paragraph 8 is not factual because not all disarmament-related agreements and forums conduct their work on the basis of consensus. We reiterate that consensus should be considered as an aspiration, not as a rule or a veto right that could end up paralysing the work of disarmament bodies and mechanisms. In that context, we are concerned about categorizing as illegitimate the results achieved by voting, which have the same value as those that are adopted by consensus.

Mr. Padilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation will join the consensus on draft decision A/C.1/77/L.54, entitled “Open-ended working group on security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 75/240”. We believe that it is important to continue working towards the establishment of binding norms aimed at preventing and combating the ill-intentioned use of information and communication technologies, including their use for criminal purposes or in terrorist activities. At the same time, our considerations on the progressive annual report of the Open-ended Working Group continue to be valid. In particular, we reiterate our concerns with regard to the excessive and imbalanced references to the 2021 report of the Group of Governmental Experts, including the inappropriate imposition of language that we do not support. We support the convening of informal meetings during the intersessional period in order to make progress in our discussions and contribute to building consensus. We must guarantee

the participation in those meetings of all Member States on an equal footing and with full transparency, which is a confidence-building measure in and of itself.

Mr. Namekawa (Japan): I take the floor in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”.

Japan will vote against that draft resolution, which pits peaceful uses against non-proliferation and creates unnecessary conflict between them, and could even undermine the efforts of the international community to implement effective export controls. Japan emphasizes that export controls play an essential role in preventing the preparation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery and conventional weapons. That is particularly crucial within the current severe international security environment, with grave concerns about the proliferation of technologies for the development of weapons, including WMDs. We believe that rigorous export controls foster confidence among trade partners and create a favourable environment for further economic growth, rather than impeding the promotion of trade and investment through the development of technologies. From that perspective, Japan hosted the Asian Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation and the Asian Export Control Seminar to strengthen international cooperation on non-proliferation and raise awareness of export control efforts in the Asian region.

Furthermore, Japan funded the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities in order to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which obligates all States to establish and develop appropriate and effective national export controls. Japan also provides financial assistance for the outreach activities of the 1540 Regional Coordinator for the Asia-Pacific region appointed under the Fund. From our point of view, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56 could undermine existing international cooperation in science and technology for peaceful uses by impairing non-proliferation efforts. For those reasons, Japan is left with no other choice but to vote against the draft resolution.

Mr. Turner (United States of America): The United States must vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on

peaceful uses in the context of international security”. As the People’s Republic of China has repeatedly stated before the Committee, it is imperative that the developed world answer the call from the Global South. Contrary to its stated intention, the draft resolution threatens a key objective inherent in answering that call, which is the need to ensure that the world enjoys broad and equitable access to new technologies, while simultaneously protecting against the dire risks that those technologies pose if misused by nefarious actors. The draft resolution calls into question the vital export control mechanisms that are designed to prevent the proliferation of sensitive technologies, particularly by terrorists and malign actors. Export control mechanisms are complementary manifestations of foundational disarmament and non-proliferation agreements, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. They are critical for ensuring safe and efficient access to the economic benefits of the twenty-first century. Those mechanisms, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime, ensure international cooperation in the field of science and technology.

Access to critical technologies holds the promise to enrich lives, create prosperity and solve global challenges, particularly in developing countries. For that reason, countries need to cooperate within those multilateral structures to ensure equitable, accountable and transparent access to vital technologies. Those regimes are not undue restrictions on exports, as the draft resolution attests — consider for example nuclear reactors, which have a diverse range of applications beyond the production of carbon-free energy. They are used to understand the properties of an array of advanced materials and are crucial for producing radioisotopes for medical, environmental and industrial applications. The existing nuclear non-proliferation regime supports the exchange of the nuclear equipment, material and technology needed for such reactors, while ensuring, through the application of safeguards and other non-proliferation conditions, that nothing is diverted to unsafeguarded nuclear activities. Simply put, non-proliferation controls build confidence and facilitate peaceful cooperation, rather than inhibiting them. If the draft resolution leads to an erosion of those regimes, it will undermine market confidence and will inhibit — not expand — the peaceful uses of technology. Those regimes are instrumental for

allowing global trade to flourish. We want to safeguard broad access to technologies and expand it through safe and responsible means.

Finally, the report of the Secretary-General (A/77/96) requested in resolution 76/234 confirms our original objection that there simply is no evidence that the existing non-proliferation agreements and regimes have hampered the international exchange of technology or hindered any country's economic development. We reviewed every national report received by the Secretary-General, but found that there were no concrete examples provided by any country of undue restrictions on the export of technology for peaceful purposes. The Secretary-General's report also continued to reflect the lack of consensus on the issue. A total of 32 countries and the European Union provided national reports, more than half of which disagreed with the premise of the resolution. Given our continued serious concerns with that initiative, we must vote against the draft resolution and urge others to do so as well.

The United States will also vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security". With that draft resolution, Russia seeks to exploit Member States' support for the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) in order to push its own agenda and assert ownership over the process. Russia claims that the draft resolution is neutral and procedural. In reality, Russia uses non-consensus-based, controversial text throughout the draft in order to recast the OEWG's work in Russia's own vision. That undermines our consensus-driven work in the OEWG and the work of its Chair. From the United States' perspective, the draft resolution serves no real purpose. One country is trying to impose its preferences for the OEWG on the First Committee. We cannot support the draft resolution, as it is detrimental to the OEWG.

Mr. Shin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to take the floor in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, entitled "Programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security".

To speak frankly, we do not agree with this document, which we consider to be yet another

attempt, dictated by purely political interests, to undermine the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 and to impose on the international community an unagreed proposal for a programme of action. We took part in all the informal consultations on the draft resolution and on each occasion asked why such a document had been introduced this year, when there are still three years left before the end of the OEWG mandate. Moreover, submitting one aspect of the OEWG's agenda for the consideration of the General Assembly at this time obviously prejudices the outcome of the ongoing OEWG discussion. Why was such a document introduced this year, two months after States approved by consensus specific recommendations to consider the proposed programme of action within the framework of the OEWG? Our colleagues have not been able to clearly explain why they decided to violate the agreements and act contrary to logic and common sense.

We are accustomed to believing in actions, not words. The actions of Western countries once again prove their real attitude towards the OEWG format. They are willing to do anything to keep the Working Group from doing its job. Their goal is to bury the entire format and replace it with another mechanism that suits them, in which a narrow circle of States will be able to impose their will on the remaining majority, including through a non-consensus-based decision-making mechanism. Consensus in negotiations on international information security enables all States to participate in the decision-making process on a truly equal basis. The draft resolution proposed by France lacks such a provision. In that context, the very same group of States that twice opposed the creation of the OEWG and has obstructed its constructive work at all stages is now seeking to undermine the Working Group from within. The current unilateral interventions by Western countries under the pretext of capacity-building provide direct evidence of their selfish intent to use information and communications technologies (ICTs) for their own political interests in order to ensure their security at the expense of the security of others.

We understand that the proposal for a programme of action may seem attractive. However, Russia continues to insist that such a proposal, as well as other national initiatives, deserves the attention of Member States and should be discussed on a truly inclusive, open and democratic basis within the framework of the

OEWG. We believe that a period of three years — until 2025 — is more than enough time to jointly develop an understanding of the usefulness of creating a programme of action and its scope and modalities, including its decision-making and funding mechanisms.

We do not understand the conceptual basis for establishing a programme of action for this issue, since such mechanisms have traditionally been launched for the purpose of reviewing the implementation of past agreements. One must admit that talking about the creation in 2025 of a mechanism for the implementation of voluntary norms that were developed in 2015 sounds irrational, to put it mildly. In our opinion, no matter what negotiation format is created after the completion of the OEWG, it should focus on the future, take into account developments in the field of ICTs and provide for the possibility of developing new norms. That is why we should seriously reflect on France's initiative, taking into account the opinions of all States. By insisting on the immediate adoption of a draft resolution on a proposed programme of action, its sponsors are satisfying their own political ambitions without thinking about the interests of the entire global community. That step will not contribute to strengthening security in the information space. It will only exacerbate contradictions, provoke disagreement in the negotiation process and draw new dividing lines. The Russian Federation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine): The delegation of Ukraine takes the floor in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.66, entitled “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements”.

Ukraine will vote against the draft resolution, which was submitted by the Russian Federation. We have decided to vote against it — but not because we are not committed to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. My country fully adheres to the existing arms control and non-proliferation regimes and supports the further strengthening of such treaties and agreements. However, on 24 February 2022, the sponsor of the draft resolution, Russia, launched an unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine in grave violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. The General Assembly condemned the Russian Federation's aggression against

Ukraine, as well as its attempt to annex four regions of my country, in resolutions ES-11/1 and ES-11/4, respectively. Pursuant to resolution ES-11/1 of 2 March 2022, entitled “Aggression against Ukraine”, Russia must immediately stop its aggression against Ukraine and withdraw its forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Moreover, Russia has been a serial violator of arms control obligations and commitments for many years. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has further undermined the European security and arms control architecture, which had already been deteriorating after Russia launched its aggression in the east of Ukraine and occupied Crimea in 2014. Russia alone therefore bears responsibility for the continued erosion of the international arms control architecture. By occupying Crimea in blatant violation of the Charter and a number of international agreements, including the Budapest Memorandum, Russia demonstrated that the legal obligations of a nuclear Power to respect the independence and sovereignty of non-nuclear States and to refrain from the threat or use of force against their territorial integrity mean nothing to it. Today Russia is threatening to use nuclear weapons. Earlier this year, Russia also raised its nuclear alert level, undermining the credibility of its commitment to the January 2022 joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States.

By submitting a draft resolution on strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements, Russia seeks to present itself as a responsible member of the international community that adheres to the existing treaties and agreements in the field of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control. However, the truth is otherwise, and the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the territorial integrity of Ukraine — in favour of which the overwhelming majority of Member States of the United Nations voted to condemn Russia's aggression against Ukraine — clearly demonstrate that is not true. Ukraine therefore calls on Member States not to support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.66.

Mr. Sarwani (Pakistan): I take the floor in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, entitled “Programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security”.

My delegation would like to thank the lead sponsor for its efforts and outreach. We appreciate some useful improvements that were made to the draft resolution, in particular on seeking Member States' views on the idea of a programme of action. However, we would like to highlight the four following points.

First, while the draft resolution seeks the views of Member States on the contours of the proposed programme of action, it also welcomes the proposal to establish it in a prescriptive manner. We note that a programme of action is one of the proposals being considered by the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025. While it is understandable to examine the feasibility of a proposed programme of action, predetermining its viability prior to gathering the views of Member States is tantamount to prejudging the ongoing deliberations of the OEWG.

Secondly, we remain convinced that consensus-based approaches represent the best avenues in which to develop solutions to the questions surrounding international security. The information and communications technologies (ICT) domain is no different. Fortunately, there is a consensus-based platform established by the General Assembly — the Open-ended Working Group — which is examining the contours and modalities of the proposed programme of action as part of its work. Duplicating the work of the OEWG is therefore unnecessary. We stress that any structure or mechanism to be built on a sustainable footing should evolve through an organic and consensus-based process. The ongoing work of the OEWG is ideally suited for that conversation, and we share the concern about the possible impact of selectively taking topics from within the OEWG and putting them into the proposed programme of action. In our view, it would have been better to examine the proposed programme of action after the OEWG had finished its deliberations, incorporating the consensus recommendations.

Thirdly, for Pakistan, norms-building in the domain of information and communications technologies (ICT) remains the primary consideration, without prejudice to the importance that we attach to capacity-building, in particular for developing countries. However, owing to the persistent gaps, the priority urgently remains the development of new norms in the area of ICT before working on developing mechanisms to operationalize or implement them.

Fourthly and lastly, past experiences with similar instruments, such as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, have not been very encouraging as far as the promise of capacity-building and assistance are concerned. Therefore, while we support the notion of capacity-building in principle, the success of that modality remains unproven.

For those reasons, my delegation will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73.

Ms. McIntyre (Australia): I take the floor briefly to explain Australia's position on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled "Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security". In doing so, I associate myself with the general statement to be delivered by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union on that subject, as well as the explanations of vote before the voting made by the representatives of Japan and the United States.

Australia has a proud record as a supporter of sustainable development and the peaceful uses of technology through the weapons of mass destruction treaty regimes and regional and bilateral capacity-building initiatives. We have also championed efforts to counter weapons of mass destruction proliferation, including through our active membership of all four multilateral export regimes. We are proud to be the permanent Chair of the Australia Group. The report of the Secretary-General (A/77/96) does not provide any evidence that export-control regimes impede development or discriminate against any country. Australia considers the publication of the report to be the end of the process initiated by resolution 76/234. We believe that the international community should instead focus on further strengthening non-proliferation arrangements, while continuing to safeguard legitimate trade and promote sustainable development.

Export-control regimes, such as the Australia Group, underpin global security by providing essential rules, norms and standards that allow for peaceful trade in technology and help prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They enable the sharing of guidelines and good practices that help countries examine proliferation risks before issuing an export licence. As a result, the regimes provide the confidence, trust and assurance necessary to make

possible cooperation and legitimate international trade involving sensitive dual-use items. In that regard, export-control regimes make an essential contribution to sustainable development in all regions by allowing trade and commerce to flourish. Export-control regimes help countries give effect to their obligations and commitments under their national legislation, non-proliferation treaties and Security Council resolutions. The output of export-control regimes, including their control lists and guidance documents, helps strengthen policy approaches to sensitive technologies in countries worldwide. Australia remains concerned that draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56 presents a distorted picture of the operation and impact of export-control regimes and thereby risks undermining those essential elements of the trade and security architecture.

For those reasons, Australia will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56 and its relevant preambular and operative paragraphs and calls on other States to do the same, in support of international efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Ms. Osoba (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom would like to speak in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”. The United Kingdom strongly supports the exchange of technology, information and expertise for peaceful uses in support of global development. We also underline the crucial importance to international peace and security of countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The draft resolution fails to strike the appropriate balance between those two objectives.

In contrast, for example, to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.59, the previous iterations of which have been adopted by consensus as annual First Committee resolutions for many years, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56 also appears to be at odds with the fact that decisions on the export of sensitive technology are the sovereign prerogative of Member States. We are partly concerned about the assertion in the draft resolution that non-proliferation measures, including multilateral export-control regimes, place undue restrictions on the transfer of technology. The sponsor of the draft resolution has not been able to provide convincing evidence that that is the case. There are specific provisions within the multilateral export-control regimes to ensure that basic scientific

research is not controlled, for example. There is no evidence such measures have excessively hampered the exchange of technology to the detriment of economic development. Multilateral export-control regimes are a crucial part of the international security system, which provide levels of assurance of end-use and give States confidence in the transfer sensitive technology, thereby facilitating exports around the world. The United Kingdom, together with many other States, remains committed to identifying opportunities to facilitate the use of advanced technology in order to safely, securely and peacefully meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Such efforts extend to the transfer of sensitive technologies and information to the developing world within the existing non-proliferation framework. The United Kingdom promotes sustained dialogue on peaceful uses, working within the non-proliferation architecture to facilitate the transfer of sensitive technologies, as mandated by article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Ms. Petit (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to speak in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.66, entitled “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements”. France will vote in favour of the draft resolution in support of the strengthening and development of the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaty and agreement system, but that does not in any way imply support for the irresponsible attitude of the delegation that introduced it. France would like to recall that the Russian Federation, which submitted the draft resolution, is responsible for the military aggression against Ukraine, in direct violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. That brutal, irresponsible and unjustifiable war violates all rules established to ensure security on the European continent, as well as international peace and strategic stability in general. Prior to and during that war of aggression, we witnessed Russia’s repeated non-compliance with its disarmament and arms control commitments.

The aggression against Ukraine attests to Russia’s disregard for the principles on which the European security architecture is based, including the 1975 Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Final Act. Russia has knowingly circumvented and exploited the confidence-building and transparency measures adopted in the framework of the Organization for

Security and Cooperation in Europe, including the Vienna Document of 2011, in order to prepare and wage its war of aggression. In Ukraine, Russia has consistently violated the rules of international law, including those governing the conduct of hostilities, by relentlessly bombing Ukrainian cities, deliberately targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure and conducting indiscriminate attacks with improvised explosive devices, anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. Russia is also conducting a campaign of manipulation and disinformation and is abusing the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention to that end. The allegations made by Russia are not based on any demonstrated fact, and France is extremely concerned about the possibility that the disinformation campaign could foreshadow the use of a weapon of mass destruction in Ukraine.

France remains deeply concerned about Russia's repeated attacks on the global disarmament and arms control architecture. We call on Russia to return to responsible behaviour, implement in good faith its arms control commitments and obligations and preserve the instruments that underpin our common security in line with the commitments made in the context of the draft resolution that we will be adopting.

Finally, France reaffirms its full commitment to the disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments, which contribute to building international peace and security. France, as the Committee knows, is a party to all those instruments and fully implements them.

Mr. Damico (Brazil): Brazil wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting on the proposals submitted under agenda items 94 and 107. At this meeting, the First Committee is discussing three initiatives on cybersecurity. This scenario is far from the ideal scenario, which would be to discuss only one text on the matter, and it represents in itself a duplication of efforts. My delegation hopes that Member States can converge again in the future, not necessarily on every specific idea but at least on the proper venue in which to discuss them.

Brazil supports draft decision A/C.1/77/L.54, which endorses the annual progress report of the Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (see A/77/275), as well as the Chair's broader efforts to ensure concrete deliverables in the work of the Working

Group. The adoption of that decision will allow us to look forward, focusing on the implementation of the report's recommendation, in particular the operationalization of the directory of national points of contact.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, Brazil sees merits in allowing enough opportunities to discuss the proposal to establish a cyber programme of action, provided that it follows the criterion of complementarity with the work of the current Open-Ended Working Group. My delegation believes that the new version of the draft resolution addresses that concern. Our support for the programme of action itself, however, will depend on the future elaboration and concrete design of the proposal. At the outset, let me express our view that any duplication of, and competition among, different mechanisms would be detrimental to multilateralism, as well as to our common goal of building confidence among States in cyberspace. One point that requires particular attention is whether a cyber programme of action would be assigned some kind of normative role, a role that has been in the hands of the General Assembly as it adopts the reports of the groups of governmental experts and the open-ended working groups. It is our view that the task should continue to be performed by the General Assembly.

Finally, Brazil believes that the current text of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security", takes into account calls by Member States to be of a procedural nature, privileging previously agreed language as much as possible, and the draft resolution therefore has our support.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled "Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security", as a developing country Brazil favours any initiative that is destined to protect and promote the inalienable rights of Member States to participate in an unhindered manner in the fullest exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for peaceful purposes. Similarly, as a member of the main export control regimes, Brazil believes they provide an essential contribution in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We acknowledge that it is not easy to strike a fair balance between those two imperatives, particularly when it comes to dual-use items in which grey areas abound.

Having that in mind, my delegation engaged with the co-sponsors in order to improve the draft resolution so as to recognize that non-proliferation export-control regimes can contribute to promoting the confidence, trust and necessary assurances for cooperation involving potentially sensitive dual-use items, thereby facilitating legitimate trade for peaceful purposes. We also believe that such control regimes should engage openly with all interested States and should ensure that no undue restrictions are imposed on access to the materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes that are required by developing countries for their continued sustainable development. For Brazil, the term “undue restrictions” should be understood to mean those restrictions that go beyond legitimate non-proliferation concerns and that contribute instead to furthering the many technological divides that exist between developed and developing countries. Unfortunately, it was not possible at this stage to reach a compromise in order to reflect those concerns in the draft resolution. Consequently, we will abstain in the voting. We will continue to engage with the co-sponsors at future sessions of the General Assembly with a view to contributing to enriching the discussions of a matter to which Brazil attaches the utmost importance.

Mr. In den Bosch (Netherlands): Please allow me to speak in explanation of vote before the voting on resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, submitted by the Russian Federation. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the European Union, and the following countries aligned themselves with this explanation of vote: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine.

With regard to the proposals related to information and communications technologies that are before the Committee, let me reiterate our full and unified support, not only for draft decision A/C.1/77/L.54, submitted by Singapore, which welcomes the Open-Ended Working Group’s annual progress report, but also for the work of the Open-Ended Working Group more generally. We welcome the road map for the Open-Ended Working Group’s upcoming sessions provided in its progress report (see A/77/275) and look forward to further advancing the framework for responsible State behaviour in that context.

Against that background and consistently with our support for the Open-Ended Working Group, we cannot support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1 as submitted by the Russian Federation. First, we have concerns that the draft resolution may not offer added value, as compared to draft decision A/C.1/77/L.54 and the annual progress report of the Open-ended Working Group, and that it may undermine the Open-ended Working Group Chair, as well as the authority of the draft decision, which endorses the annual progress report.

In addition, and most important, it appears that the preambular section of the draft resolution provides only an imbalanced selection of the consensus language contained in resolution 76/19 and the consensus reports on this topic. For example, the draft resolution incorporates concepts such as that of a “community of shared future for humankind” and of “information space”, which although discussed were never agreed by all delegations. We consider that such concepts should not be used to alter or replace concepts agreed by consensus in previous outcome documents.

The member States of the European Union and aligning countries will therefore vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1 and call on other States to do the same.

Mr. Balouji (Islamic Republic of Iran): I take the floor in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, entitled “Programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security”. We will vote against that proposal.

Beginning in 1998, the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently joined the consensus that existed in the First Committee with respect to the process involving developments in the field of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the context of international security. That was in view of the fact that we had serious reservations over the way in which the Groups of Governmental Experts (GGEs) were established and conducted. Since 2018, the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security has faced an opposing force to its inception from the time when the United States put forward resolution 73/266 at the same General Assembly session, giving effect to a new GGE with

the same mandate. That was a clear deviation from the spirit of collective work through the OEWG. Ever since, we have persistently requested putting an end to the ongoing parallelism in terms of two groups, namely, the OEWG and one other, as well as the two resolutions. In our view, the OEWG, as the most inclusive existing mechanism, should continue to fulfil its mandate until, and unless, a new, inclusive multilateral institutional dialogue mechanism is established within the United Nations. That is exactly how the Russian draft proposal in document A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1 reflects it, and we will vote in favour of it.

Draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73 surprisingly follows a divisive approach and clearly seeks to replace the current OEWG. Such a proposal is in blatant contravention of the recommendations of the first annual report of the OEWG (see A/75/816) to discuss the national initiatives, including the Programme of Action within the OEWG. From our perspective, putting forward such a proposal is premature, and the content should still be discussed and agreed upon by consensus.

Finally, we take note of the fact that a certain co-sponsor of the draft proposal, namely, the United States, personifies a notorious prototype of irresponsible behaviour and malicious acts in, and through, cyberspace. The United States Government and its close State- and non-State allies, including the Israeli regime, have been behind a range of malicious acts in cyberspace, including the so-called Stuxnet malware against Iran's critical infrastructures in 2010.

My delegation will join the consensus in adopting draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.18, entitled "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control". However, we would like to put on record that this draft resolution is acceptable to my delegation inasmuch as it is in line with our Constitution, laws and regulations, as well as administrative procedures. We will abstain in the voting on all paragraphs, as they do not reflect the consensual approach of Member States, and there are some Member States, including Iran, that have different views on the topics concerned.

The full version of the explanations of vote will be submitted consequently.

Mrs. Hofírková (Czechia): I would like to deliver an explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled "Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security". I have the honour to

speak on behalf of the States members of the European Union (EU) and the following aligned countries: North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, the Republic of Moldova, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino and Canada.

The EU calls upon States to vote against the Chinese draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled "Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security". This draft resolution further builds on last year's resolution 76/234. Despite the fact that divergent views and serious concerns have been expressed since the adoption of that resolution, there is no reflection of those concerns in the draft text.

This draft resolution continues to suggest a false dichotomy between peaceful uses of nuclear, chemical and biological materials, on the one hand, and export-control regimes and other non-proliferation measures, on the other. We recall that a number of export-control regimes and related arrangements were established to contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Those include the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Zangger Committee. Those multilateral regimes contribute to the enhancement of international peace and security by preventing the diversion of sensitive materials, technology and equipment to end-users of concern. They further contribute to the implementation of treaty obligations regarding non-proliferation and Security Council resolutions. The export-control regimes are setting clear guidelines and control lists, which give exporting States the necessary assurances to export sensitive products to trusted recipients.

Export-control regimes are open to membership based on transparent, objective and non-discriminatory criteria. All States can adhere to, and benefit from, the guidelines of the regimes and apply the control lists, as they are public documents available on the regimes' websites.

Outreach is also conducted through the regimes to non-participating States in order to inform them about changes in the control lists, give explanations of what the regimes do, address membership issues and answer other questions that non-participating States may have. Specific topics, including those with regard to peaceful uses, can be raised on such occasions.

Individual trade restrictions can always be addressed bilaterally and/or through the appropriate multilateral bodies. The EU fully supports such transparency.

The EU is concerned about the unfounded suggestion that export-control measures and regimes put undue restrictions on exports of sensitive items. That assertion is not based on facts. Unfortunately, such a negative approach to export controls could ultimately undermine international trade, as well as scientific and technological cooperation, which requires robust and trustworthy export controls.

The draft resolution implies that the export-control authorities of States Members of the United Nations do not correctly carry out their task given that export-control decisions fall within the national competence of States, based on their national, regional and international obligations. In mentioning undue restrictions, the draft resolution disregards the content of the report of the Secretary-General (A/77/96), in which no evidence or facts were presented to support the claim that existing export controls are excessive or undue. The report also highlights that there are no findings in the comprehensive reviews of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) that undue restrictions through export controls would inhibit sustainable development. Furthermore, no suggestions for concrete initiatives outside the existing frameworks were submitted in contributions to the report, whereas this draft resolution keeps the way open for the creation of a new framework on peaceful uses, which would be parallel to the one already existing.

On the contrary, within the submissions, the report contains various initiatives to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention frameworks. Those initiatives should be addressed in the frameworks of those respective instruments.

Given the important contribution of multilateral export-control regimes to international peace and security, as well as facilitating legitimate trade and international cooperation, that framework must not be undermined. Unfortunately, we do not see an impartial and balanced approach in this draft resolution, and we therefore call on States to vote against the draft resolution.

The full version of this statement will be submitted in written form.

Mr. Jiménez (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.23/Rev.1, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”. We thank the Russian Federation for its flexibility and for taking into account crucial capacity-building aspects, to be discussed within the Open-ended Working Group, as well as other elements that will ensure the continuity and preservation of the only inclusive and transparent negotiating format regarding the adoption of a binding instrument on an open, secure, accessible and peaceful information and telecommunications environment. We call on other Member States to vote in favour of this draft resolution. We will also join the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.54 and welcome the adoption by consensus of its first progress report.

My delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.73, entitled “Programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security”, which, we note, represents an obstacle to the work of the Open-ended Working Group by prejudicing and undermining its efforts in a mandate that still has three years to go, thus creating a parallel process and forcing Member States to take a decision that jeopardizes the sole universal format — and one in which we have worked on an equal footing. Our delegation, together with others, insisted that these proposals be discussed in the Open-ended Working Group. We hope that, in future, this duplication of effort will be rectified, and that we can stick with the mandate established for the Open-ended Working Group.

My delegation will also vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.56, entitled “Promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses in the context of international security”. We consider it a very timely draft resolution in the field of international cooperation and peaceful uses, especially for developing countries. We call on other countries to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

The Chair: Given the time left for this meeting and given the provisions of rule 128 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Committee will proceed with voting on the draft proposals contained in cluster 5 at 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

However, I shall now call on those who have requested to exercise the right of reply. In that connection, I should like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to five minutes and the second to three minutes.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Once again, we reject the baseless accusations by the United States and its allies with regard to the Russian Federation's adherence to international treaties and agreements on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Russia is fully committed to its obligations in this area, strictly implements them and provides relevant information on this implementation as stipulated by the agreements, review mechanisms or transparency and confidence-building measures.

We agree with the need to bolster the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation regime declared by the Western States, but I wish to note that it is often the United States and its allies that are blocking the strengthening of this regime. Examples are not hard to find. Under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the United States has been, since 2001 — that is, for more than 20 years — preventing the relaunch of negotiations on a legally binding protocol to the Convention with an effective verification mechanism, and this is not the only example. There are many others, including the efforts of the United States to undermine various international agreements on arms control. The cynicism that we see from these countries when they hurl unsubstantiated accusations against the Russian Federation is simply regrettable.

Instead of such insinuations, we invite in the United States and other Western States to focus not on words but on real work and to get actively involved in the efforts aimed at strengthening international arms control instruments and at further developing them.

Moreover, we categorically reject any accusations related to the Russian Federation's deployment of the special military operation in Ukraine, which we consider to be baseless. Once again — we will repeat this for those who did not understand it the

first time — the special operation is being carried out in full accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law. Such accusations that have nothing to do with reality are only a smokescreen with one single purpose: to deflect attention from the criminal acts being perpetrated by the Ukrainian armed forces with the silent approval of Western countries and at times with their active support.

The Ukrainian armed forces are quite consciously using inhumane battlefield tactics, deploying heavy weapons and setting up firing positions and ammunition depots in schools, hospitals and residential buildings and on the premises of dangerous chemical production facilities. They are attacking nuclear power plants and those areas where prisoners of war are held. They are using civilians as human shields. They are using civilian infrastructure for military purposes.

A recent example of this is the use of civilian dry cargo ships from third countries passing through the maritime corridor agreed upon under the so-called grain deal as a cover for attacking Russian vessels deployed to ensure the implementation of this agreement. This terrorist attack was carried out with active intelligence and logistical assistance from NATO countries. We also cannot fail to mention that this group of States is trying to derail the investigation into September's incident concerning the Nord Stream gas pipes. The nature of the damage revealed as a result of the inspection of the scene by Gazprom specialists leaves no doubt that it was a terrorist attack. According to the information of the Russian Ministry of Defence, the planning, logistical support and execution of this terrorist act was carried out with the participation of the United Kingdom's naval force units.

The cynical reaction of the military and political leadership of NATO countries and Ukraine to the terrorist attack against the Crimean bridge and the acts of nuclear terrorism against the Zaporizhzhya and Kursk nuclear power plants is also quite revealing.

The Chair: There are no more requests from delegations to take the floor in exercise of the right of reply.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.