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First Committee

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Official Records

Chairperson: Mr. Marco Antonio Suazo (Honduras)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 81 to 96 (continued)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): This afternoon, as we announced yesterday, we will hold informal consultations and exchanges of opinions with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of the respective organizations.

On behalf of the Committee, I thank the panellists for being here and welcome them most cordially. I hope we can have a fruitful exchange. I would like to personally emphasize that, in this Committee, we always try to have an interactive debate and exchange of opinions and move ahead on the substance of the matters of disarmament. We have an opportunity once a year to exchange views with officials from the international disarmament field, so I would ask everyone to make the most efficient use of the time at

our disposal to ask questions or make relevant comments and observations with regard to both their statements and the work with the different organizations that they represent or direct. Practically speaking, that is quite a challenge, but we will have to be up to the task if we want to move ahead with the United Nations disarmament agenda.

With these brief introductory remarks, I would like say that I hope that we can conclude in an hour and a half the statements of the panellists. We will then move to a round of "Q & A", as they say in English. Then we will move on to the list of speakers who wish to address the matter of nuclear weapons.

In order to keep to this timetable, I would ask our invited speakers to limit their remarks to the suggested 10 minutes strictly established by our rules of procedure. I warn them that we have been hammering that point home with all delegations. The panellists are duly forewarned. Please let us try to have the most constructive dialogue possible.

With that, I first invite our respected friend Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, to make a statement to the Committee.

Mr. Duarte (High Representative for Disarmament Affairs): I am very grateful for this opportunity to participate in this panel, together with our four visitors: Mr. Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; Mr. Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; Mr. Tim Caughley, Deputy

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Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament; and Mr. Gustavo Zlauvinen, representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the United Nations.

In my statement last year to the Committee on the role of intergovernmental organizations in arms control and disarmament, I described — or tried to describe — how this role has evolved over several centuries to yield the organizations that are represented on this panel today. I pointed out then how there is actually not just one role, but many diverse roles, because international organizations play important but different roles in advancing these goals. I also added that, ultimately, the future of the world lies in the fate not of international organizations, but of international organization, that is, how we organize ourselves as a global process.

Despite the many variations in their day-to-day activities, all of the organizations represented on this panel today share a common purpose in advancing the goals of the Charter of the United Nations, especially with respect to strengthening international peace and security. This common purpose extends to the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control and, most notably for our purposes today, the goal of eliminating all weapons of mass destruction. It is this sense of common purpose that guides the overall relationship between these organizations and the United Nations, and it is this sense of common purpose that will determine the potential for the growth of this cooperation in disarmament and arms control in the years ahead.

In the world at large, however, the current state of affairs in these fields is, at best, unstable and, at worst — well, I can only recall the judgement of Father d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly, who warned on 16 September that the world was in danger of “sinking into the morass of mad, suicidal selfishness” (*A/63/PV.1*, p. 2). Although he cautioned that we were not fatally condemned to this destiny, his words merit the close attention of all who participate in the work of this particular Committee.

Many of our Member States are confronting today a variety of crises that are aggravated year after year by the loss of a sense of common purpose, the rise of mutual mistrust and the misperceived need to seek security in measures of self-help, rather than in

cooperative multilateral action guided by the rule of law.

Some of these crises have been particularly hard on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, for instance, and have inspired doubts about the Treaty's effectiveness in achieving its goals of disarmament and non-proliferation and in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Meanwhile, other criticisms persist over its discriminatory implementation, both among States parties to the Treaty and in relations with non-parties.

Some of these crises relate to the lack of any multilateral legal obligations in certain fields, which is the case with missiles, space weapons and a wide range of conventional armaments, including small arms and light weapons. This problem also extends to incomplete legal regimes. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty of Pelindaba have not yet entered into force, several protocols of regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties remain unsigned, required nuclear safeguards agreements have not yet been concluded, and there are still no general, legally binding assurances for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Additional challenges are arising that may not yet constitute an imminent crisis but nonetheless warrant both concern and collective action. Many of these challenges are arising from the global march of technological change, as, for example, in the realm of cybersecurity, in the engineering of non-lethal chemical and biological agents for use as weapons, in the relentless qualitative improvements of both nuclear and conventional arms, and in the growing danger that terrorists will acquire the means to make and use weapons of mass destruction.

Another type of challenge, however, is often omitted in such a survey — the challenge of organization, both domestic and international. The domestic organizational challenge appears in the compelling need for States to develop their own institutional infrastructures to implement their own commitments, especially in the field of disarmament. There is a wide gap between such commitments and the lack of budgets, offices, laws, policies and regulations to implement them, which is clearly an ends-versus-means type of crisis.

At the international level, each of the organizations represented on this panel today has faced similar constraints, whether they be lack of resources, the inability to undertake long-term planning, narrow legal mandates or other such circumstances. Yet these organizations have much indeed upon which to build.

They have, first of all, this essential commitment to a common purpose and, from that, collective legitimacy. Their secretariats are staffed by dedicated professionals who share a common perception of the global challenges and the enormous potential for cooperative action in addressing them.

Secondly, these organizations remain useful to States and are almost destined to become more so in the years ahead. They provide a central repository for information and serve as a kind of institutional memory of the world community in their respective disarmament and non-proliferation fields. They promote the agreed objectives of States by assisting at treaty review conferences, advocating universal membership in treaties and full compliance, building support for these agreed goals in civil society and helping to educate and train a younger generation to assume their own responsibilities in these fields to meet future challenges. Some of these organizations provide technical assistance, some conduct inspections, some assist in the physical destruction of weapons and some work to protect against the misuse of technology or do many of these things together. All, however, offer distinct practical advantages over the ineffective and dangerous alternatives of self-help and unilateralism.

It is quite apparent that, despite the turmoil in our world today — despite the lack of common purpose, despite the mutual mistrust and despite the persistence of the view that security is only found in weaponry — it is in the realm of international organizations where some of the greatest progress is possible in fulfilling both disarmament and non-proliferation goals. I believe many Member States share this view, as do many groups in civil society around the world. And I believe that the main motives for the great contributions of international organizations in arms control and disarmament relate to this notion of common purpose and the role of these organizations in building mutual trust and confidence among States.

Some may of course say that progress in disarmament must await an improved international environment — indeed, the prior achievement of

harmonious world peace. Others disagree and point to the many ways that disarmament promotes peace and security. In a press conference in Prague in 1956, Dag Hammarskjöld addressed this issue in the following manner:

“Now there is, of course, a kind of shuttle traffic between the improvement in the international atmosphere and disarmament. On the one hand ... disarmament is not likely to come about in an efficient, effective way short of a further improvement in the international situation. On the other hand, I do not think any single policy move will contribute more to an improvement in the international atmosphere than an agreement on even the most modest step in the direction of disarmament.”

His words remain true today. He also left us, however, with another legacy, and that is his warning of the dangers of compromising the fundamental principles and ideals of the United Nations as an organization. In one of his last reports on the work of the United Nations, he wrote:

“It is my firm conviction that any result bought at the price of a compromise with the principles and ideals of the Organization, either by yielding to force, by disregard of justice, by neglect of common interests or by contempt for human rights, is bought at too high a price.”
(A/4390/Add.1, part V, p. 7)

It is in this spirit — embodying a shared commitment to a common purpose, a determination not to sacrifice the principles and ideals of our respective organizations in the field of arms control and disarmament, and a willingness to learn from the experience of those who preceded us in these fields — that I wish all of the participants in this panel well in their noble work, which I believe has earned the respect and support of all Member States.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Duarte for his statement and his contribution to the work of this Committee.

I now call Mr. Tim Caughley, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Caughley (Deputy Secretary-General, Conference on Disarmament): The stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament has been long-standing, but it needs to be made clear that that does not mean

that the Conference is moribund. It is lacking in results, yes, but the Conference is arguably the closest it has been since 1998 to reaching a consensus on a programme of work. Taking stock of the state of affairs in the Conference from the secretariat's perspective, I offer the following remarks. A perspective from the current President of the Conference, Ambassador Mundaraín of Venezuela, will be expressed during the thematic debate on disarmament machinery during the morning of Thursday 23 October in this room.

The Conference began its work this year under an unusually high level of attention. Following the address by the Secretary-General at the opening of the 2008 session and his call to political leaders to come to the Conference on Disarmament, a total of 18 dignitaries from the 65 members addressed the Conference to express their support for it. Additionally, on 12 February, the Russian Foreign Minister submitted, along with China, the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects.

These events had a positive and energizing impact in raising both the political and the public profiles of the Conference on Disarmament, attracting increased press coverage of the work of the Conference and leading to more than 50 articles during this year.

Within the Conference, the tradition of continuity among Presidents of the Conference has been maintained for a third year, with the 2008 Presidents sustaining the practice of a collegial presidency known as "the P-6". The six Presidents have been assiduous in their commitment to providing leadership. It is already clear that the incoming Presidents intend for that to continue in 2009, and Viet Nam is to be congratulated on its leadership in initiating and securing early cohesion among next year's six Presidents.

The continuity of leadership these past three years has enabled the development of a schedule for activities throughout the entire year, and that has helped engender real coherence in activities, in contrast to the ad hoc approach taken in previous sessions.

The 2008 Presidents also continued the valuable practice of their predecessors of submitting a presidential progress report at the end of each of the three parts of the annual session. The Conference on Disarmament has become more inclined than in the past to recognize the value of regular presidential reports and records of major activities. In addition, the

Conference again developed a substantive report to the General Assembly this year in a good and businesslike spirit. Venezuela, together with fellow members of the P-6 of 2008, is to be applauded on its leadership in pulling together the report.

The thematic debate on seven substantive items on the agenda of the Conference continued this year, carrying on the tradition that began in 2006. The seven coordinators appointed by the 2008 Presidents have also been very conscientious in supporting the presidency. The work on the seven agenda items which they coordinated under the responsibility of the presidency demonstrated that the capacity for close and active engagement by members is more than simply latent. Essentially, that work is geared towards helping determine the relative ripeness of the respective agenda items for more intense treatment by the Conference.

It has to be noted that some members remained reluctant to giving formal status to the coordinators, a role which is neither ruled out by the rules of procedures nor explicitly envisaged. A small minority of members would have preferred to see the establishment of subsidiary bodies, which are envisaged but not explicitly required by the rules of procedure. In any event, in the absence of agreement on a formal programme of work, the coordinators played useful roles in facilitating thematic debates on all substantive items on the Conference's agenda.

The main development of 2008 was the introduction by the six Presidents of a further refinement to the proposal by their predecessors in 2007 for addressing the priorities on the Conference's agenda. The new proposal for a programme of work, a slightly revised version of that of their predecessors, was seen as increasing the prospects of its adoption. The new proposal, contained in document CD/1840, contained essentially the same mandates as the 2007 presidential proposal L.1, that is, to negotiate an agreement banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons use and other nuclear explosive devices, while providing for substantive discussions on the three other core issues — nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

A wide range of delegations supported the presidential proposal. However, it became clear that it was not yet capable of securing consensus. Although no explicit opposition has been voiced to a negotiation

of a fissile materials treaty per se, clear concerns remain about the scope of such a treaty and its verification requirements. Many delegations believe that these concerns can be addressed in negotiations and call for the early commencement of negotiations without preconditions.

It must be noted, too, that certain linkages continue to be drawn, conditioning the proposed treatment of one issue to the treatment of another issue or issues. Indeed, there were also continued calls for a comprehensive and balanced programme of work, seeking an equal treatment of the four core issues. A number of members questioned, however, the practicality of taking up the four issues simultaneously. This state of affairs suggests that flexibility will be required on the scope of the qualification that the programme of work needs to be comprehensive and balanced.

In this context, it is noteworthy that the Russian Federation and China submitted the text of their draft outer space treaty with a research mandate, not a negotiating mandate. While their aspirations to conclude such an instrument were well known, they showed flexibility by not insisting on the negotiation of the treaty at this time.

Resolving the shape of a programme of work remains, thus, the Conference's most urgent challenge. Through a decade-long deadlock over this issue and via a series of refinements of a comprehensive approach — through proposals known as Amorim, the five ambassadors' proposal, the decision of the President L.1 and now CD/1840 — it is inescapable that the Conference continue to pursue an ambitious outcome. Mindful that there are firm proposals on individual core issues already on the table, including the United States draft fissile materials treaty and an accompanying negotiating mandate, there is a certain irony that in, aiming for a comprehensive approach, the Conference continues to end up without a programme of work.

The thematic debates for the past three years, however, have served to demonstrate that some issues are riper than others. To this extent, and in a positive vein, the transition from procedural debate to concrete substantive work should be a comparatively easy one when the moment comes, notwithstanding the complexity of the subject matter.

Whatever the actual vehicle that carries the Conference into the next substantive negotiating phase of its history, it remains essential that, in the absence of a programme of work, the Conference continue to develop an annual timetable that allows members to feel satisfied that time will be allocated to the issue or issues to which they attach importance. That leaves it up to delegations to sustain the coverage of their prime issue or issues by deepening the treatment of any issue through such means as submitting new or amended draft instruments or mandates on the issues they are seeking to promote and increasing the participation of experts from capitals.

It is tempting from the secretariat's perspective to ask, perhaps simplistically, whether the Conference should treat its annual schedule of activities as its programme of work and focus on individual mandates for the key activities covered by such a schedule, taking them forward initially, in the absence of agreement on any subsidiary forum, in informal or formal sessions of the plenary. This would not necessarily overcome the problem of linkages, but it might serve to make them less institutional.

A question sometimes posed by members is the value of the current regional groupings in the Conference. Like several other issues of procedure, this question will lose its significance, if not its relevance, at the point at which the Conference is actually involved in substantive work once more. But it is worth noting that whatever one's views on regional groupings, there is nothing to prevent the emergence of a cross-regional approach to finding solutions to the Conference's current impasse.

In conclusion, there has been an increase in the intensity of the work of the Conference, demonstrated in part by a marked rise in the number of attending dignitaries, especially in 2008. This helped to enhance the political and public profile of the Conference, including through greater media coverage, and served to energize it. A valuable consistency of practice and cohesion has also characterized the Conference's work methods these past three years.

There are clear signs that the incoming Presidents for 2009, led by Viet Nam, are gearing up to sustain this state of affairs. There are growing expectations among members of a breakthrough. From the secretariat's perspective, we remain eternally optimistic and ready to assist in any way we can.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament for his statement and his participation in and contribution to the work of this Committee.

I would greatly appreciate it if representatives could keep the volume of their conversations a little lower in order to show due respect to the panellists who are with us this afternoon. I know we are all worried about the draft resolutions and deadlines that will be addressed tomorrow, but I believe we should listen to the panellists and give them the respect due to them.

On behalf of all delegations, I warmly welcome the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. Rogelio Pfrter, to the Committee and I invite him to take the floor.

Mr. Pfrter (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, on your well-deserved election to chair the First Committee of the General Assembly. The Committee plays a pivotal role in evaluating developments in the field of arms control and disarmament and making recommendations to the Assembly. I wish you every success.

The cooperation of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with the United Nations is a manifestation of the international community's aspiration to a law-based, humane and peaceful system of global security with effective multilateralism at its heart.

This year was very important for the organization. In April 2008, members of the OPCW met for the second special session of the Conference of States Parties to review the operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The Conference renewed the strong commitment of States parties to the noble goals of the Convention, reiterated the critical importance of this instrument and reaffirmed the essential contribution it makes to confidence-building, to cooperation among States parties and to their own national security. States parties affirmed that the Convention sets new standards for both disarmament and non-proliferation through its non-discriminatory and multilateral verification regime.

On the question of destruction of chemical weapons, the Conference, while reaffirming that the complete destruction of such weapons is essential to

the realization of the object and purpose of the Convention, welcomed the statements of possessor States reiterating their commitment to meeting the final, extended deadlines for destroying chemical weapons stockpiles. It also reiterated that universality of the Convention is essential to achieving its object and purpose, and strongly urged the world's remaining States not parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to it "as a matter of urgency and without preconditions".

Furthermore, it reaffirmed that full and effective national implementation is essential for realizing its object and purpose and re-emphasized the continuing relevance and importance of the provisions of article X of the Convention for assistance and protection against chemical weapons.

Similarly, it stressed the importance of the provisions of article XI on the economic and technological development of States parties, and recalled that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of that provision is essential to the realization of the goals of the Convention.

Given the sensitivity of security perceptions, any multilateral conference dealing with the important issues of disarmament and non-proliferation is bound to encounter divergences and disagreements. The Second Review Conference indeed had its challenging moments in bridging the differences on a number of critical issues. However, in the end, the consensus that emerged bears testimony to the wisdom and constructive spirit of States parties. It is good news for disarmament and non-proliferation, and indeed good news for multilateralism.

Allow me now to recall the state of progress in the implementation of the Convention.

As of 30 September 2008, OPCW had verified the destruction of more than 28,600 metric tons of category 1 chemical weapons. That represents 41.25 per cent of the total stockpiles declared by six States parties, namely, Albania, India, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and another State party. Nine hundred and fifteen metric tons — or 51.8 per cent of the declared category 2 chemical weapons — have also been destroyed to date. In addition, all States parties that declared category 3 chemical weapons have completed the destruction of those weapons.

On their part, China and Japan each submitted two reports on the progress made towards the destruction of all chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China. I wish to commend the exemplary cooperation between the two countries in dealing with that historical legacy and, in that regard, reaffirm the readiness of the technical secretariat of OPCW to provide all possible assistance. Indeed, we can all look forward to the commencement of the process of destruction of those weapons at an early opportunity.

Last year, I had the pleasure to inform the Committee about Albania's completion of its destruction undertaking. In 2008, another milestone was marked in the history of chemical disarmament when, on 10 July, a State party completed the destruction of its entire chemical weapons stockpile. I have wholeheartedly congratulated that second OPCW member for its achievement and for the unwavering commitment it has shown to reaching that important goal. That takes us a step closer to the goal of completing chemical disarmament and reinforces the validity of the CWC.

However, we of course remain aware that 2012 is the final deadline for completing the destruction of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles. That deadline poses significant challenges, especially in the context of the two countries with the largest stockpiles, on behalf of all delegations, the United States of America and the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation has to date completed the destruction of more than 11,600 metric tons, or 29 per cent of its category 1 chemical weapons. The commissioning of new destruction facilities in Russia, as well as the construction of additional ones, highlights the commitment expressed by the Russian Federation to fulfilling its obligations under the Convention within the established deadlines. Such commitment and the concrete steps being taken by the Russian Federation are highlighted in a report of a recent visit to that country by a delegation of the OPCW Executive Council. At the conclusion of that visit, which took place in the facility in Shchuch'ye, the mission of the Executive Council drew up a report that is now being considered by the Executive Council. It expressly states that the Russian Federation is firmly committed to fulfilling its obligation under the Convention within the established deadlines and that it has been taking concrete steps to that end.

The assistance provided by the countries of the G-8 and other donors in support of the Russian Federation's destruction programme has been crucial to the momentum of chemical disarmament in Russia. I hope that this vital cooperation will continue in the future.

The other major possessor State, the United States of America, has already destroyed nearly 15,400 metric tons, or 55.4 per cent of its declared stockpiles. New destruction facilities are under construction, which will add to the existing United States capacity to destroy chemical weapons, thereby lending further support to the resolve of that State party to meet its obligations under the Convention. It should also be noted that the United States contribution to the goals of the Convention is not restricted to its own disarmament progress. The United States has also provided critically needed assistance to other countries in their destruction efforts.

Given the large quantities of chemical weapons that the Russian Federation and the United States still need to eliminate in a safe and environmentally sound manner, and the inordinately large expenditure that obligation entails, OPCW member States have carried out visits of the type I just mentioned with regard to Shchuch'ye. They intend to continue to do so in the future.

I cannot fail to praise another possessor State — India — which has consistently demonstrated its resolve to complete the destruction of its stockpiles within the extended April 2009 deadline. As a result, India has already destroyed over 97 per cent of its category 1 chemical weapons stockpile and is expected to reach its 100 per cent target before the cut-off date.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's plans to ensure the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpile are on track.

Along with the goal of disarmament, it is vital to ensure that the non-proliferation regime under the Convention is implemented effectively and to its full potential. The effective and efficient industry inspection regime that has been established under the Convention is key to its non-proliferation efforts and to the promotion of confidence among States parties in the chemical industry's legitimate and peaceful activities. Progress in disarmament will gradually lead to increasing attention to and enhancement of the Convention's verification tools under article VI. The

continued refinement and higher intensity of the industry verification efforts are crucial to that objective. Those are matters that are now before the relevant policymaking organs of the OPCW.

Like any other industrial sector, the chemical industry also continues to evolve. We see increasing overlaps between chemical and biological sciences, the integration of chemical engineering into the life sciences, and the fusion between those and information technology. Furthermore, in the context of future challenges, we will also need to take into account emerging technologies, such as nanotechnologies and the creation of new chemical manufacturing methodologies. For the verification mechanism to maintain its relevance and effectiveness, OPCW will have to adapt it to a rapidly changing environment throughout the global chemical industry.

The Chemical Weapons Convention now covers more than 98 per cent of the worldwide chemical industry. In order to ensure the permanence and durability of the norms of the Convention, it is necessary to strengthen the domestic legal and administrative systems in member countries. The existence of loopholes could encourage possible criminal and terrorist uses of chemistry and its products. National implementation of the Convention's provisions and reporting on steps taken in that regard constitute clear obligations for States parties. In an environment of heightened concerns about proliferation and the possible use of chemical weapons by terrorists, the adoption and implementation of such measures takes on added necessity and urgency.

I am now in a position to report that the number of countries that have enacted legislation covering all key areas has increased from 51, in October 2003, to 82 in October 2008. In addition, 126 States parties have informed us of the legislative and administrative measures they have adopted. At the same time, the number of States parties that have designated or established national authorities has increased to 177, or 96 per cent of all States parties. We support their implementation efforts and count on the voluntary financial support provided by States parties, which has enabled those productive activities to be sustained.

Recent examples of how member States are contributing in that area include the offers by the Governments of Turkey and China to host events on industry-related issues relevant to the Convention, to

be held in 2009 in Istanbul and Hong Kong. I also wish to acknowledge the generous contribution made by the European Union under its joint action programmes in support of OPCW activities. In particular, the European Union will sponsor a one-day event on the national implementation of the CWC, to be held on 1 December in The Hague.

While the OPCW is not an anti-terrorist organization, it nonetheless has an important contribution to make in that area by virtue of its mandate to ensure the non-use of chemical weapons under any circumstances. The OPCW Executive Council and subsequent decisions of the Conference of the States Parties and of the Second Review Conference have affirmed the importance of national implementation measures as an essential safeguard against terrorism.

Apart from Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), whose provisions are fully consistent with the obligations established under the CWC, the organization's role has also been clearly recognized in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the General Assembly in 2006 and reaffirmed recently in September 2008. OPCW will continue to respond to the calls of the Security Council and the General Assembly in this regard.

I would now like to touch upon two other important areas of OPCW's work. These are the areas to which our member States, particularly those whose economies are developing or in transition, attach enormous significance. First of all, let me repeat that, faced with a potential threat of the use of chemicals by terrorists, States parties are also keen to build their national capacities to deal with the threat of this type of incident. We are therefore offering training courses to that end. OPCW also sponsors a number of important programmes aimed at building capacities to promote the peaceful applications of chemistry.

In the short period of 11 years, the CWC has enabled the international community to progress towards a world free of chemical weapons. However, we have one pending issue — the issue of universality. Although the CWC membership has now reached 184 member States, there are still 11 States Members of the United Nations that have not joined the chemical ban. Promoting universality remains an important priority.

Towards this end, I have to say that some Member States are moving in the right direction — Iraq and Lebanon have completed the parliamentary

procedures necessary under their constitutions. Elsewhere in the Middle East, the picture is, unfortunately, different. Egypt, Israel — which has signed but not ratified the Convention — and Syria continue to cite regional security concerns for remaining outside.

While we all respect the articulation of these perceptions, I believe that the validity of the Convention is universal and should not be affected by regional circumstances. That, indeed, is the view of our member States, as expressed in the report of the Second Review Conference. However, I must gratefully acknowledge the dialogue that Egypt and Israel have with us, which represents a very constructive engagement.

We also look forward to progress in Africa and the Caribbean, where there are still Member States that are not members of the Convention, as well as in Asia. We look forward to the day when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea shall also join us. Unfortunately, it has not found an opportunity to respond to our overtures. However, I would recall that we remain prepared to assist the Democratic People's Republic in any manner we can to facilitate its accession to the CWC.

In conclusion, I wish to thank delegations for their consistent support for the General Assembly resolution on the CWC. In this connection, I acknowledge the important contribution made by the delegation of Poland through its engagement in promoting the resolution, negotiating it and ensuring that it is steered to good end.

I wish the Committee success and I remain available for any questions.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I most warmly welcome Mr. Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, to the First Committee and I give him the floor.

Mr. Tóth (Executive Secretary, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization): I have the honour to report to the First Committee today on the status of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and on progress achieved by the Preparatory Commission.

As members know, the purpose of the Commission is to promote the entry into force of the Treaty and to establish a global verification regime to

monitor compliance with its provisions. I am pleased to report that our organization is now 180-members strong, moving towards the high membership level of the United Nations itself. This forum is probably the right place to reiterate our appreciation to the members of our organization for their political, technical and financial support.

While there remain nine countries whose ratification is still necessary for the Treaty to enter into force, we are approaching the universalization and implementation of the CTBT — a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing for all and for all time. And so the Preparatory Commission is making every necessary preparation to ensure that the verification regime is ready from day one. Members of the First Committee can appreciate that this is no small task.

The system itself will be comprised of almost 340 facilities across the territory of 89 countries, each hosting a diverse range of recording equipment using four different technologies; a system operated and maintained by nearly 500 operators around the globe and around the clock; a global communications infrastructure of 250 VSAT communication assets relaying recorded data through six geostationary satellites back to operations in Vienna in real time; and a team of experts at the International Data Centre analyzing incoming information and comparing the data to Treaty-specific timelines. Those data may also be viewed by member States and institutions across the globe in what could be the most open verification democracy of its kind. Ultimately, should the need arise, an on-site inspection team can be dispatched to survey an area of approximately 1,000 square kilometres for a potential nuclear blast.

A number of important steps has been made in the build-up of the verification regime since the last time I addressed the First Committee. Nearly 70 per cent of the international monitoring system has been certified to date. It will be recalled that the system was able to record and attribute the nuclear event in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2006, with 180 facilities in place at that time. By the end of this year, we will have 250 facilities transmitting data back to the International Data Centre in Vienna. During the present midterm cycle, we have tripled the number of facilities in operation.

The event in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea underscored the importance of the noble gas

element of the radionuclide network. Compared to the limited noble gas network we had at that time, the number of our noble gas stations will be doubled by the end of this year. Had the new stations with improved geographical saturation been in place at the time of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea event, the readings would have been 50 times higher than those recorded in 2006.

This year, we undertook the migration to a new platform for our global communications infrastructure. The volume of data being transmitted from monitoring facilities to the International Data Centre has tripled in recent years.

As the benefits derived from these products have expanded, so has access to them. Recently, we crossed two important numerical barriers. As of now, more than 1,000 authorized institutions in over 100 countries have direct access to the data generated by the international monitoring system. And those data are proving themselves increasingly useful, not just for verification but in civil and scientific applications as well — for example, in providing more time-efficient information to tsunami warning alert centres. Our system provides the fastest, most reliable and highest quality data to national and international tsunami warning centres. Those are important life-saving applications. Data provision arrangements have been signed in the past few months with Japan, the Philippines and Australia. Similar arrangements will soon be signed with Indonesia, with more countries to follow.

A new standard of transparency has been achieved with the CTBT verification regime. It represents a new democracy in the verification of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. But there is no need to take our word for it. Recently, the Commission initiated an international scientific studies project in cooperation with the international scientific community. The main purpose of the project is two-fold — first, to assess the capability of the verification system that is now approaching full implementation; and secondly, to explore whether the scientific community can provide additional tools that will further improve our data analyses. That process will conclude next year with a conference to be held in June for all participants in the project.

In September this year, we took a massive step forward in our preparations for on-site inspections. A team of trained inspectors journeyed to Kazakhstan to conduct the first integrated field exercise of its kind under the concept of on-site Treaty inspection. Two hundred participants were deployed in the former nuclear-weapon-test site of Semipalatinsk, an area roughly the size of a small country. They brought with them over 50 tons of equipment to be tested over 30 days in the field. Many valuable lessons were learned, which will be included in all preparations for on-site inspections as we move forward. The fourth and final arm of the verification regime will be greatly strengthened as a result.

We have progressed to quite an advanced stage. Instead of talking about separate components of the regime, we can now talk of an integrated system of systems functioning in a holistic way. In many respects, the system is achieving a high level of maturity, but let us not get ahead of ourselves. As with any journey, the last mile is often the longest.

It has been almost 20 years since the cold war ended, and with it the spectre of global nuclear catastrophe — a spectre that seemed to haunt us for so long. Fortunately, that is no longer the case, or at least the fear is no longer what it once was. But the threat remains — out of sight, out of mind for some, perhaps, but still it remains a threat. The urgency with which that threat must be countered — with which we must advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation — has lost its grip on our imagination. We have taken our eyes off the ball.

The ban on nuclear testing is now more necessary than ever. The CTBT is an important measure in its own right. It is a quick brand-recognition tool for progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. I ask the members of the Committee to contemplate the importance of progress to the CTBT's entry into force at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. What could better demonstrate the international community's commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament at that critical juncture?

The Treaty also has the potential to act as a catalyst for progress in other crucial areas of disarmament and non-proliferation: further reductions in strategic and sub-strategic nuclear weapons, de-alerting nuclear arsenals and achieving a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Looking to the future, we see compelling reasons to establish the CTBT proper in the international rule book. Nuclear energy is expected to experience a renaissance. The International Atomic Energy Agency has forecast annual growth rates over the course of the next 20 years that give reason to pause and think. How can we ensure a system of access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes that is fair, secure, safe and safeguarded? Such questions are for all of us to answer. Such resurgence will almost certainly lead to an increase in the number of countries, facilities, institutions and individuals managing a wider array of sensitive nuclear-fuel-cycle components, with a significantly enlarged amount of fissile material. Such a surge across the board will make it more difficult than ever to differentiate between prohibited and permitted nuclear activities.

As nuclear energy is promoted to address energy security and climate change challenges, that promotion must go hand in hand with the strengthening of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, which has been weakened in recent years. The nuclear testing of recent years underscored not just the need for the ban but also the urgency with which we had to get there. The Treaty is the last and most visible legal and technical barrier to the development of nuclear weapons. It can keep the non-proliferation and disarmament regime from unravelling as we progress through the twenty-first century and attempt to navigate the manifold challenges facing our world.

As we learn the lessons of the financial meltdown, those challenges must not go unattended and left simply to forces of sheer competition. Even more than in other volatile areas of our turbulent daily lives, those challenges require regulation. They do not forgive complacency and must be faced promptly, decisively and collectively.

The Treaty's own built-in mechanism means that 44 listed countries must ratify the CTBT before it can enter into force. We are still nine ratifications short of that goal. With recent signatures, we have become a 180-member-strong organization. We are 5 ratifications away from crossing the barrier of 150 ratifications, which is a robust increase from the nearly 100 ratifications the Treaty had five years ago.

However, as we sit here now, the Treaty awaits its entry into force. This unprecedented joint global venture of force represents a massive political,

financial and human investment. This arrangement has been erected atop half a century of political efforts. The verification regime is worth \$1 billion. The system embodies 10,000 scientific-person years. This great endeavour of scientists and laymen alike is waiting to enter into force and to enter into full operation, because that is what it was dreamt to do, that is what it was built to do and that is what it stands ready to do.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Tóth for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Gustavo Zlauvinen, representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Zlauvinen (International Atomic Energy Agency): The expectations for the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have grown in the past 50 years in response to technological and geopolitical changes and to the experience gained through responding to various verification challenges. In addition to the introduction of comprehensive safeguards, in the early 1970s, the IAEA experiences in Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the early 1990s profoundly impacted the safeguards system. Those cases triggered far-reaching efforts to strengthen the safeguards system, in particular the Agency's ability to detect undeclared nuclear material and activities in States with comprehensive safeguards agreements, and culminated in the introduction of the Additional Protocol to the safeguards agreements.

The evolution of safeguards has also led to a change in the culture of the Agency's verification system. The shift in the focus of safeguards implementation from verification of declared materials to assessing and understanding the consistency of information on a State's nuclear programme has resulted in fundamental changes in the IAEA, be it with regard to the way in which the Agency evaluates States or in the way it utilizes verification technology.

Past experience has highlighted the importance of considering a State's nuclear programme as a whole, rather than just individual facilities, based on the evaluation of a broad range of information in drawing conclusions concerning safeguards. It is an iterative process whereby the Agency assesses all information available to it about a State's nuclear activities in order to paint a holistic picture of a State's programme.

As a result, verification has become less mechanistic and more information-driven. That is true of the way in which safeguard activities are now planned and implemented, results analysed, follow-up activities identified and carried out, and conclusions on safeguards drawn.

A key, tangible requirement of the information-driven safeguards system is, of course, information itself. The three main sources of information used in the evaluation process of a State are, first, information provided by States under the safeguards agreements, additional protocols or voluntarily; secondly, information derived from IAEA verification activities in the field; and thirdly, information obtained from open and other sources of information relevant to safeguards.

The last category includes the use of commercial satellite imagery, which has become a tool used routinely in the evaluation of information provided by States about their nuclear activities and to plan inspections and visits to facilities to verify that information. Satellite imagery can also increase the possibility of detecting illicit nuclear activities, and information provided by States on a voluntary basis, such as nuclear trade-related information, is highly valuable. For example, following revelations about extensive covert networks related to the procurement and supply of sensitive nuclear technology, some IAEA member States have been providing information voluntarily on procurement enquiries, export denials and other nuclear trade-related information.

In the future, the expanding world population, growing world economy, increased globalization and fast-paced scientific and technological advances will all have an impact on IAEA's efforts to stem nuclear proliferation. While the wider use of nuclear energy holds great promise for bringing greater prosperity, the expansion is not without risks in the areas of safety, security and non-proliferation. Nuclear materials, technology and know-how will become more widely and easily available, increasing also the concerns of other possible misuse.

Compounding those challenges are also the growing concerns over the health of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, which has been beset by questions about compliance and tensions between its development and security

aspects and its non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament-related aspects. But the role of objective and independent verification is likely to become ever more important, for it can improve confidence in the global non-proliferation system and help strengthen it at a crucial time.

To meet future challenges, IAEA will continue to need a robust toolbox that contains the necessary legal authority to gather information and carry out inspections that rely on state-of-the-art technology, a high-calibre workforce and sufficient resources.

The Agency's legal authority for nuclear verification is not yet universal. Thirty non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT have not yet brought into force their required comprehensive safeguards agreements, and over 100 States have yet to conclude additional protocols. The comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol combination should become the universally accepted verification standard if verification is to be credible, all the more so in light of the projected increased use of nuclear power. IAEA currently projects that the number of nuclear power reactors could increase by up to 60 per cent and associated fuel-cycle facilities by up to 45 per cent by 2030. As a result, additional nuclear facilities, materials and activities will be subject to IAEA verification. The universal implementation of the additional protocol is vital to increasing not only the effectiveness of safeguards, but also their efficiency, allowing the Agency to optimize its verification activities and reduce associated additional verification workload.

IAEA must also ensure that its verification technology is state of the art. That will be particularly important for the detection of clandestine nuclear activities. IAEA will need to strengthen the existing detection capabilities, especially with regard to environmental sampling, satellite imagery and information analysis. For example, the increasing number of environmental samples taken will require IAEA to improve its laboratory's capability to analyse higher numbers of samples and expand its network of analytical laboratories in member States.

In addition, IAEA will need to focus on recruiting a highly competent workforce. With a limited pool of nuclear professionals currently available, the recruitment of such a workforce will be a growing challenge in the light of growing future needs.

Underpinning all IAEA's verification activities are financial resources. For some \$200 million per year, IAEA evaluates more than 160 States and applies safeguards to over 950 nuclear facilities and installations. That was described as "an extraordinary bargain" by the United Nations High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change in 2004 (A/59/565). It is a modest investment in an important element of the international security framework. To ensure the continuity of IAEA verification abilities, it is essential that predictable, assured and sufficient resources be made available to the Agency to fulfil its mandates.

To continue to serve the international community in a changing world, IAEA must be ready and able to take on new roles and tasks to meet new demands. One area could be the creation of a new framework for the sensitive parts of the nuclear fuel cycle, meaning uranium enrichment and reprocessing of plutonium. A fully developed framework is a complex endeavour to be developed in stages.

The first step would be to establish mechanisms to assure the supply of nuclear fuel. States would have confidence that they would be able to obtain nuclear fuel in a predictable and stable manner over the longer term. While a well-functioning market is likely to ensure that, a back-up mechanism could add further confidence by helping to protect against nuclear fuel disruptions unrelated to technical or commercial considerations. There has been considerable interest in that idea, with several States and other stakeholders proposing a variety of possible approaches for the assurance of supply.

The various proposals now on the table envisage new responsibilities for the Agency, ranging from deciding when fuel supplies could be released to an ambitious vision of the actual construction, operation and monitoring of enrichment plants. The various proposals suggest a growing nuclear broker or facilitator role for the Agency, a vision that was already recorded in the IAEA statute 50 years ago.

The multinational framework would also have important non-proliferation advantages. For instance, ultimately, should all enrichment and reprocessing activities come under multinational control, this could provide enhanced assurance to the international community that the most sensitive parts of the civilian nuclear fuel cycle are less vulnerable to misuse. Naturally, a global, verifiable treaty prohibiting the

production of fissile material for nuclear weapons would be required to complete the new framework.

Earlier this year, the IAEA Director General appointed a high-level panel to assess the challenges IAEA will face up to the year 2020 and beyond. The Commission of Eminent Persons, under the chairmanship of former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, included 18 senior international figures. The Commission's report contains some bold recommendations on what we should be doing up to 2020 and beyond and will require a bold response from our member States.

The road ahead will not be easy, but we believe that everything the Commission recommends is doable if the political will is there. Revitalizing IAEA will make us more effective in serving the needs of our member States. The Commission's findings are intended to stimulate further discussion among member States, between the States and the IAEA secretariat, and among the broader public about the future of the Agency and how best it can contribute in the coming years to the efforts of the international community to achieve development, peace and security.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving IAEA this opportunity to address the delegations of the First Committee.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency. I would like to thank all the panellists for their presence here and their participation in this meeting. It has been the intention of the presidency, ever since Geneva, that these presentations be as short as possible so that we might have a true exchange with the representatives of these agencies and allow delegations to make comments, ask questions and respond to questions and discuss these issues further in an informal format. I hope that in the time that remains, we will be able to hold such a dialogue. To do so, we must move on to the informal part of the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 4.40 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

Ms. Millar (Australia): The Australian Government is strongly committed to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Australian Prime Minister Mr. Rudd said in Kyoto on 9 June:

“In the past decade, the world has not paid adequate attention to nuclear weapons ... There has not been the same focus on the danger of nuclear weapons that we saw at the height of the cold war.

“While we no longer live with the daily fear of nuclear war between the two super-Powers, the past decade has seen concerning developments in the nuclear landscape. Nuclear-armed States outside the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have emerged. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has announced its withdrawal from the NPT and conducted a nuclear test. Iran is engaging in proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities in violation of international law. The risk of proliferation and nuclear and radiological terrorism is increasing, including through black market activity, and there is mounting post-cold-war discontent with NPT nuclear-weapon States’ performance in meeting their disarmament obligations.”

That said, since this Committee last met, Australia has been encouraged by a discernible, if tentative, shift in mood on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Prime Minister Rudd’s proposal in June to establish an International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament was designed to reinvigorate our work in the lead-up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference and beyond. Former Australian and Japanese Foreign Ministers Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi have agreed to co-chair the Commission. Other eminent and outstanding individuals, many well-known to this Committee, have taken on the challenging role of Commissioner. They have accepted a tough task: to bring fresh vision to the interconnected challenges of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to make practical and realistic recommendations.

The Commission will meet in Sydney for the first time this month at the first of six planned meetings. With less than two years to go before the NPT Review Conference, the Commission’s work is urgent.

The NPT has successfully prevented widespread nuclear weapons proliferation and paved the way for

the elimination of those that already exist. But 40 years after its opening for signature, the Treaty is under great pressure. The 2010 Review Conference offers a real opportunity to put our work back on track. This opportunity must not be lost. Success will require genuine commitments by all NPT member States. We hope that the new Commission will contribute to shaping a global consensus in the lead-up to the Review Conference.

The realization of a world free of nuclear weapons demands balanced, progressive and reinforcing steps. The international community rightly looks to the nuclear-weapon States and those possessing nuclear weapon capabilities outside the NPT to take the lead through lasting reductions of their nuclear arsenals.

Australia welcomes the steps taken by several nuclear-weapon States. We acknowledge the deep reduction in warhead numbers and delivery systems by the United States and the Russian Federation, including as part of the Moscow Treaty. We note the historically low number of nuclear warheads expected to remain in service by 2012 and welcome the unilateral cuts made to its tactical stockpile by the United States.

Strong leadership from both countries is needed to ensure further deep and irreversible cuts. We look to the United States and Russia to ensure ongoing and transparent bilateral reductions to all weapons in their nuclear arsenals beyond the expiry of the Moscow Treaty in 2012.

Australia has also welcomed the announcement by the United Kingdom that it will reduce its holdings of nuclear warheads by 20 per cent and France’s announcement that it will reduce its nuclear arsenal by one third. But we look to States with nuclear weapons, within and outside the NPT, to work towards the elimination of nuclear arsenals.

Such efforts must be undertaken transparently. We welcome reports at the NPT Preparatory Commission and other meetings, but note that transparency is applied unequally by nuclear-weapon States. We encourage nuclear-armed States to reassess and limit the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies and to reduce further the operational status of their nuclear weapons in ways that promote global security and stability.

The burden of responsibility for nuclear disarmament is not the nuclear-weapon States' alone. All States must contribute to ensuring an environment conducive to nuclear disarmament. Australia is playing its part in strengthening that environment.

Australia is a committed party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith chaired the fourth ministerial meeting of the CTBT here in New York only this past month. It is deeply regrettable that, after a decade, there remain nine Annex 2 States that have yet to join the CTBT. Signature and ratification of the CTBT without delay must be a priority for all.

Australia is also a party to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. The development of such zones is a real and important step towards nuclear disarmament, providing binding negative security assurances.

As one of the six Presidents of the 2009 Conference on Disarmament, Australia will work with all Conference members to advance work of the Conference, including on a fissile material cut-off treaty. This has been delayed far too long. It is unacceptable that the Conference on Disarmament, the world's only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, has for so long remained idle.

The nuclear non-proliferation regime continues to be put under pressure by certain States, both within and outside the NPT. Australia supports the use of diplomacy to bring all States within the nuclear non-proliferation regime and under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. We strongly urge all States to swiftly ratify the IAEA Additional Protocol. This would enhance the confidence of all States in the peaceful nature of a State's nuclear activities.

The nuclear weapons activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue to pose a significant threat to regional security and global non-proliferation objectives. Australia welcomes the agreement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States on a set of measures to verify the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The removal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the United States list of State sponsors of terrorism is a consequence of this agreement.

Australia now looks to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to work cooperatively with its six-party partners in carrying out this agreement. In this context, we welcomed the agreement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to resume disablement of its Yongbyon nuclear facilities.

Australia is deeply concerned that Iran is persisting with its proliferation-sensitive activities in violation of four legally binding Security Council resolutions. These are not the actions of a State seeking to restore confidence and address the international community's concerns about the nature of its nuclear programme. Iran needs to comply immediately with its obligations and suspend its activities related to uranium enrichment, reprocessing and heavy water. It must grant IAEA the access it needs to remove the international community's justifiable doubts about its peaceful intentions.

Mr. Mutavdžić (Croatia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Australia is also concerned by information indicating the undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor in Syria. Australia regrets that Syria has not yet responded to the IAEA request for access. We call on Syria to show maximum cooperation and transparency and to provide all the information needed by IAEA to complete its assessment.

Progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is fundamental to enduring global peace and security. Australia looks forward to working constructively with the Chairman and other delegations during this session in the First Committee and beyond to achieve the progress we all seek.

The Acting Chairperson: I would like to take this opportunity to ask the members of the Committee to be quieter during the statements in order to show respect to the speakers.

Mr. Labbé (Chile) (spoke in Spanish): Allow me to congratulate the Chairman and the other members of the Bureau and to assure them of the full cooperation of the delegation of Chile.

Chile associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Brazil on behalf of the Common Market of the South. We reaffirm that not only is nuclear disarmament the most important item on the agenda of the United Nations disarmament

machinery, but its attainment is also essential if we are to achieve security for all States and the lowest possible number of weapons.

We are therefore party to all relevant and related instruments, including of course the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the protocol additional to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreement, and The Hague Code of Conduct. We are also very active in the competent agencies, including the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and, of course, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), whose Board of Governors has been chaired by Ambassador Milenko Skoknic of Chile.

We have been following and strongly support the ongoing NPT review process, which will conclude in 2010 with the eighth conference. We have been involved in this process both at the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee and at the conferences that the Middle Powers Initiative — a unique global civil society organization — has held in Ottawa, Vienna and Dublin in order to exert global political pressure for the success of the 2010 Conference.

We are less interested in describing our national positions on disarmament, which, we believe, are sufficiently well known, than in expressing our hope that the political changes that have already occurred or that are in the offing will effectively create opportunities for rescuing the nuclear non-proliferation regime and relaunching nuclear disarmament. The letters by Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, William Perry and Sam Nunn published by the *Wall Street Journal* carry great importance, as this means that the most prestigious members of the intelligentsia of one of the leading States in issues of peace and international security are reaffirming the political necessity of nuclear disarmament and advocating progress on this issue.

Such progress must take place at the bilateral and multilateral levels, and the eighth NPT Review Conference will therefore be a litmus test of the determination of the key players to avoid a failure such as that of 2005. These key players must take over the entire political legacy that has been built up at all the

review conferences — the progress achieved thus far that sustains and moulds subsequent developments. To ignore it would be to adopt a blinkered approach and would lead only to stalemate.

Allow me to express here my sincere congratulations to Australia for its initiative to establish a new Commission of Eminent Persons on the subject of nuclear disarmament. It is an initiative by a country of the South with which we have had a long history of cooperation on multilateral matters.

The relaunching of nuclear disarmament also requires the entry into force of the CTBT. We are pleased to note that new political circumstances could allow a resumption of the process of ratification of this instrument by the United States and other key States. We congratulate Colombia on its effort to ratify the Treaty and to overcome legal and constitutional difficulties with which we are all too familiar. Our Colombian brothers have demonstrated that political will can remove any obstacle, and their action sets an example to all those whose ratification is essential for the entry into force of the CTBT.

While we recognize and appreciate the moratorium on nuclear tests that many nuclear-weapon States have pledged to observe, it is an essentially provisional instrument that does not provide the legal security or political confidence that the CTBT is designed to bring to international relations.

In addition, it is essential that negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty begin either within or outside the Conference on Disarmament. That is a natural step towards the CTBT and will strengthen the commitment of the nuclear Powers to article VI of the NPT. It will also potentiate the affirmations of other nuclear-weapon States, which have often asserted in international forums that nuclear disarmament is their top priority. Chile recognizes that verification has its own political entity, which affects the essence of disarmament mechanisms. However, as we have stated in Geneva, we are prepared to accept an instrument that does not provide for verification, since we are convinced that disarmament is an incremental and ongoing process that can always be improved.

Chile, together with Malaysia, Nigeria, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland, is submitting to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session a new version of their draft resolution on the de-alerting of nuclear weapons systems. It is the outcome of the

successful exercise that we conducted in 2007 and has the understanding and support of a solid majority of Member States, including States with nuclear military capacities and members of important security entities, such as NATO.

We remain convinced that the effective abolition of the “launch on warning” principle would remove a plausible cause of a nuclear catastrophe as a result of error, misunderstanding or even sabotage. The process of disseminating this draft resolution has been received enthusiastically by civil society. Here, I wish to thank John Hallam of Nuclear Flashpoints, Steven Starr of Physicians for Global Survival and the International Peace Institute, which held a seminar last week on the operational status of nuclear weapons, moderated by Edward Luck. Those who could not participate in the seminar will be given a second opportunity the day after tomorrow, Friday, 17 October, at 3.15 p.m. in conference room 6. The sponsors of the draft resolution have organized a new side event to raise awareness about this danger, explaining the factual underpinnings of our initiative. Both the converted and agnostics are cordially invited.

Chile is among those countries that believe that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin. We must make progress in both areas, ever mindful that the final objective is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. I wish to reiterate once again that there are no good proliferators, as opposed to bad proliferators, and there are no good “nukes”, as opposed to bad “nukes”. All proliferation is disastrous, and all nuclear weapons create an unacceptable risk to international security. All policies and diplomatic efforts that ignore that essential truth are destined to be received with mistrust and frustration by the overwhelming majority of non-nuclear-weapon Member States.

Nearly two decades after the end of the cold war, we see that international relations are fluid and that the causes of tension and conflict seem to have a perverse ability to reinvent themselves. Nuclear weapons, like all weapons, have been created with the potential of being used. It would be arrogant to assert that human intelligence can overcome all the risks created by the mere existence of these devices. The only possible rational course of action is to work resolutely and together for their elimination.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): This year, we have commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is widely recognized that the NPT has been a core pillar of global security and has served us well. Yet, this vital Treaty is increasingly coming under pressure. That is highly unfortunate, given the fact that the threat of nuclear danger is still very real.

There can be no doubt that the NPT is being challenged in several ways. We must address the outstanding proliferation challenges. We welcome the very recent progress made in efforts to address the dossier of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. We urge Iran to comply with the demands set by the international community in order to facilitate negotiations with a view to reaching an outcome acceptable to all.

At the same time, it has to be recognized that there is a widespread perception that the disarmament process is moving forward too slowly. The considerable reductions in arsenals made by nuclear-weapon States since the end of the cold war are very welcome. Yet, it does not make sense that more than 20,000 nuclear weapons remain nearly 20 years after the end of the cold war.

Another complicating element is the fact that the use of nuclear energy is expected to grow in the years to come. Norway fully recognizes the right to peaceful uses in accordance with the NPT. At the same time, it cannot be ignored that greater use of the atom may pose challenges regarding both our non-proliferation efforts and the environment and human safety.

We are rapidly approaching the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. While the preparations are well under way, we are not guaranteed a successful and forward-looking outcome. There are too many differences among States parties on how to further strengthen the NPT regime. It is crucial that all States parties mobilize the political will necessary to sustain the NPT and work systematically to move closer towards our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. The NPT is not only a non-proliferation instrument; it is also a disarmament treaty. Its overall objective is the full elimination of nuclear arms.

The NPT also aspires to facilitate peaceful cooperation with regard to nuclear energy and technology. A number of countries need sustained and

even increased technical assistance from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) concerning civilian nuclear applications. We need to restore an international consensus on key issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We must reaffirm the relevance of the three pillars of the NPT and their close interlinkage.

In doing so, we must work in innovative ways. We must reach out across regional groupings, and we must be ready to engage civil society. Norway is trying to contribute through the seven-nation initiative. An expression of such broad partnership was the Oslo Conference on Achieving a World Free of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo from 26 to 27 February this year. We appreciate the active participation of Mr. Sergio Duarte, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. The Oslo Conference was intended not to produce a negotiated document, but to bring various ideas to the table. As organizers of the event, we made some observations that, we believe, reflect the very rich deliberations in Oslo. Five principles and 10 actions were identified. The outcome of the Oslo Conference has been widely circulated. Let me briefly highlight some of the major points.

First, progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons demands leadership at the highest level. All relevant stakeholders must be engaged.

Second, achieving a world free of nuclear weapons is a joint enterprise of all States. In that respect, Norway, the United Kingdom and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre have developed cooperation in the verification of nuclear disarmament.

Third, we need to move forward in reducing existing nuclear arsenals. We encourage the United States and the Russian Federation to take the lead.

Fourth, we need to make progress in putting instruments in place to prevent a new nuclear arms race. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and early negotiations on and the conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty are crucial factors.

Fifth, nuclear-weapon States should continue to make every effort to reduce their reliance on these weapons as a contribution towards their elimination.

Sixth, the elimination of nuclear arms requires a robust and credible non-proliferation regime. The

universalization of IAEA comprehensive safeguards and additional protocols is essential.

Seventh, we must move forward in developing non-discriminatory fuel-cycle arrangements in close cooperation with IAEA. As a first step, Norway has pledged \$5 million to a fuel bank under IAEA auspices.

We hope that the observations from the Oslo Conference may be useful in the preparations for the NPT Review Conference. We also welcome other efforts, such as the Blix Commission, to identify recommendations that may mobilize broad support. We welcome in particular the recent establishment of the Australian and Japanese high-level International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I will read out a shortened version of my statement. The full text will be distributed.

Despite substantial reductions in existing arsenals, nuclear disarmament remains an elusive objective. Recent trends have revealed a progressive erosion of international arms control and non-proliferation structures, which is evident from the disavowal of complete nuclear disarmament by most nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the demise of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the prolonged non-entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the prospects of new tests by some States, the emergence of doctrines envisaging the use of nuclear weapons even against non-nuclear-weapon States, plans to develop such usable nuclear weapons, the pursuit of selective non-proliferation, discriminatory conditions for peaceful nuclear cooperation, the growing asymmetry in military power among States, and the danger of the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-State actors.

Even as we struggle to erect barriers against proliferation at the State level and against the threat of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-State actors and terrorists, we sometimes tend to lose sight of the broader picture that the best defence against the possible use of nuclear weapons is through the total elimination of such weapons. Both non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are important to international peace and security. Their simultaneous pursuit alone can erect effective barriers against the risks of proliferation.

Vertical proliferation or improvement in nuclear weapon systems compounds uncertainties and instabilities and spurs new strategic competition. The determination of a few powerful States to retain the option of weapons of mass destruction while prescribing strict regimes for weaker States only aggravates the sense of insecurity among States.

Until we agree to revive the international consensus with regard to the need for general and complete disarmament under effective international control, the quest for an environment of peace and security will remain elusive. The International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 1996, called for negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention to secure complete and irreversible disarmament.

By demonstrating political will to move forward towards promoting the objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation, Member States can enable the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body, to address all the priority issues on its agenda: nuclear disarmament, security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and a verifiable fissile material treaty. The proposals presented in the Conference on Disarmament in 2007 and 2008 negated the principle of equal security for all, served the interests of a few States and undermined the agreed basis of negotiations on a verifiable fissile material treaty.

Pakistan supports the negotiation of a verifiable treaty on fissile material in the Conference on Disarmament. Such a treaty is an essential condition for the effective cessation of a nuclear arms race. If it is to become a genuine nuclear disarmament measure, it should include verification and stocks. It should also be equitable and balanced. The proposed treaty must also address the question of protection — past, present and future — in its entirety, at both the regional and global levels.

The Charter of the United Nations obligates nations not to use or threaten to use force. That obligation extends to nuclear weapons. The right to self-defence in that context is not unrestricted. Every year, the General Assembly adopts a resolution calling for effective, credible and legally binding assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States. Last year's resolution reaffirmed the urgent need to reach an early agreement on effective international arrangements on negative security assurances. It appealed to all States, especially

nuclear-weapon States, to work towards an early agreement on that issue.

Since 1978, Pakistan has spearheaded the efforts to seek legally binding assurances from nuclear-weapon States in the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament. After the nuclear tests in May 1998, Pakistan has remained committed to the cause and has declared not to use or threaten to use our nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State.

Unfair restrictions on the development of nuclear technology for peaceful uses only serve to strengthen the monopoly of the few over nuclear technology, and thus to aggravate the sense of discrimination and the existence of double standards. Such discrimination is dangerous to the integrity of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Black market networks owe their existence in part to restrictions on technology transfers that are also for peaceful purposes. Non-proliferation arrangements have focused on the supply side of the problem while ignoring the demand factor. An international agreement on universal and non-discriminatory criteria for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including nuclear power generation, should be developed.

The restricted nature of certain export control arrangements is an impediment to the global implementation of non-proliferation standards. If States are required to meet standards set by those arrangements, then they should be given an opportunity to participate in those arrangements and benefit by sharing the best practices and experiences of the founding members of those arrangements in the area of export controls and to keep abreast of technical developments.

Finally, the objectives of peace, stability, security and socio-economic development will continue to elude various regions should they fail to address the central issues of inter-State conflicts. Efforts should be intensified to remove the underlying security concerns of States that act as motivation to seek weapons of mass destruction and other advanced weapons systems. Redressing socio-economic disparities also continues to be imperative to comprehensively addressing the security challenges confronting States.

Mr. Tarui (Japan): In the field of nuclear weapons, it has become apparent to many that a revitalization of discussions on the total elimination of nuclear weapons is occurring within the international community. Although there are a number of emerging challenges — some would say a stalemate — on the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, there is also growing international momentum for a new initiative in this area.

The International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, which was established under a joint initiative of the Prime Ministers of Japan and Australia, follows that trend. The Commission, which will be co-chaired by Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Japanese Foreign Minister, and Mr. Gareth Evans, former Australian Foreign Minister, shall deal with nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is expected to submit a report before the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), with a view to contributing to its success.

Based on the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan has committed itself to the goal of bringing about a world free of nuclear weapons. In an effort to introduce our ideas on practical steps to accomplishing this goal, Japan will submit to the First Committee again this year a draft nuclear disarmament resolution entitled “Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”. I would like to recall that last year an overwhelming majority — 170 countries, the highest number since its first submission, including nuclear-weapon States — again adopted this resolution in the General Assembly.

Reducing the number of existing nuclear weapons is the first priority of the international community. In this regard, it is important that, at this year’s G-8 summit in Hokkaido-Toyako, for the first time in the Group’s history, the leaders’ declaration called upon all nuclear-weapon States to undertake reductions of nuclear weapons in a transparent manner. For example, France’s recent announcement that it would reduce its total nuclear stockpile to fewer than 300 warheads — the first such case by a nuclear-weapon State — and its invitation to international experts to visit its military fissile materials production facilities, are a good example of transparency.

Our draft resolution reinforces the message of transparent reductions, while welcoming the steady progress the nuclear-weapon States have already made in cutting their arsenals. In this vein, it is important that the Russian Federation and the United States implement fully the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions and to undertake nuclear arms reductions beyond those provided for in the Treaty in an irreversible and verifiable manner. From this perspective, Japan welcomes the Strategic Framework Declaration between the United States and the Russian Federation. We strongly encourage the Russian Federation and the United States to successfully complete the negotiations for a legally binding instrument that will be the successor to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

In order to reduce nuclear stockpiles, one must first stop producing fissile material, the key ingredient of nuclear weapons. We would like to point out that, in the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament, no delegation expressed opposition to negotiations on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Document CD/1840, which was submitted to the Conference on Disarmament by this year’s six Presidents, states the clear objective of negotiating such a ban, but does not in any way prejudice the outcome of negotiations.

In the process of realizing a world free of nuclear weapons, preventing their development is also vital. Therefore, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a very high priority.

As a measure to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war until the total elimination of nuclear weapons is realized, we call for the nuclear-weapon States to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems in ways that promote international stability and security.

The vehicle that could carry us to a peaceful and secure world free from nuclear weapons does not move without the other wheel — nuclear non-proliferation. Here, I would like to touch upon the nuclear issues of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Iran as regional and international proliferation problems that require particular focused efforts.

The nuclear development of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea is a threat to the peace and security not only of Japan, but also of East Asia and the

entire international community, and represents a serious challenge to the NPT regime. An agreement has recently been reached between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on a series of verification measures. Japan regards it as extremely important to establish a concrete framework of verification in order to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, which is the objective of the Six-Party Talks. Japan will continue to work actively in order to adopt without delay a document at the Six-Party Talks regarding the concrete verification framework based on the agreement between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic and, further, to achieve a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issues within the framework of the Six-Party Talks.

Iran has, regrettably, continued and even expanded its uranium enrichment-related activities in defiance of calls by the international community not to do so. In order to remove the concerns of the international community and to regain its confidence, Iran has to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and respond sincerely to the requirements set forth by the relevant resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council. Japan continues to work towards a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the issue in concert with the international community.

In the general debate, I mentioned that we are facing ups and downs in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and that political will has to be shown by all countries to further the cause in this area. Japan's draft resolution, entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", maps out one of the roads for tackling this issue. There is now a greater need than ever before for the international community to cooperate in order to follow this road step by step with the resolute political will that is so plainly required.

Mr. Marschik (Austria): Let me congratulate the Chairperson on his assumption of his office and his excellent work in that function. Let me also congratulate the other members of the Bureau — Micronesia, Honduras and Portugal. Austria fully supports the statement of the European Union presidency. In addition, Austria would like to stress a couple of points it deems particularly relevant.

In our global discourse on international security, nuclear tests are a deliberate threat. Twenty years after

the end of the cold war, the language of nuclear threats is obsolete; it is not the way States should converse today or in the future. Nevertheless, suspicions and mistrust have nurtured fears of a global nuclear arms race. It is therefore all the more important that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) enter into force soon.

In line with our commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation, Austria, jointly with Costa Rica, assumed the presidency of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in 2007. In that capacity, we continue to raise awareness about the CTBT and the benefits of scientific civil applications of its International Monitoring System for the benefit of humankind, such as tsunami warnings, earthquake and volcano monitoring, and research on the Earth's core and oceans. Austria has sponsored several Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization workshops and conferences, such as for Caribbean and Pacific States, to explain the many advantages of CTBT membership.

On 24 September 2008, Austria together with other countries organized a Ministerial Conference in support of the Treaty in New York. With almost 100 States participating, the success of the Conference — which was also attended by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as well as former United States Defense Secretary William Perry — reflected a positive dynamic towards the universalization of the Treaty. Austria urges all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and particularly calls upon the Annex 2 States to show leadership in this regard.

The last decade has seen some setbacks in the field of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The recent decision of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) regarding an exemption for a non-member State of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) from NSG export control guidelines has raised legitimate questions as to whether the international community still accords the Treaty the same priority as it did a decade ago.

Austria is convinced that the NPT remains the foundation and cornerstone of the international non-proliferation architecture. However, serious efforts by all Member States are now needed all the more to overcome the divergences that have paralysed the international regime, particularly since the NPT

Review Conference in 2005. We need visible progress in nuclear disarmament and visible success in nuclear non-proliferation.

In that context, Austria expresses its appreciation for the dedicated work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It serves as a forum for debate, a centre of technical expertise and, most importantly, an indispensable institution for monitoring and verification within the global security architecture. It must be the international community's utmost priority to cope with non-proliferation challenges, in particular by strengthening and universally implementing the Agency's safeguards system, including the Additional Protocol, by implementing and further developing the most stringent security and safety tools and by advancing the multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle.

On the latter topic — the multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle — Austria has actively participated in the respective discussions in the IAEA, the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference and the Disarmament Commission. We have presented a proposal to create a new multilateral framework for nuclear energy that, over time, would include converting enrichment and reprocessing facilities from national to multilateral operations. In our view, there should be a differentiation not between haves and have-nots, but only between wants and want-nots. For those States that opt for nuclear energy, access to nuclear fuel should be a strictly regulated, but impartial and fair undertaking.

That is, of course, a long-term vision that requires a step-by-step approach. The creation of an international fuel reserve under the auspices of the Agency could be such a first step. Austria will continue to contribute to the multilateralization debate and intends to present a more detailed outline of its proposal in the appropriate forums of the IAEA in the near future.

Finally, the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction rises exponentially with the development of advanced delivery systems. Let me recall that, until we have successfully established a multilateral missile control arrangement within the United Nations, the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation of 2002 serves as the only multilateral instrument for verification against the proliferation of ballistic missiles. Austria serves as the executive

secretariat of the Code and has so far hosted six meetings of the subscribing States. More than two thirds of United Nations Member States have already subscribed to the Code and I hope that more will join.

It is paramount, however, that all subscribing States demonstrate their commitment and contribute positively to all aspects of that confidence-building instrument. In that respect, let me thank the Netherlands for hosting an informative lunch today, in which many colleagues participated. That is also a sign of growing interest in the Code, and I hope that that interest will also be reflected in wide support for this year's resolution on the Code.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In Russia's view, nuclear disarmament is one of the key areas of world politics in ensuring regional and global strategic security. Without consistent progress in that area, we will fail not only to duly strengthen the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), but also to create an atmosphere of trust and good-neighbourliness among States.

On that basis, Russia has negotiated for three years with the current United States administration on a new arrangement to replace the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms — the START I Treaty — which expires on 5 December 2009. We must recognize that even the rather long-standing and intensive contacts have yet to lead to an agreement providing for progress or predictability in the reduction of strategic offensive arms.

We have proposed to our United States partners to take the best from the START Treaty and preserve it in a new agreement. Such an instrument could be legally binding and codify lower, verifiable ceilings, both on strategic delivery vehicles — intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers — and on the warheads placed on them. We are grateful that our position was supported in the statement of the ministers for foreign affairs of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on the issues of strategic stability and control. A copy of that statement will be distributed as an official United Nations document.

Our approaches to the issue of nuclear disarmament have been defined in the foreign policy concepts of the Russian Federation. In that regard, we are prepared to negotiate not only with the United

States, but also with other nuclear Powers, in order to reduce strategic offensive weapons to minimal levels sufficient to maintain strategic stability.

In order to ensure common security, we support countering possible missile threats jointly and making the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty regime global. Russia has consistently opposed an arms race, above all of nuclear missiles, and the development, production and deployment of destabilizing types of weapons, including new types. In particular, that means low-yield nuclear charges, intercontinental ballistic missiles with non-nuclear warheads and an anti-ballistic missile defence system with components placed near the borders of our State.

Russia reaffirms its fundamental position with respect to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which we view as one of the crucial international mechanisms for strengthening the regimes on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear arms limitation. The fact that the future of the Treaty continues to remain uncertain can only cause concern. Here, we call upon those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so immediately. We particularly appeal to the nine countries whose ratification is essential for the CTBT to enter into force.

We view the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones as an effective measure to strengthen the international regime of nuclear non-proliferation and to enhance regional and international security, and advocate the further development of such zones. Our reservations on protocols to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones apply only to exceptional cases incompatible with the implementation of their obligations by members of a zone or those that are not in accordance with the universal norms of international law.

We support the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia signed on 8 September 2006 in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. We are convinced that the Semipalatinsk Treaty will help to strengthen peace and stability in the region and to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear materials or technologies. The agreement was drafted in full accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and with international legal standards in that area. We welcome the launch of the Treaty's

ratification process and anticipate that States that have not yet begun the process will soon do so.

We are ready to settle the remaining issues with respect to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone within the framework of the dialogue between the nuclear Powers and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. We believe that it would pave the way for the signing of a relevant protocol on security guarantees for members of the South-East Asian zone.

We are also committed to the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. As a member of the Quartet of international mediators for a settlement in the Middle East, Russia has consistently supported efforts to establish a zone free from nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction in that region.

We respect the nuclear-free status of Mongolia and reaffirm our negative security assurances to Ulaanbaatar. We continue to remain open to further discussing the issue of strengthening the non-nuclear status of that country.

We view the extension and implementation of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States signatories to the NPT as a fundamental task in strengthening the regime established by the Treaty. Such assurances clearly make a positive contribution to nuclear non-proliferation and the universalization of the Treaty. We must also not forget the fact that the question of negative security assurances was among the key issues when the decision was adopted in 1995 to extend the Treaty indefinitely.

The Russian Federation has already extended such assurances to more than 100 countries that have acceded to the relevant agreements on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In 1995, along with other nuclear Powers, Russia was a sponsor of Security Council resolution 984 (1995), which called for positive security assurances. It also took note of national statements by nuclear-weapon States on negative security assurances.

We have consistently advocated the timely drafting of an international convention on assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States that oppose the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Our position is that such a convention should take into account reservations with regard to cases in which nuclear

weapons may be used in accordance with the military doctrines of the nuclear Powers. We support the idea of implementing the decision taken by the Conference on Disarmament in 1998 to reconstitute the Ad Hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances with a negotiating mandate.

For interested delegations, the English version of my statement will be circulated tomorrow.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): Creating a world safe from nuclear weapons remains one of the international community's most urgent priorities. My delegation has already placed on record its views on the imperative need to implement nuclear disarmament commitments through the statement of the New Agenda Coalition delivered by the representative of South Africa during the general debate.

The focus of New Zealand's efforts on nuclear issues will continue to be the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In looking towards the 2010 NPT Review Conference, we will concentrate on the priority areas of nuclear disarmament, transparency and confidence-building measures, the de-alerting of nuclear weapons, the revision of the nuclear doctrine and effective safeguards against proliferation. We also very much welcome the prospect of further reinvigorating our thinking through the new International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, which was referred to by our colleagues from Australia and Japan earlier in the debate this afternoon.

We believe that one of the areas on which the NPT should be able to make substantive progress during the current review cycle is transparency and confidence-building measures. We are pleased to see that momentum is growing in support of greater transparency, including in the work of the First Committee. We welcome the increased efforts undertaken in that respect over the past year by some nuclear-weapon States.

As part of the New Agenda Coalition, we have supported ideas on systematized nuclear accounting within the NPT as a way to increase transparency. A reporting mechanism with regard to national arsenals would be a substantive confidence-building measure if, for example, nuclear-weapon States were to provide further clarity as to the current status of their holdings and about future plans for down-sizing and reducing

reliance on nuclear weapons in national and regional security doctrines.

The de-alerting of nuclear weapons would help to give confidence to non-nuclear-weapon States that expanded roles for nuclear weapons in security doctrines are not being developed. It is of concern to New Zealand that some nuclear-weapon States continue to advocate the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, which reinforces the perception that, for them, nuclear weapons will continue to remain a long-term strategic component of national security. New Zealand absolutely rejects that proposition. The best way to pursue national and collective security is to work towards a global security environment in which nuclear weapons have been eliminated.

New Zealand is a core co-sponsor of a number of draft resolutions relating to nuclear weapons in the First Committee, which reflects our strong commitment to achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. As I mentioned earlier, the representative of South Africa has already spoken on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition. We expect that a high level of support will continue to be demonstrated for the Coalition's annual nuclear disarmament draft resolution in the First Committee.

Together with Switzerland, Chile, Malaysia, Nigeria and Sweden, we will again present a draft resolution on decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear-weapon systems. As highlighted by the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission in 2006, one of the greatest risks of nuclear catastrophe comes from the estimated thousands of nuclear weapons that remain on high-alert status. Ensuring that all nuclear weapons are removed from high alert as we move towards the total elimination of nuclear arsenals would help build confidence and would make a significant improvement to our collective security. We anticipate that the draft resolution will continue to receive widespread support. We hope that, once the draft resolution is introduced by the representative of Switzerland, additional States will move to demonstrate their support for the initiative, which is now in its second year.

New Zealand is pleased to be a core co-sponsor, along with Mexico and Australia, of the draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is imperative that the Treaty enter into force as soon as possible. We very much welcome

the ratifications of Colombia, Barbados, Malaysia and Burundi over the past year. The universalization of the CTBT should be a collective goal of the international community. In particular, we urge those Annex 2 States that have signed but not ratified the Treaty to ratify it without delay. We hope that States will again demonstrate their strong support for the Treaty by voting for the draft resolution.

New Zealand is also proud to work with Brazil on a draft resolution calling for a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are a powerful symbol for demonstrating the strong collective will that exists to eliminate nuclear weapons. We very much welcome the comments just made by our Russian colleague in support of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Such zones act as disarmament measures and contribute to non-proliferation efforts. We hope that this draft resolution will once again be adopted by an overwhelming majority.

It is in our common interest to ensure that the peaceful uses of nuclear technology remain accessible to all States, while at the same time ensuring that such technologies do not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is therefore important that peaceful nuclear activities be conducted within the framework of a robust system of safeguards. New Zealand attaches great importance to ensuring that the International Atomic Energy Agency has all of the tools necessary to undertake that essential work. In that regard, we recognize the vital role of the additional protocol, which together with the comprehensive safeguards agreement forms the contemporary verification standard.

New Zealand is also a strong and active supporter of the Proliferation Security Initiative, in connection with which we hosted a major international exercise last month. Our firm support for the Initiative is consistent with our long-standing commitment to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related material. Last year, New Zealand was also pleased to join the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. We also continue to be an active participant in the G-8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

We will distribute my statement in the Committee tomorrow.

Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia): We must deliver on the commitments that we have all made to make the world a peaceful and prosperous place. Otherwise, we undermine the security of peoples everywhere and risk tarnishing the image of the United Nations as the embodiment of the collective will of humankind. Our peoples deserve an international environment where precious resources are utilized not to increase the nuclear and other humankind-obliterating weaponry of some but to realize the fundamental vision of the Charter of the United Nations to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

The international community will not have peace of mind unless the clearly non-workable paradigm of ensuring security through nuclear weapons is done away with. Nuclear weapons must be eliminated in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The responsibility for the elimination of those weapons lies in the hands of the nuclear-weapon States. We urge all nuclear-weapon States, and in particular those that have the largest nuclear arsenals, to expedite their disarmament efforts.

The existence of nuclear weapons not only poses the risk that those who do not possess them will seek to acquire them; the danger posed by their potential use alone is unthinkable. There can never be any realistic guarantees against miscalculations and accidents. The best assurance against that threat is the complete eradication of nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Adhering to both ends of the central bargain under the NPT — non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament — is critical to the survival of the NPT.

It continues to concern us that, while the non-nuclear-weapon States have agreed to renounce the nuclear option under the NPT, some nuclear-weapon States, contrary to their disarmament obligations under the Treaty, are retaining their nuclear arsenals. They even continue to develop new capabilities in this perilous area. It is unfortunate that the focus of the United Nations, driven by nuclear-weapon States, which also wield veto power in the Security Council, remains mostly on the non-proliferation challenge, while that of disarmament is largely ignored.

It is unfair and untenable to demand that non-nuclear-weapon States comply with their

obligations while nuclear-weapon States have failed to live up to their obligations and commitments. That imbalance in attention will neither adequately address the dangers of nuclear weapons nor enhance the confidence of the international community that all countries are serious in working for world peace. Indonesia believes that both non-proliferation and disarmament should be advanced in a mutually reinforcing and non-discriminatory manner. One should not take precedence over the other.

Nuclear disarmament is possible and realistic. It can be achieved through practical, sensible and careful measures. At the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the nuclear-weapon States unequivocally undertook to accomplish the elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to move towards complete nuclear disarmament. That undertaking should be carried out immediately through the full implementation of the 13 practical steps in pursuit of a nuclear-weapon-free world, as agreed to by all States parties at the 2000 Review Conference.

It is high time that nuclear-weapon States move away from rhetoric and start to take concrete disarmament steps, as per their agreed commitments. There is no reason to linger on how to pursue nuclear disarmament. As an interim measure, for instance, nuclear-weapon States should de-alert and de-activate their nuclear weapons immediately. The nuclear-weapon States should also take other concrete measures to reduce the operational status of their nuclear weapon systems. But it should be clear that reductions in deployment and operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The failure to fulfil obligations under the multilaterally agreed disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation agenda will threaten the continued existence of the NPT. It will also threaten the disarmament regime as a whole. Nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States alike have an equal responsibility to fully implement all provisions of the NPT and to achieve its universality.

In that regard, we are all of the view that States party to the NPT should encourage all countries outside the regime to join the Treaty. At the same time, it is also vital that the rights of NPT member States to pursue the peaceful uses of nuclear energy be fully acknowledged and respected. Nuclear energy is a

crucial resource in facilitating the national development efforts of developing countries. It also helps to mitigate the effects of climate change.

However, there should be no cooperation on nuclear matters with States that remain outside the NPT. Nuclear cooperation between States parties and States outside the Treaty will undermine efforts to ensure the universalization of the Treaty and set a negative precedent as a whole. We believe that nuclear cooperation should be rendered exclusively to the States party to the NPT, as that will also serve as a rightful reward and a further incentive to States that have renounced the nuclear option.

In conclusion, we welcome the successful meeting of the 2008 NPT Preparatory Committee. We are encouraged by the various initiatives to support the success of the NPT review process. My delegation very much hopes that the next meeting of the Committee will pave a positive path towards a successful NPT Review Conference. It is important for the NPT review mechanism to be able to agree on the procedural issues beforehand and to focus on the substantive subjects, including the agenda of the Review Conference. We hope that the NPT meetings will lead to the strengthening of the commitment of all countries and produce concrete outcomes for achieving the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation while fostering the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mrs. García Jordán (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba fully supports the statement on nuclear weapons delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Cuba reiterates its concern about the serious threat to humankind posed by the existence of an immense arsenal of nuclear weapons. Despite the proclaimed end of the cold war, there are still some 32,300 nuclear weapons in the world, of which over 12,000 are ready for immediate use. The existence of strategic defence doctrines based on the possession and use of such weapon is unacceptable and highly dangerous to international peace and security. The ongoing possession of nuclear weapons is an irresponsible incentive to proliferation, which increases nuclear danger in the world.

Despite the fact that in 1996 the International Court of Justice issued a historic advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, and that every year the international community demands

the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, certain nuclear-weapon States continue to maintain their position of refusing to renounce the use of nuclear weapons as part of their military doctrines and to develop new and more sophisticated nuclear weapons through modernization programmes.

Cuba believes that the use of nuclear weapons is illegal, totally immoral and cannot be justified by any security concept or doctrine. The use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic consequences for all known forms of life on Earth and constitute a flagrant violation of international norms on the prevention of genocide.

For non-nuclear-weapon States, such as Cuba, that are also parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), this situation is a cause of great concern. The lack of progress on the implementation of the nuclear disarmament measures agreed upon at the 2000 NPT Review Conference is unacceptable. Nuclear-weapon States must fulfil their obligations to hold negotiations in good faith leading to nuclear disarmament and to a general and complete disarmament treaty under strict and effective international control.

Cuba reiterates the need to fully honour the commitments already made, including the 13 practical steps agreed on at the sixth NPT Review Conference in 2000 aimed at totally eliminating nuclear arsenals, pursuant to article VI of the NPT. I must reiterate that, for Cuba, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is not an end unto itself, but a means of achieving the supreme goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The total elimination of such weapons is the only sure way to avoid disaster as a result of their use.

Cuba firmly reiterates its rejection of the selective and double standards application of the NPT. The issues related to nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy cannot continue to be disregarded while horizontal non-proliferation is favoured. The inalienable right of States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, as established in article IV of the NPT, must be fully respected. Moreover, developed countries have the responsibility to facilitate the legitimate development of nuclear energy in developing countries and to provide assistance in this respect, allowing them to participate fully in the exchange of nuclear equipment and

material and of scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Besides being a State party to the NPT, Cuba has supported resolutions advocating the full elimination of nuclear weapons in the General Assembly, such as resolutions 62/42 on nuclear disarmament and 62/51 on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons. As a member of the Conference on Disarmament, Cuba also supports the priority launching of negotiations on a phased disarmament programme leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It has been a sponsor of concrete initiatives developed by the Group of 21 to that end. Cuba's position in favour of nuclear disarmament extends to its participation in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, where it has joined the rest of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement in proposing various recommendations aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament.

Cuba reiterates the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice on the obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones under the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Palindaba and Semipalatinsk, and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status represent positive progress and are important measures to meet the objective of disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world. In this context, Cuba considers it essential that the nuclear-weapon States unconditionally guarantee to all States in the zones that they will neither use nor threaten to use said weapons.

Cuba stresses the urgent need to launch multilateral negotiations leading to the prompt conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, deployment, storage, transfer, threat of use or use of nuclear weapons, and providing for the elimination of those weapons.

Nuclear weapons and their technical infrastructures are highly expensive. The nuclear weapons industry involves a useless diversion of resources that could be used in valuable programmes, such as development assistance, the implementation of which would make a real contribution to international peace and security.

We reiterate our full commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons and our total willingness to fight to make that aspiration into reality for all humankind.

Mr. Al Azemi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to state that my country aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Lebanon on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons is a threat not only to international peace and security, but to all of humankind. The nuclear disasters that may result from the use of those weapons could transform the world into a mass graveyard and lead to further division and tensions among peoples. In order to avoid such a catastrophe, we call upon all Member States to make greater efforts to consider the realities of disarmament matters and to recall the vital benefit of disarmament to humankind and to international peace and security.

My country views with deep concern the growing security challenges and dangers at the international and regional levels. As a result, we have been moved to adhere to an increasing number of international instruments, particularly in the area of disarmament, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We also attach special importance to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as a constructive step in the field of nuclear disarmament. The elimination of such weapons must be a top international priority, and we must all seek its achievement through multilateral cooperation and international coordination.

Regional nuclear disarmament through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important step towards creating an atmosphere of confidence and trust and ending the nuclear arms race. Since the resolution on the Middle East was adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, and despite a lapse of 13 years, Israel remains an impediment to its implementation. While all other States of the region, including the State of Kuwait, are committed to rejecting the nuclear option and acceding to the NPT in the interests of peace and the aims of the resolution, and despite Arab and international demands that Israel accede to the NPT, Israel continues to procrastinate on its accession.

We therefore reaffirm the importance of putting greater pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to achieve the goal to which we all aspire — creating a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

The Acting Chairperson: We have heard the last speaker on today's list.

The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind him that statements in exercise of the right of reply should be limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second. I now call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The statement made this afternoon by our colleague the Ambassador of Australia to the Conference on Disarmament confirmed yet again our serious concern that there is a theatrical distribution of roles to those who bear false witness or who try to play the role of devil's advocate.

The representative of Australia has read the record of the Israeli aggression against my country in a manner that runs contrary to the truth and is full of contradictions and mistakes in form and content. Indeed, either she has derived no benefit from the explanations that we made yesterday, or she is basically blind to anything she disagrees with. It is indeed disturbing that the representative of Australia should turn a blind eye to the real threat posed by Israeli nuclear weapons and distract attention from Israel's violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations in its aggression against Syria.

Her unfair point of view suggests that Australia supports Israel's excesses in the field of nuclear proliferation and wishes to provide cover for Israeli military nuclear programmes that threaten regional and international peace and security. I would like to remind my colleague the representative of Australia that the position of my country with respect to non-proliferation is a principled one that cannot be distorted by her delegation or any other.

In our statement yesterday, we made it quite clear that Syria has implemented all its obligations to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the Director General of the IAEA has categorically

confirmed that the results of environmental samples taken from the destroyed site show no presence of any nuclear material.

It would have been better had the representative of Australia thanked Syria for its transparent cooperation with the IAEA and condemned not only Israel's aggression against Syria but its ongoing military nuclear programme, its acquisition of more than 200 warheads and its continued rejection of the IAEA and NPT frameworks. When the representative of Australia does so, we shall indeed say that the positions of her country in this respect have some credibility.

The Acting Chairperson: I wish to remind delegations that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions is tomorrow, Thursday, 16 October, at 12 noon. Delegations are urged to adhere to these deadlines so that the secretariat may process the documents in a timely manner. For delegations wishing to become co-sponsors of draft resolutions, the secretariat will have the sponsorship list available for signature in the conference room early next week.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.