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Chairperson: Mr. José Luis Cancela (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda items 86 to 103 (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*): Before we begin our work, I would like to inform delegations that, as of the start of this meeting, the Secretariat had received 34 draft resolutions and decisions. I strongly encourage all delegations to submit their drafts before the extended deadline for the submission of draft resolutions, 6 p.m. today. For delegations wishing to become additional sponsors of draft resolutions, I wish to say that the Secretariat will have the sponsorship lists available for signature in the Conference Room next week.

We shall now continue our thematic debate on the issue of nuclear weapons, including the introduction of draft resolutions.

Mr. Alshehhi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): The adoption of policies of nuclear deterrence and the acquisition of nuclear arsenals do not help maintain security and stability in any country. Rather, they exacerbate tension and create a form of strategic arms race, which leads to a world without security.

The United Arab Emirates, which acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1995 and which ratified the Comprehensive

Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 2000, reaffirms its principled position that calls for strengthening international efforts towards the progressive and complete elimination of all nuclear weapons. There is also a need to ensure a system of non-proliferation, through strict compliance with the comprehensive ban on all nuclear-weapons tests, including explosive devices. There is also a need to put an end to all attempts to qualitatively develop these dangerous weapons.

We welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 1887 (2009) at the recent Council summit (see S/PV.6191), and we hail the progress made in this field, most important, the reduction in the number of nuclear warheads by the United States of America and the Russian Federation. It is our hope that these efforts will continue so that we can fully and permanently eliminate these weapons. We hope that the result of these efforts will be to encourage all other nuclear-weapon States to renounce them, to put an end to the nuclear arms race and to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The delegation of the United Arab Emirates reiterates its firm position on the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons throughout the world and calls on all nuclear-weapon States to work in a positive fashion to implement disarmament objectives and to ban nuclear weapons tests, including the implementation of the 13 practical steps agreed upon during the sixth NPT Review Conference, held in 2000, which considered the Treaty and other agreed arrangements and principles on the achievement of

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non-proliferation and strategic disarmament, starting with nuclear disarmament.

Here, we hope that the 2010 Review Conference will be crowned with success. The States parties to the NPT participating in the Conference will help to strengthen the universality of the Treaty and its full implementation, in particular regarding the results of the Conferences held in 1995 and 2000.

We should like to stress the following points. First, there is a need to base ourselves on the principles of international law, multilateralism and the rejection of double standards when implementing treaties and conventions on the disarmament of strategic weapons.

Secondly, there must be full and balanced implementation of all articles of the NPT, without forgetting the balance between disarmament and non-proliferation, which requires first and foremost that all nuclear-weapon States enter into serious and urgent negotiations with the aim of gradually reducing existing nuclear arsenals and transforming them into sources of nuclear energy to be used for peaceful purposes within a well-determined time frame, and in accordance with article VI of the Treaty.

Thirdly, we reiterate the importance of attaining the universality of the NPT, which requires the international community to exert pressure on States that have not yet acceded to the CTBT and urge those countries that have not ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible in order to make possible its entry into force.

Fourthly, there is also a need for an unconditional international instrument to provide security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States in order to safeguard them from any threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Fifthly, we stress the primary role played by the IAEA, which is the sole international organization that can guarantee, control and monitor the nuclear weapons activities and programmes of Member States and resolve problems in that sphere.

Finally, there is also a need to ensure the rights of developing countries to acquire nuclear technology for solely peaceful civilian purposes under IAEA safeguards, in accordance with the provisions of article IV of the NPT. The United Arab Emirates recently adopted a law on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which will govern our nuclear programme and will be applied under the aegis of the international community

and the supervision of the IAEA, so as to safely take advantage of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes — for example, to produce electrical power and to develop medical and industrial services in a transparent manner that does not threaten the environment or public safety. This will help our programme become a model in the acquisition of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Larson (United States of America): I would like today to discuss the views of the United States on nuclear disarmament. I will describe our fundamental approach, what we have accomplished in recent years and our current objectives. I will also discuss some more long-range questions as we consider how to create, in the words of Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

As President Obama noted in his statement at the summit meeting of the Security Council, the United States is pursuing a new agreement with Russia to “substantially reduce our strategic warheads and launchers” (*S/PV.6191*, p. 3). We are also seeking the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and deeper cuts in our own arsenal. We look forward to the start of negotiations in January on a fissile material cut-off treaty and to an NPT Review Conference that strengthens the operation of that agreement.

Our negotiators are engaged in intensive negotiations with their Russian counterparts in Geneva on a treaty to replace the START Treaty regime and to enact further cuts in delivery systems and warheads. The new treaty will enhance stability and predictability in our two countries’ strategic relationship, while reducing deployed nuclear warheads. Once we have reached an agreement, we will of course notify the international community about its terms.

In the meantime, let me discuss some aspects of what the United States has done in nuclear arms control in recent years. For some representatives here this may be old news. But since we are often challenged to state what we have accomplished, it may bear repeating.

As far as strategic weapons are concerned, the START Treaty reduced United States and Russian deployed strategic warheads from well over 10,000 to 6,000 each by the end of 2001. This year, the United

States met its Moscow Treaty reduction obligation, and now has fewer than 2,200 operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads. In the area of non-strategic, or tactical, nuclear weapons, the United States, in consultation with its NATO allies, retired all United States nuclear artillery shells, nuclear warheads for short-range ballistic missiles and naval nuclear anti-submarine warfare weapons. All of those weapons were dismantled by 2003. Those actions reduced United States non-strategic nuclear weapons in NATO by nearly 90 per cent.

The United States also has retired over 1,000 strategic ballistic missiles, 350 heavy bombers and 28 ballistic missile submarines. Four modern Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, carrying a total of 96 Trident missiles, have been removed from strategic service. In 2004, in addition to the Moscow Treaty reductions in operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads, the United States decided to reduce the number of warheads in the overall United States nuclear stockpile, including both deployed and non-deployed warheads. By 2012 or sooner, the United States nuclear stockpile will be reduced by nearly one half from its 2001 level and three quarters from its 1990 level, resulting in the smallest stockpile since the 1950s.

The United States has also stepped up the pace of warhead elimination. We are already below the levels in our active stockpile that we had planned to reach in 2012, and we are retiring an additional 15 per cent of the stockpile below that planned level.

The United States is also making significant progress to eliminate fissile material. The United States has not enriched uranium for use in nuclear weapons since 1964, and we have not produced plutonium for nuclear weapons since 1988. We have no plans to produce those materials for use in nuclear weapons in the future. Since 1994, we have removed more than 374 metric tons of highly enriched uranium (HEU) and 61.5 metric tons of plutonium from use in nuclear weapons. Taken together, those removals account for enough nuclear material for more than 22,000 nuclear weapons.

Where possible, we aim to convert defence HEU to low enriched uranium for commercial use. Of the 374 metric tons of United States HEU removed from weapons use, the United States is down-blending 217 metric tons for peaceful use in commercial or

research reactors. To date, 127 metric tons have been down-blended. The 217 metric tons includes some 17.4 metric tons that is now being down-blended and set aside for a nuclear fuel reserve to support international efforts to provide States with a viable alternative to pursuing domestic enrichment and reprocessing programmes.

Perhaps the most successful example of cooperation to reduce nuclear threats is the agreement between the United States and Russia to down-blend more than 500 metric tons of highly enriched uranium from Russia's dismantled nuclear weapons for use in United States nuclear power plants. Approximately 375 metric tons have been down-blended to date. The United States and Russia have also agreed to effectively dispose of at least 34 metric tons of excess weapon-grade plutonium each, enough for approximately 17,000 nuclear weapons total. That plutonium will be converted to fuel for civil nuclear power plants. Construction of key facilities in the United States is well under way at the Savannah River site in South Carolina. The United States and Russia are in the process of updating their agreement and cooperation to facilitate Russia's programme.

The United States recognizes its leadership responsibility in this field, but as President Obama said in his statement to the General Assembly, "Those who used to chastise America for acting alone in the world cannot now stand by and wait for America to solve the world's problems alone" (*A/64/PV.3, p. 10*).

Creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, which will not come into existence unless it promotes international stability, requires the efforts of all. Nations acquired nuclear weapons in order to promote what they saw as their national security. If they are to give them up, they must be convinced that doing so will not harm their security or that of their friends and allies. They must also have confidence in the strength and durability of the global non-proliferation system.

While we have made progress on many fronts, it should be clear that the process leading towards our ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons will require action to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime and to address urgent non-proliferation challenges. President Obama laid out a comprehensive agenda for non-proliferation in Prague last April, calling for enhanced International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, cooperation to defeat proliferation networks and improved security for vulnerable nuclear material. The United States does not view progress on disarmament and non-proliferation as an either-or proposition. Those elements are not in competition. Rather, they should be treated as two sides of the same coin. If the non-proliferation system is weak, States having nuclear weapons will not move to eliminate their arsenals. Nor will States not having nuclear weapons remain confident in the decision taken to forgo those weapons.

Of particular concern are the cases of Iran and North Korea. Iran has an opportunity to restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme that we hope the Government will seize. We also expect North Korea to live up to its commitment to abandon its nuclear programmes and return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards. Resolving both of those challenges is a critical element of the push to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, as the arsenals of nuclear weapons come down to low levels, the need for effective verification and compliance becomes greater. We will all have to consider how to achieve effective verification in ways that are stabilizing. Similarly, we will all need to work together to ensure that nations comply with their obligations and that, when they do not, they will face what President Obama characterized in Prague as “real and immediate consequences for breaking the rules”.

The international community has reached a greater degree of consensus than ever before on the need to move towards a world without nuclear weapons. The United States is playing its part and urges others — nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapons States as well — to join in that essential endeavour.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In continuing the First Committee’s general political discussion, I would like to address specific issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

We believe that the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be a landmark event for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The international community continues to pay steadily growing attention to the Conference and legitimately expects it to yield practical results to strengthen the

non-proliferation regime. Our country favours considering a package of specific steps to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of the NPT on the basis of a carefully measured balance in its three fundamental pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of atomic energy.

Russia has consistently fulfilled its obligations in the area of nuclear disarmament under article VI of the NPT. The implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles has allowed us to fully destroy 1,846 ballistic and land-based cruise missiles having a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometres, including 825 launchers. On the whole, more than 3,000 nuclear warheads, with a total yield over 5,000 kilotons, have been deactivated. We have consistently called for making that important Treaty global in nature.

Russia has completely removed its nuclear weapons from the territory of the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The Russian Federation has fully met its obligations under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in advance of the deadline for doing so. I should like to recall that, under that Treaty, Russia was to retain 1,600 strategic delivery vehicles and 6,000 accounted warheads. We have met and exceeded those obligations.

The Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT), which was signed in Moscow in May 2002, has ensured the continuity of the disarmament and arms control process. Under that Treaty, Russia and the United States are to reduce their levels of strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 units by 31 December 2012. That is approximately three times less than the threshold level established by the START Treaty. The implementation of SORT is now well under way.

By 2009, we had eliminated over 1,500 intercontinental ballistic missile launchers and submarine-launched ballistic missile launchers, over 3,000 intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles, dozens of nuclear-powered ballistic missiles and over 50 heavy bombers. Those facts demonstrate that Russia is implementing its consistent policy towards nuclear disarmament.

Moreover, pursuant to our obligations under article VI of the NPT, we intend to continue to move forward towards further reductions in nuclear weapons. In pursuing that approach on the basis of the joint understanding signed by Presidents of Russia and the United States in Moscow on 6 July 2009, we have begun the intensive work with the United States aimed at the signing a new full-format, legally binding arrangement to replace the START Treaty. Our goal is to complete those negotiations by December 2009. It is our hope that we will be able to reduce the levels of nuclear warheads and substantially lower the number of strategic delivery vehicles — namely, intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers — to be recorded in the agreement currently being developed.

We also take note of the fact that, under the NPT, the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is the final goal of a gradual and stage-by-stage process of complete and general disarmament under effective international controls. Progress towards “global nuclear zero” is possible only in an environment of strengthened strategic stability and strict compliance with the principle of equal security for all. That means that all States must implement a series of measures to ensure the sustainable development of the disarmament process. We would like to emphasize the following among those measures.

First, all nuclear-weapon States must continue their efforts in the area of nuclear disarmament with a view to turning the Russia-United States dialogue into five-party negotiations. Those efforts should also be joined by other States. One cannot imagine a situation in which nuclear-weapon States that are parties to the NPT would disarm themselves while other States without relevant treaty obligations maintain and build up their nuclear military potentials.

Secondly, nuclear reductions may not be compensated for by building up strategic offensive arms with conventional warheads.

Thirdly, nuclear disarmament should be accompanied by measures to ensure that States do not have a so-called upload nuclear potential. Nuclear warheads and their means of delivery must be irreversibly eliminated; otherwise, real nuclear disarmament is out of the question.

Fourthly, unilateral steps to build up strategic anti-missile defences should be avoided. Strategic

defensive and offensive weapons are intrinsically and insolubly linked. One can hardly imagine a situation in which deep cuts in nuclear weapons are accompanied by a deliberate build-up of anti-missile defence assets that can give a military advantage to one of the sides.

Fifthly, we must ensure that weapons are not placed in outer space.

Sixthly, all States must strive to ensure the controlled limitation of conventional weapons, together with the parallel resolution of other international problems, including the settlement of regional conflicts.

I wish to emphasize that we should not overlook the close link between nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. We call on all States to promote the implementation of the following measures to strengthen the NPT.

It is essential that all States strictly abide by their non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty and enhance the effectiveness of the verification activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We believe additional protocols to safeguards agreements to be efficient instruments in helping to increase the Agency's capacity.

There is also a need for the speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We urge the nine remaining States upon which the entry into force of the CTBT depends to sign and/or ratify the Treaty without further delay. Let me emphasize that compliance with the nuclear-test moratorium, regardless of how important that is, cannot replace the legal obligations deriving from the CTBT.

Negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty must also begin. We believe that all the necessary conditions for that are now in place.

Regional problems in the field of non-proliferation must be resolved through political and diplomatic means.

There is also a need to promote the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In that connection, we welcome the entry into force of the Semipalatinsk Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty. At the same time, we note that the 1995

decision of the NPT Review and Extension Conference on establishing a zone in the Middle East free not only of nuclear weapons, but of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, has not yet been implemented. We are ready to engage in substantial dialogue with all interested countries with regard to constructive proposals to implement that decision.

An effective international safety net must also be developed to prevent nuclear weapons and nuclear material from falling into the hands of non-State actors. A great deal has already been done in this area, including the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the launch of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, joint activities in the framework of multilateral export control regimes and a strengthening of the control activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). However, much remains to be done.

In the light of the increasing interest of an ever-growing number of countries in the development of nuclear energy, we stress the importance of a broader use of atomic energy while simultaneously reducing the risks of proliferation, above all those associated with the so-called sensitive nuclear technologies. In this context, of particular importance are multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle.

Russia has contributed to these multilateral approaches by launching the 2006 initiative of the President of the Russian Federation to develop a global nuclear energy infrastructure and establish international nuclear fuel cycle centres. In addition, at the initiative of the IAEA Director General, Russia has decided to create a reserve stock of low-enriched uranium under IAEA auspices.

Ms. Chaimongkol (Thailand): Thailand associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The international community has been dealing with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for a long time. The issue has become more complex yet even more relevant in today's world, given the growing interest in nuclear energy. Effective multilateral infrastructure is required in order to ensure that such a trend will not become a loophole in the nuclear non-proliferation agenda and hinder our ongoing efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. That is

why it has become increasingly crucial that we fulfil our commitments on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be treated as substantively interrelated and mutually reinforcing. These two intertwined challenges require a strong political will from and practical undertakings by nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike. Although we have not yet attained this goal, efforts are under way to reach that end, and States have recently shown greater determination to do so.

Thailand welcomes the ongoing negotiations between the Russian Federation and the United States to conclude a new treaty as a follow-up to the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, which will expire in December. Aimed at reducing deployed nuclear warheads to 1,500 to 1,600 each within seven years with effective verification measures in place, this new treaty, when concluded and implemented, will demonstrate the genuine and firm commitment of the two countries possessing the world's largest nuclear arsenals to their nuclear disarmament obligations. It is our hope that the other nuclear-weapon States, as well as countries with nuclear-weapon capability, would follow suit.

This strong political will, which is shared by other Member States, was reflected in the historic Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and by the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1887 (2009) last month. The recent positive developments marked a new era of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Thailand therefore calls on all parties concerned to build upon this momentum in order to ensure that our ongoing efforts will eventually bear fruit.

With the next Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be held in May 2010, we are at a critical juncture in our joint deliberations on whether to move on towards fulfilling our pledge or just to stay just where we are. The Review Conference is indeed an opportunity to further consolidate our efforts. We hope to see constructive consultations that demonstrate commitments by nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike. Both groups of States have an equally important role to play. In our view, the Review Conference should also include on its agenda substantive discussion on confidence-building

measures, transparency, negative security assurances, effective safeguards against proliferation and the follow-up to the implementation of the 13 practical steps agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another crucial instrument that will assist the international community to reach the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. As a signatory State of the CTBT, Thailand fully supports the universality of the Treaty and calls for the remaining nine Annex 2 States to become parties to the Treaty so as to put a definitive end to nuclear-weapon testing. For our part, we are taking necessary steps towards ratifying the Treaty.

From Thailand's perspective, the next milestone in the field of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is a fissile material cut-off treaty that would help to reinforce efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Thailand therefore hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to commence negotiations on such a treaty as soon as possible as part of its 2010 agenda.

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Thailand attaches great importance to the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) as a key instrument for nuclear non-proliferation in South-East Asia that complements the NPT at the regional level. The principles of SEANWFZ will be further upheld with the support of the nuclear-weapon States. Direct consultations with them will be resumed to encourage their early accession to the Protocol to the Treaty. To highlight the contribution of SEANWFZ to regional and international security, Thailand, as ASEAN Chair and Chairman of the SEANWFZ Commission, and on behalf of ASEAN Member States, has tabled the traditional draft resolution on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (A/C.1/64/L.23) at this session of the General Assembly. We look forward to the valuable support of all States Members of the United Nations.

As an active proponent of SEANWFZ, Thailand supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world. These zones not only serve as a means of promoting complete disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons at the regional level, but also play a pivotal role in the area of confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy. We warmly welcome the recent

entry into force of the Semipalatinsk and Pelindaba Treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central Asia and Africa, respectively.

Cooperation among the zones should be encouraged. Thailand therefore reiterates its support for the second Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, to be convened next year immediately before the NPT Review Conference.

Equally important is the issue of the development of nuclear energy. Thailand recognizes and respects the inalienable right of every State to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as stipulated in article IV of the NPT. In the meantime, it is in our common interest that nuclear technologies and materials not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is therefore important to ensure that peaceful nuclear activities be conducted under a strengthened and effective safeguards system. The International Atomic Energy Agency, as the sole international verification authority, has a vital role to play in this regard and should be equipped with all tools necessary for engaging in this important work.

As nuclear terrorism is one of the most immediate and extreme threats to global security, Thailand welcomes the initiative of the United States to host a nuclear security summit in April next year. We hope that the summit will lead to concrete outcomes on measures that would secure vulnerable stockpiles of nuclear materials from theft and boost global cooperation in combating the trafficking of atomic materials and technologies. We believe that the highest level of nuclear security is key to the development and expansion of peaceful nuclear energy worldwide.

In closing, Thailand is convinced that the existing multilateral instruments remain relevant in today's international security circumstances and must be further strengthened. We remain hopeful that we will be able to see substantive progress from the upcoming forums on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the year to come.

Mr. Hong Je Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like first of all to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

As highlighted by a number of delegations during our general debate, the first priority issue facing the international community in the field of disarmament is nuclear disarmament. That is because nuclear disarmament is directly linked to the survival of humankind, even before it relates to world peace and security.

In that context, my delegation is of the view that the following questions need to be clarified if we are to achieve nuclear disarmament. First, what should be the priority issue with regard to nuclear weapons? The complete dismantlement of all nuclear weapons is the aspiration and demand of humankind. However, the current efforts for nuclear disarmament are misdirected and contrary to the aforementioned goal.

Of all the weapons in this world, only nuclear weapons remain out of control with no relevant monitoring instrument. Rather, they have become increasingly the exception, although their very existence itself constitutes a major source of nuclear proliferation, and the attempt to give priority only to non-proliferation continues.

Today, the aim of non-proliferation is obvious, as it is used as a means to overthrow independent countries. A clear example of that is the fabrication of information on the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in order to overthrow its Government by force. On the other hand, it is no longer a secret that the country with the largest nuclear arsenal in the world has been seeking to monopolize the possession of nuclear weapons under the pretext of non-proliferation. That has been proved by the most recent instance, in which the United States, in its nuclear posture review document, advocates extended deterrence and commits itself to providing a nuclear umbrella to its allies.

Bilateral nuclear disarmament, which was confined to the only two super-Powers during the cold war era, can no longer be a major mode of nuclear disarmament today, following the end of the cold war. Today, the nuclear Powers are competing to strengthen their respective nuclear weapons through modernization. Hence, nuclear disarmament should be multilateral, verifiable and irreversible.

Secondly, the nuclear-weapon States should refrain from making nuclear threats and provide non-nuclear-weapon States with negative security assurances. Most nuclear-weapon States are opposed to

the preparation of an international instrument on negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States. Current international relations, which allow a certain country to use nuclear weapons as a threat while others are compelled to be threatened, should no longer be tolerated. It is natural that a country should take self-defensive measures in the face of nuclear blackmail from a nuclear-weapon State.

I also take this opportunity to respond to the references of some representatives of Sweden, Australia, Turkey, Japan, the United States, South Korea and other countries to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in their statements made before mine. The Swedish and Japanese representatives in particular claimed that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's satellite launch and second nuclear test constitute clear breaches of Security Council resolutions 1695 (2006) and 1718 (2006), undermine the stability of the Korean peninsula and represent a threat to international peace and security. I categorically reject their statements as serious provocations.

First, the successful satellite launch of 5 April 2009 should not be controversial as it was related to our sovereignty and fully conformed with international law and all necessary procedures. The exploration of outer space and its use for peaceful purposes are legitimate rights entrusted equally to all countries of this globe. No one will deprive the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its right to space exploration for peaceful purposes.

Secondly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's second nuclear test was a countermeasure necessitated by the Security Council's action, which made an issue of our peaceful satellite launch under pressure from the United States. Had the Security Council from the very beginning not made an issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's peaceful satellite launch, in the same way as it kept silent over other satellite launches, it would not have compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take strong counteraction, such as its second nuclear test. By possessing a nuclear deterrent, we are now able to keep a nuclear balance in North-East Asia, to the very least, and to deter a war on the Korean peninsula. Likewise, our nuclear deterrent promotes stability on the Korean peninsula and thus further contributes to international peace and security.

As I have already mentioned, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea does not pursue a nuclear arms race. Our nuclear weapons serve as a war deterrent. We will possess only the least number of nuclear weapons to deter military attacks on and threats to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. While keeping nuclear weapons, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will act in a responsible manner with regard to their management, use, non-proliferation and disarmament.

Thirdly, on several occasions the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has clarified that it rejected Security Council resolutions 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009) and would not be bound by them. Those resolutions reflect the unilateral demands of the United States, in contravention of the United Nations Charter and international law, which provide for the principle of sovereign equality and fairness in international relations, and therefore will have no legal force whatsoever.

The rejection by many countries of resolution 1887 (2009), adopted at the Security Council summit, is also due to the failure to reflect fully the aspirations and will of the international community, ignoring the obligations of nuclear Powers with regard to such a crucial issue as nuclear disarmament, while dealing with the non-proliferation obligations of non-nuclear-weapon States. We will continue to pursue resolute actions as long as the United States continues its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Poo (Singapore): While today's globalized and interconnected world has brought tremendous benefits, the very same conditions that have enhanced trade and interaction since the end of the cold war have also created new and complex security challenges for our Governments. That can be seen in the shifting focus of security agencies when it comes to the securitization of nuclear weapons. Previously, attention was focused on the possession of such weapons by State actors. However, with today's increasingly fluid trade and security architecture, concern has now been expanded to include possession of such weapons and related technologies by non-State actors. It has become almost impossible for any Government to individually address the proliferation of nuclear weapons and related technologies.

At the same time, cross-border non-proliferation efforts still rely on the bedrock of robust implementation at the national level. In that regard, Singapore plays its role by participating in relevant multilateral initiatives to advance both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. We take our obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) seriously. We also support the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. Singapore believes that while universal adherence to those regimes is a goal to strive for, multilateral non-proliferation regimes are empty constructs if they are not accompanied by effective implementation. National efforts by individual States, as well as practical cooperation among States, are therefore crucial to countering proliferation.

Singapore is a major aviation and port hub. As one of the busiest trans-shipment ports in the world, Singapore attracts more than 140,000 vessels and processes about 29 million containers annually. We are very much part of the global supply chain. In this regard, Singapore relies on a robust export control system and participates actively in non-proliferation efforts. The security procedures we have put in place ultimately enhance our physical security and therefore strengthen our long-term economic vitality. In addition, this also highlights our commitment to help prevent technologies related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from falling into the wrong hands.

I will briefly elaborate on our non-proliferation efforts in terms of our export control systems and our participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative.

As a major trans-shipment hub and a responsible member of the international community, Singapore has enacted strong national legislation that allows for an enhanced export control system to govern the export and trans-shipment of strategic goods and technology with potential WMD applications. On the basis of our 2003 Strategic Goods (Control) Act, which adopted a partial control list, we have monitored items controlled under all four major multilateral export control regimes since January 2008. In addition, our system includes a catch-all provision, brokering controls and controls on the intangible transfer of technology, which is a unique feature yet to be implemented in many export control systems in the world. Intangible transfer of technology refers to the electronic transmission via fax, e-mail, or the Internet of strategic goods technology controlled

under our strategic goods control, including technology relating to any relevant activity.

Singapore takes the proliferation of WMD, their means of delivery and related items very seriously. We are therefore an active participant in the Proliferation Security Initiative, which was formed in 2003 to encourage international cooperation in the interdiction of shipments of WMD, their delivery systems and related materials and technology. To date, more than 90 countries around the world have endorsed the Proliferation Security Initiative and are working together to counter the global threat of WMD proliferation. Proliferation Security Initiative members are committed to the Initiative's Statement of Interdiction Principles, which ensures that all actions taken under the Initiative are consistent with relevant international law and national legislation.

The Proliferation Security Initiative is not a stand-alone initiative. Instead, it builds on existing mechanisms, such as international treaty regimes and domestic export control systems, to create an effective framework for States to work together to prevent the flow of WMD and related materials to and from entities of proliferation concern.

Later this month, from 27 to 30 October 2009, Singapore will be hosting a Proliferation Security Initiative exercise entitled Exercise Deep Sabre II. This exercise, which involves participants from 20 countries, will allow Proliferation Security Initiative participants to enhance their interoperability and build capacity for the conduct of maritime and port counter-proliferation actions.

In conclusion, the national implementation of measures in support of multilateral non-proliferation regimes remains critical. Nonetheless, national efforts alone cannot succeed without comprehensive implementation by and cooperation from other States to make non-proliferation efforts succeed.

Mr. Ndimeni (South Africa): We have in the recent past heard an increasing number of positive pronouncements by States and their leaders in relation to nuclear disarmament, as mentioned in our earlier statement during the general debate. These pronouncements, which have included renewed commitments to nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons, are indeed welcome developments.

It is imperative that these positive statements be translated into concrete actions in order to restore confidence in the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime, which has been subject to significant tensions during the past decade. Such actions should not only entail reductions in the number of nuclear weapons that continue to be deployed and stockpiled around the world, but should also include a review of security doctrines and other transparent, irreversible measures aimed at realizing our common objective of a world free from nuclear weapons.

The recent high-level Security Council meeting (see S/PV.6191) also came at a time of both encouraging new developments and enduring challenges in the field of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. While South Africa welcomes this endeavour by the Security Council to contribute to a new, more balanced approach to addressing the challenges related to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, it should, however, be noted that South Africa has consistently argued that any presumption of the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons will only lead to increasing insecurity and a continuing arms race. Continuous and irreversible progress in nuclear disarmament and other related nuclear arms control measures therefore remain fundamental to the promotion of nuclear non-proliferation.

For South Africa, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and we will continue to promote its universality. In our view, the Treaty and the outcomes of its Review Conferences remain as valid as ever and together form the basis for progress in the Treaty's review process. States parties to the NPT should therefore avoid the temptation to selectively apply obligations provided for under the Treaty and commitments made during Review Conferences. We remain particularly concerned about the lack of progress following the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Nonetheless, South Africa welcomes the positive outcomes of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which, inter alia, agreed upon the agenda and the

organization of work for the 2010 Review Conference. In this connection, South Africa urges all States parties to engage constructively with each other in order to achieve a positive outcome to the 2010 Conference that would consolidate and build upon the commitments reached at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences.

With regard to the issue of security assurances, South Africa continues to believe that such assurances rightfully belong to those States that have foresworn the nuclear weapons option, as opposed to those that prefer to keep their options open. The NPT is the primary international legal instrument under which non-nuclear-weapon States have foregone the nuclear weapons option. South Africa therefore regards the provision of international, legally binding security assurances as a key element of the NPT, and we will consequently continue to pursue negative security assurances within that framework. Legally binding security assurances will enhance strategic stability, facilitate the process of the elimination of nuclear weapons and contribute to international confidence and security.

South Africa continues to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this regard, South Africa is proud of the entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the Pelindaba Treaty, which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. This is a significant achievement not only for Africa, but also for a southern hemisphere free from nuclear weapons. In this context, we call upon those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the relevant protocols attached to the Treaty at the earliest opportunity.

South Africa also welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia on 21 March 2009, and hopes that these important developments will be followed by concerted international efforts to create nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions, including in the Middle East.

The peaceful application of nuclear energy is of particular importance to many developing countries, given the urgent need for sustainable and accelerated economic growth. The rise in the demand for nuclear power comes with challenges and responsibilities that require the international community to be vigilant in ensuring that nuclear energy is utilized for peaceful purposes only.

In this connection, South Africa strongly believes that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

should be provided with the necessary means not only to carry out its verification mandate, but also to enhance its technical cooperation activities and assistance in a non-discriminatory, efficient and professional manner.

At the same time, we need to ensure that no unwarranted restrictions are imposed on States in full compliance with their obligations. Further modalities for preventing the diversion of those sensitive technologies may be required in order to ensure that we can pursue such activities without fear and with the necessary assurances. However, what is required is a non-discriminatory approach that would assure a reliable supply of nuclear fuel while fully respecting the choices of States and protecting their inalienable right to pursue peaceful nuclear activities, consistent with their non-proliferation obligations.

The Agency is the only competent, internationally recognized authority responsible for verifying and assuring compliance with safeguards agreements with a view to preventing the diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. That authority should not be undermined, and any concerns regarding non-compliance with safeguards agreements should be directed to the IAEA for consideration of any actions that may be required, in accordance with its statutory mandate. South Africa will continue to support activities aimed at strengthening and developing verification capabilities in order to provide assurances of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear weapon-free world.

In conclusion, allow me to merely state the obvious, namely, that the systematic and progressive elimination of all nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again remain the only guarantee against their use. That should firmly remain our goal.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/64/L.18, A/C.1/63/L.19 and A/C.1/63/L.20.

Mr. Rao (India): It gives me pleasure, Sir, to convey how pleased we are to see you chairing the thematic debate on nuclear weapons. India associates itself with the statement on this cluster made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

India has consistently maintained its principled position of attaching the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament, both as a national position that has enjoyed strong and consistent domestic support and as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has stood steadfast in its support for global nuclear disarmament. In that context, we recall that the only document on nuclear disarmament adopted by consensus by the international community — the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament (resolution S-10/2) — accorded the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament. The Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988 provided a holistic framework for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons in order to usher in a world free of nuclear weapons and rooted in non-violence. We remain committed to that objective.

Speaking at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reiterated India's proposal for a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their complete elimination within a specified time frame (see A/63/PV.12). India's External Affairs Minister again underlined its support for a nuclear weapons convention during his address to the General Assembly last month (see A/64/PV.10).

India has consistently maintained that nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment to the global elimination of nuclear weapons. In a working paper submitted to the General Assembly in 2006, India suggested a number of measures in that regard, including reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Consideration could also be given to specific legal measures, including a global no-first-use agreement and the negotiation of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Measures to reduce nuclear dangers arising from the accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons are also pertinent in that regard.

Addressing the threat posed by all nuclear weapons to international peace and security requires the global elimination of nuclear weapons on a non-discriminatory basis. It is clear that, while preventing proliferation is important, we must not lose sight of the essential principle of the mutually

reinforcing linkage between disarmament and non-proliferation. As such, nuclear disarmament cannot be held hostage to absolute success in the non-proliferation field. International efforts in that regard should build the necessary confidence among States so that international treaties and agreements are multilaterally negotiated and freely accepted, which remains the true test of their legitimacy and credibility. At the same time, States should fully and effectively implement the obligations arising from the agreements or treaties to which they are parties.

India has acceded to and is in full implementation of the two non-discriminatory international conventions banning biological and chemical weapons. India's position on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of India's national security and will remain so pending non-discriminatory and global nuclear disarmament.

As part of its credible minimum nuclear deterrent, India has espoused the policy of no first use against nuclear-weapon States and non-use against non-nuclear-weapon States, and is prepared to convert those undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements.

As the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament, the Conference on Disarmament bears a responsibility to meaningfully respond to the international community's expectations in the disarmament field, particularly on the priority issue of nuclear disarmament. As a nuclear-weapon State and a responsible member of the world community, India is committed to participating constructively in the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament as part of its programme of work.

India welcomes the renewed attention of the international community to achieving a nuclear weapon-free world. World leaders, parliamentarians, distinguished statesman, international groups and non-governmental organizations have lent their voice in favour of nuclear disarmament. The shifting currents of informed opinion are now moving in favour of nuclear disarmament. As the embodiment of multilateralism, the United Nations should carry forward that momentum, in recognition of which the Secretary-General put forward his five-point plan, which, inter

alia, includes consideration of a nuclear weapons convention. To sustain the current mood of optimism, follow-up action on the ground will be needed, based on a genuine desire to take concrete steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, measures to reduce nuclear dangers, and universal commitments to global and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

The threat of nuclear terrorism is a formidable challenge facing the international community. We support the strengthening of international efforts to address that threat, including improving nuclear security. In that context, we welcome the United States initiative to convene the Global Summit on Nuclear Security in 2010.

As in previous years, India will be sponsoring the following draft resolutions.

First, on behalf of the sponsors, I would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" (A/C.1/64/L.20). The draft resolution reflects the belief that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of delegitimizing nuclear weapons and create a climate conducive to negotiations on an agreement on the prohibition of nuclear weapons. The operative part of the draft resolution reiterates the request to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations in order to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

I also have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, the draft resolution on "Reducing nuclear danger" (A/C.1/64/L.18). This draft resolution highlights the concerns of the international community and calls upon all Member States to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It underlines that the international response to this threat needs to be at the national, multilateral and global levels. We hope that, as in the past with similar texts, this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus and enjoy the sponsorship of an increased group of countries.

Mr. Belaoura (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): We have all followed with great interest the statements made by representatives in the First Committee.

On numerous occasions, we have referred to the great importance that we and the rest of the international community attach to this issue. We have also noted the commitment of delegations to working together to promote disarmament and to make the world safer and more stable for us and for future generations. In that connection, nuclear disarmament is of particular importance and stature, given the increasing danger posed by those weapons for our countries and for all of humankind. Algeria is a signatory of all international treaties and conventions on weapons of mass destruction, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We firmly believe that the only response to the threat posed by such weapons is to totally eliminate them and to ban them through binding international instruments.

In recent months, the world has heard very promising declarations and pledges at the highest level that constitute positive steps forward towards disarmament and international peace and security on a solid, mutually agreed and sustainable basis. In that regard, we highlight a series of statements that have included the commitment made by the Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation to continue negotiations on a post-START instrument to reduce their nuclear arsenals. We also welcome the statement made by President Obama on 2 April in Prague setting out his desire to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Algeria is convinced that the multilateral framework is the sole context for addressing disarmament issues. We call on the international community to strengthen that framework and give it high priority it needs to implement the commitments that have been made at the multilateral level. In that connection, on 29 May, following many years of deadlock and difficulty, the Conference on Disarmament decided to establish a programme of work. That change is a major accomplishment that has generated optimism among all Member States. In line with the programme of work, which was adopted under Algeria's presidency, the Conference decided to establish four working groups and to appoint three special coordinators to consider all items proposed for the Conference's agenda. Algeria reaffirms its commitment to this process, including our determination to make every effort to complete the programme of work and implement it in 2010. We call on all Member States to coordinate their efforts and to work together to achieve that goal.

Implementing the decision will make it possible for us to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty, as well as to address other issues agreed upon by the Conference on Disarmament working groups. The importance of a fissile material cut-off treaty is rooted in the fact that it is one of the 13 practical steps agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference. That will be a major step towards halting the production of nuclear weapons and achieving nuclear disarmament.

Facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), 13 years after its conclusion, is at the centre of our efforts. Although we welcome the commitment expressed by the new United States Administration to work to ratify the CTBT, we call on the nine Annex 2 States that have not yet ratified it, including two nuclear-weapon States, to do so as soon as possible so that it can enter into force.

The eighth NPT Review Conference will take place in May 2010. That event will be even more important given the failure of the 2005 Review Conference. We have great expectations for the Conference, given the current level of optimism regarding disarmament throughout the world and the statements made by certain Member States, in particular by nuclear-weapon States, which have committed themselves to working towards achieving the goals of the Treaty and the success of the Conference. The fruitful discussions between States that took place during the most recent session of the Preparatory Committee in May made it possible for the Committee to adopt a draft programme of work for the Review Conference. That was an important indicator of the presence of conditions conducive to the success of the upcoming Conference.

We once again emphasize that Algeria is committed to the provisions of the NPT. We are determined to implement it and to promote its objectives. We are convinced that the upcoming Review Conference will be an opportunity for doing so. In that regard, we are committed to ensuring the universality of the Treaty. We cannot effectively implement its non-proliferation provisions and attain nuclear disarmament if certain countries do not become signatories to it, in particular Israel.

Secondly, we would like to emphasize the need to fully implement all the commitments made by States parties during the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences,

especially the 13 practical steps and the resolution on establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Our credibility is put to the test when it comes to our implementation of the commitments and obligations that we, as a State party to the NPT, have undertaken in the context of that Treaty. The agreed measures aimed at guaranteeing effective respect for the provisions of the NPT must be accompanied by similar efforts in the area of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with the provisions of article VI of the Treaty, and by real guarantees of the inalienable right of States parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with article IV of the Treaty.

The world is facing enormous challenges, generated by threats to our collective security, by numerous crises by and distortions in the global security situation. But the greatest threat of all is the nuclear threat. It thus falls to all States, whether nuclear or non-nuclear, to effectively and completely do away with this threat. There is no doubt that such efforts will bring greater security and stability to the entire world and will free up enormous resources and capacities that can be devoted to meeting the legitimate needs of our peoples in terms of development and prosperity.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): Since this is the first time the Slovenian delegation has had the opportunity to take the floor, allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Ambassador Cancela, and the other members of the Bureau on your election and on a job well done so far. My delegation has full confidence in your judgement and is convinced that you will wisely guide this Committee to the fulfilment of its task.

I would also like to fully subscribe to the statement delivered by Ambassador Hellgren of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

Like other delegations, Slovenia welcomes the renewed momentum in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The window of opportunity is here and now and should not be missed. We are convinced that this impetus, inspired primarily by the statements of United States President Obama and others, should bring us forward in achieving our goals in this field.

In order to effectively use the current window of opportunity, we believe the following concrete steps

could help in moving forward our agenda in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

First, we should make an effort to further consolidate the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). A generation before us successfully negotiated the NPT and made it a cornerstone of the international peace and security system. Since then, the NPT has faced many challenges, namely further nuclear proliferation and non-compliance. In addition, we believe that more should be done to prevent any proliferation of nuclear weapons to terrorists.

The absence of any meaningful outcome to the most recent NPT Review Conference, held in the spring of 2005, contributed to the notion that the NPT is not what it used to be. Slovenia firmly believes this is not the case. We are convinced that the present momentum should enable the May 2010 Review Conference to be more effective and that we will — with a positive outcome — manage to consolidate this important instrument and preserve it for the future. Consequently, our common goal is the universal acceptance and implementation of all the objectives enshrined in the NPT.

Secondly, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which our heads of State and ministers signed in this building 14 years ago, has still not entered into force. We are convinced that this should happen as quickly as possible. We believe that early entry into force and full completion of the Treaty's verification regime are now within our reach, in particular after the announcement of the United States Government that it will move forward with the CTBT ratification process. Other ratifications by Annex 2 States should be encouraged and should proceed without delay. We should redouble our efforts to reach this goal and fully use this valuable instrument in order to achieve our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons tests.

The third step forward should be the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament when it resumes its work in Geneva in January. Slovenia warmly welcomes the decision of the Conference on Disarmament of 29 May 2009, which includes the decision to start these negotiations. As an observer State and a candidate to become a full Conference member, Slovenia wishes to actively engage in these negotiations, which should, in

our view, commence without delay early next year. A verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty, once successfully negotiated, would significantly contribute to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and complement the NPT and the CTBT.

We are convinced that the future fissile material cut-off treaty should also contain an effective verification mechanism, in which the International Atomic Energy Agency could play an important role. In this context, we welcome the draft resolution presented by the delegation of Canada. The Canadian proposal comes at the right time. It should steer our efforts in this regard. My delegation believes that this important draft resolution should be adopted without a vote, thus demonstrating our unequivocal commitment in this regard.

Slovenia believes that, in this positive spirit, the steps of NPT consolidation, CTBT entry into force and the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty would make our world safer.

Nuclear energy and other nuclear technologies are to play a very important role in this beginning of the twenty-first century. The so-called renaissance of nuclear energy and the application of nuclear technologies in health, food production and agriculture offer great hope for sustainable development, for humanity and particularly for those who continue to be plagued by poverty, disease and underdevelopment. On the other hand, the irresponsible spread of nuclear technology represents a great concern. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and the issues of nuclear safety and security connected with the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technologies are the most frequently quoted risks. To meet the expectations of this great hope, it is absolutely vital to preserve and further strengthen the global non-proliferation architecture. Commitments by all sides are needed if we wish to increase the responsible use of civil nuclear power and, at the same time, prevent the spread of sensitive nuclear technologies.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Slovenia shares the vision and goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We are convinced that this vision is realistic. We are well aware that we will have to walk many miles to achieve this goal, but by making progress with regard to the three aforementioned steps, we will certainly be on the right track.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The mere existence of nuclear weapons is a source of horror, distrust and threat. Nuclear disarmament is the highest priority on the disarmament agenda. It forms a fundamental part of the package agreed within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1968. Despite the obligations under article VI of the Treaty and undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals, the continued existence, development and deployment of thousands of nuclear warheads in their arsenals threaten international peace and security.

The lack of implementation by the nuclear-weapon States of the unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament, under article VI of the NPT, is frustrating. This is a matter of grave concern. Despite limited bilateral and unilateral arms reductions in the past, such efforts fall far short of the international expectations for real and effective steps and can never be a substitute for the obligations of nuclear-weapon States. These reductions have not gone beyond the mere decommissioning of nuclear weapons and their placement in storerooms. To be effective, reductions in nuclear weapons must be irreversible, internationally verifiable and transparent.

As a result of the blatant violations of legally binding commitments under article VI of the NPT, the integrity of the NPT has been endangered and the confidence of non-nuclear-weapon States in the credibility of the Treaty has been eroded. The world will not wait indefinitely for nuclear-weapon States to live up to their international obligations regarding their nuclear weapon programmes.

The nuclear posture review, which has yet to be changed, and the so-called Trident programme — which has provided for the development of new types of nuclear weapons and modern delivery means, the possible use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and targeting nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT — are in contravention of the NPT and the assurances given by the nuclear-weapon States at the

time of the Treaty's indefinite extension. More worrisome is the announcement by France regarding the addition of a nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine and the retention of 300 nuclear warheads in its arsenal. These weapons, which are considered by its possessor as minimum deterrence, can destroy 300 cities and kill 300 million people.

Iran considers the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We continue to believe in the need for negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time limit, including a nuclear weapons convention. In this regard, we reiterate our call for the establishment, as the highest priority and as soon as possible, of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament within the Conference on Disarmament, with a mandate for real negotiations. Such negotiations must lead to the legal prohibition, once and for all, of the possession, development and stockpiling of nuclear weapons by any country, and provide for the destruction of such inhumane weapons.

Pending the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention, the nuclear-weapon States must honour their obligations under the NPT and immediately stop any kind of development and research on nuclear weapons; any threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States; any modernization of nuclear weapons and their facilities; the deployment of nuclear weapons in the territories of other countries; and the maintenance of their nuclear weapons in a trigger-alert situation.

For a long time, certain European Union (EU) members have been in non-compliance with their obligations undertaken under the Treaty, which provides in its article II that:

“Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly”.

These countries have violated the NPT by receiving hundreds of nuclear weapons from the United States under the umbrella of NATO.

Deploying hundreds of nuclear weapons in non-nuclear-weapon States and training the fighter/bomber pilots of the host EU countries to prepare for handling and delivering nuclear bombs against other States contravenes both the letter and spirit of the NPT, and the host States are in clear non-compliance with the NPT.

This concern has prompted many, even in European countries, including parliaments, to request the withdrawal of nuclear forces from their territories. These EU members should come into compliance with the NPT by immediately removing nuclear warheads from their territories. In this context, the European Union, instead of threatening others, should urge its relevant members to comply with the NPT.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that the best way of assuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is the full and non-selective implementation of the NPT and its universality. The universality of the NPT, in particular in regions of tension, should be vigorously promoted.

In this context, the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which was reaffirmed in 2000, must vigorously be pursued. Despite the repeated calls by the international community contained in the 1995 Middle East resolution, related General Assembly resolutions and resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Zionist regime has neither acceded to the NPT nor placed its clandestine nuclear facilities under the full scope of IAEA safeguards. It has not even declared its intention to accede to the Treaty. This regime is the only non-party to the NPT in the Middle East region. Its unlawful nuclear weapons programme, which has received assistance from the United States and France, seriously threatens both regional and international peace and security and has endangered the non-proliferation regime.

The inaction imposed upon the Security Council over the past several decades in addressing the well-documented nuclear weapons programme of that regime has given that regime the audacity to explicitly acknowledge its unlawful possession of nuclear weapons, which has been condemned by the Non-Aligned Movement.

In conclusion, let me reiterate again that Iran, as a victim of chemical weapons, will vigorously pursue the goal of a world free from weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): Let me start by declaring that the Philippines aligns itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered on its behalf by the representative of Indonesia.

The topic of the current thematic debate is central to the security of all Member States. The Philippines submits that the elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against — or the only way to save humanity from — the use or threat of use of such weapons. It follows that the international community must act in concert with all the political will it can muster to rid the world of nuclear weapons once and for all and save planet Earth and humanity. The present global political climate presents countries with the best opportunity to make progress towards that end.

The Philippines understands that the elimination of nuclear weapons is not going to happen overnight. However, it is convinced that the objective is within reach in the immediate future, given the required political will of countries and a heightened sense of common destiny for all. Countries should not fall into a misguided belief that nuclear weapons provide real security. They should know that, in fact, these weapons cause more tension, heighten fears and insecurity, and cause destruction due to miscalculations or accidents. Above all, countries that harbour these weapons even risk their own destruction.

The Philippines supports the calls for the irreversible and complete elimination of nuclear weapons under international supervision. It is prepared to examine proposals for a phased process leading to the ultimate objective of achieving total nuclear disarmament and to secure the agreements under a nuclear convention.

The Philippines commends the Russian Federation and the United States of America for agreeing to have a follow-up agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and looks forward to the conclusion of such an agreement. It calls on all other possessors of nuclear arms to take urgent steps to reduce and eventually eliminate their nuclear arsenals. The challenge is to develop a mechanism that will bring all possessors of nuclear arms into a multilateral undertaking that leads them to global nuclear disarmament.

The Philippines subscribes to the view that there can be no peace without trust. The international community can expect the possessors of nuclear arms

to participate fully in a multilateral undertaking towards global nuclear disarmament only should a climate of confidence and trust prevail among them.

In order to foster a climate of confidence and trust, certain prerequisites must be fulfilled. First is the common understanding of where all possessors of nuclear arms are coming from in terms of their respective stockpiles of nuclear arsenals and delivery systems. Second is the presence of a reliable and accurate reporting of action on global nuclear disarmament to an accepted international body or entity. Finally, there must be a mechanism enabling all to verify fully actions taken in pursuit of global nuclear disarmament.

There have been positive signals and developments on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The Security Council held a high-level meeting on this subject on 24 September 2009. Statements by world leaders have recently given prominence and importance to this issue. The Philippines welcomes such statements and pronouncements calling for a world free of nuclear weapons. However, it would welcome even more concrete action and definitive plans on how to achieve the objective of global disarmament.

The Philippines supports calls for the holding of an international conference to identify ways and means to eliminate nuclear dangers at the soonest possible time, as well as the need to conclude a legally binding instrument on security assurances.

As a contribution to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, the Philippines stresses the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The Philippines strongly supports the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and would like to see the Treaty enter into force as soon as possible. In this regard, the Philippines again urges the nine Annex II States to ratify the Treaty.

The Philippines hopes that when the Conference on Disarmament resumes its work in January 2010, it can immediately go into high gear by quickly resolving the issues relating to its programme of work and start the process of negotiating a treaty on fissile materials as soon as possible.

The Philippines views the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and

nuclear disarmament regime and recognizes that progress on the Treaty can be achieved only through progress on the three pillars, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Agreement on concrete measures is thus critical in the area of nuclear disarmament because of its inextricable link to non-proliferation. The surest road to non-proliferation is the total elimination of nuclear arms. The Philippines hopes that the 2010 Review Conference of States Parties to the NPT will be able to right the NPT "ship" and chart a course that will take us to that desired destination of a world free of nuclear arms, where nuclear energy is employed solely for peaceful uses.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor to the next speaker this afternoon, I would like to remind representatives that 6 p.m. today is the deadline set for the submission of draft resolutions. I would also like to call on representatives and those present in the room to keep order and remain silent during the deliberations of this Committee.

Ms. Shilli (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Our delegation has already taken the floor during the general debate. However, we wish to share some views with the Committee during this segment of the thematic debate.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

With regard to the thematic discussion on nuclear weapons, nuclear-weapon States have enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery thanks to the doctrine of strategic nuclear deterrence. The Security Council will only consider issues related to non-proliferation, although nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are inextricably linked. We must endeavour to recognize the interdependence of these two aspects and the balance that must be struck between them. Indeed, concentrating our efforts on nuclear non-proliferation, in particular horizontal non-proliferation, while de-emphasizing nuclear disarmament will not further our common and ultimate aspiration to free the world from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, we call on nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their practical commitment to this primary objective, as set out in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We call on those States to immediately implement the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 Review Conference of States Parties to the NPT as a basis upon which to measure progress in this area in a verifiable and irreversible fashion, including the substantial reduction of current nuclear arsenals as a first step, without omitting the prohibition of further production until we have completely eliminated current weapons stockpiles.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya welcomes the current vision of a world free from nuclear weapons spearheaded by the United States' initiative to attain this objective, the start of serious negotiations with the Russian Federation aimed at limiting strategic weapons, and the positive movement towards ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. I also wish to highlight the opening of negotiations for a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty.

We hope that these steps will be accompanied by concrete measures, as complete nuclear disarmament is the only way to ensure that these weapons will not be used and that no one will be able to threaten to use them. To achieve this, a legally binding, unconditional international agreement should be reached that protects non-nuclear-weapon States from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them.

We believe that non-proliferation is a goal that will promote nuclear disarmament. Non-proliferation should include horizontal and vertical elements. We must be aware that the greatest threat to non-proliferation is the failure to achieve the universality of the NPT on a worldwide basis, especially in the Middle East, which has allowed Israel to develop its military nuclear potential without any international controls.

Israel's non-adherence to the Treaty and its refusal to open its military installations to IAEA inspection pose a threat to regional and international peace and security. They are also violations of international resolutions, beginning with Security Council resolution 487 (1981). Given the declared opposition of one Council member to the Libyan proposal, there is no reference in resolution 1887 (2009) to the Middle East or to the establishment of a

nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. There has been no progress to date to that end because Israel continues to refuse to renounce the use of nuclear weapons. That is a serious drawback to achieving peace and undermines the Security Council's ability to fulfil its mission in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

We must not forget the inalienable right of all States to acquire, develop and use nuclear technology and energy for peaceful purposes. In that regard, we would like to reiterate that the International Atomic Energy Agency is the sole and specialized authority capable of ensuring that States parties to the NPT act in accordance with the Treaty's provisions and that nuclear energy is not utilized for military purposes. The Agency is also the international platform for technical cooperation in the nuclear sphere.

Libya believes that any cooperation, be it military or peaceful, between States parties and non-parties to the NPT is in clear violation of the letter and spirit of the NPT. Such cooperation threatens the universality and credibility of the Treaty and flies in the face of its principles and effectiveness.

In conclusion, international peace and security cannot be achieved through the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, or threats to use them. Instead, international peace and security can be achieved by strengthening the principles of dialogue, understanding, mutual respect, justice and increased fruitful cooperation among States.

That is the reality acknowledged by Libya when, in its 2003 declaration, it voluntarily renounced all its programmes and equipment that could assist in the production of internationally prohibited weapons. We call on all States without exception to follow suit in order to ensure that the peoples of the world can live in peace and security free from the threat posed by nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. We hope that nuclear-weapon States will assume their responsibilities in that regard.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement in the debate on nuclear weapons.

It is worth recalling that, at its first special session on disarmament, the General Assembly recognized that nuclear weapons posed an existential

threat to humankind. It agreed that disarmament and arms limitation, especially in the field of nuclear weapons, were essential to the prevention of the danger of nuclear war and to the strengthening of international peace and security. The best defence against the possible use of weapons of mass destruction lies in the total elimination of such weapons. However, we have witnessed the progressive erosion of that consensus and the disavowal of the objectives of the special session by the major nuclear-weapon States.

From a realistic perspective, general and complete nuclear disarmament will require, first and foremost, sincere practical efforts to create an environment conducive to peace and security by resolving the underlying causes of the nuclear and conventional arms race at the regional and global levels. A peaceful and stable international order can be based only upon the principle of equal security for all States. No State can attain its security through the insecurity of others.

The experience of South Asia provides a prime example of the threat to regional and global peace and security arising from regional disputes and power asymmetries pushing the region towards nuclearization. Pakistan has been forced to respond to ensure its security in that environment based on minimum credible nuclear deterrence. Nevertheless, we remain committed to pursuing our stated proposals aimed at ensuring regional stability and the resolution of outstanding disputes.

At the global level, the recent expression of commitment to the objective of nuclear disarmament by the largest possessors of nuclear weapons is an encouraging development. However, the realization of the objective of nuclear disarmament requires concrete actions. Words need to be translated into deeds. The empty rhetoric of the past will no longer suffice. We hope that, at long last, the renewed emphasis on nuclear disarmament reflects a genuine desire on the part of the major Powers to work towards that objective and their conviction that the time is ripe for meaningful action in this regard.

At the same time, the major nuclear Powers need to demonstrate that their commitment to nuclear disarmament will not lag behind non-proliferation and arms control measures or the need to prevent new areas of an arms race, such as in outer space. The major nuclear Powers also need to address the security

concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States by assuring those States that nuclear weapons will not be used against them. The reality is that, despite the fact that such measures are cost-free for nuclear-weapon States, they have so far refrained from undertaking any commitment in that regard.

Multilateralism and multilaterally negotiated, universally accepted and non-discriminatory agreements provide the best way forward for achieving the objective of disarmament and non-proliferation. By enabling the Conference on Disarmament, which is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, to initiate substantive negotiations on all four core issues on its agenda, Member States can demonstrate their political will, commitment and sincerity to the cause of nuclear disarmament. If there is indeed a genuine will to achieve nuclear disarmament, then it is surprising to be told at the Conference on Disarmament that, with the exception of one issue, the time is still not ripe for negotiations on the other core issues, namely, nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

General and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, is the *raison d'être* of the Conference on Disarmament. It should therefore be the central theme of the work of the Conference. The objective of disarmament, and not just non-proliferation, should also be the defining factor for negotiations on a fissile material treaty. To make the proposed treaty a genuine nuclear disarmament measure, it must address the question of the production of fissile material — past, present and future — in its entirety at both the regional and the global levels.

A cut-off in the future production of fissile material alone would simply freeze and formalize the existing asymmetries in stockpiles. It would further neither the cause of nuclear disarmament nor the objective of international and regional stability. For the major nuclear Powers with large existing stockpiles of fissile materials, support for such a treaty would be cost-free.

The positive international climate in favour of nuclear disarmament should not be allowed to mask certain unfortunate realities. It must be acknowledged that the gravest threat to the integrity and credibility of the non-proliferation regime is the existence of double standards and discriminatory approaches followed by States that are most eloquent in the promotion of the

non-proliferation regime. This double standard has been compounded further by these States' recent actions in complete reversal of their own so-called non-proliferation norms. This situation has undermined the non-proliferation regime and turned it into a farce.

For Pakistan, these double standards have created a dangerous environment by undermining strategic stability in South Asia. It is indeed ironic that in such a discriminatory and dangerous environment, Pakistan is being advised to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and eschew its nuclear deterrent capability, as has been proposed by some delegations in this Committee. We strongly reject such prescriptions.

These ideologues of non-proliferation seldom raise their voices against the existence of thousands of nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert possessed by their allies. Moreover, while offering prescriptions for other States, these high-priests of non-proliferation, in disregard of their own security compulsions, are themselves prepared neither to give up their nuclear security umbrellas nor to prohibit the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories.

States with a history of wilful complicity in nuclear test explosions seem hardly qualified to pontificate on non-proliferation. In addition, those States that arrogate to themselves the right to define their approach towards arms control and disarmament issues based on their national security assessments conveniently disregard the same right of other States. In truth, treaties on banning certain types of weapons, test bans or moratoriums on fissile material production have only been negotiated and agreed by certain States once these weapon systems have lost their relevance for these countries or when their national reviews lead to certainty regarding the sufficiency and reliability of existing arsenals for future defence needs.

Apart from these double standards and duplicity, the restricted nature of certain export control arrangements is an impediment to the global implementation of non-proliferation standards. While expecting universal application of the non-proliferation standards adopted by them, the members of the exclusive export control arrangements are not willing to open up these arrangements so that other States may benefit from the sharing of best practices and experiences. In fact, they would like to protect their commercial interests through restricted no-undercutting arrangements. The objective of

non-proliferation would be better served by the adoption of multilaterally negotiated export control standards and a cooperative approach based on non-discriminatory and inclusive partnerships.

Mr. Ponomarev (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus was one of the first countries of the former Soviet Union to renounce the right to possess nuclear weapons and therefore attaches particular importance to issues related to nuclear disarmament. In that regard, we note with satisfaction that nuclear disarmament is now at the forefront of the disarmament agenda and that multilateral efforts in that area have been stepped up.

We observed with great interest the meeting of the Security Council on issues of non-proliferation and disarmament. Resolution 1887 (2009), adopted by consensus at that meeting, has set a new standard for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. At the same time, we are convinced that nuclear-weapon States must not stop at that and must take effective measures towards nuclear disarmament.

The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be another opportunity for them to do so. Participating States must make substantive efforts to avoid the kind of failure that we saw at the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Accordingly, there will be a need to make all necessary efforts to create an atmosphere of trust and effective multilateralism at the upcoming Conference in order to ensure its success. We hope for a balanced reflection in the final document of the Conference of all three pillars of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Certain States must take effective steps to ensure the speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which will also have a positive impact on strengthening the nuclear disarmament regime. We call on those States that have not yet ratified the CTBT to take all possible measures to do so without precondition.

The enhancement of mutual trust among States — nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon alike — is the highest priority for further progress towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. We believe that the most important confidence-building measure is the provision of legally binding negative security guarantees to

non-nuclear-weapon States and unconditional compliance with the agreements already reached in this area.

Belarus, as a State party to the START Treaty, responds positively to all initiatives that make a real contribution to international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. We note with satisfaction the intention of the Russian Federation and the United States to achieve a new legally binding agreement on further reductions and limitations of strategic offensive weapons.

Our hopes are also linked to the resumption in early 2010 of the negotiating process at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Belarus, as one of the Presidents of the Conference in 2010, will do its best to ensure that the Conference can begin its substantive work. After the Conference succeeded in 2009, after 10 years of deadlock, in reaching agreement on its programme of work, including a mandate for holding negotiations on a non-discriminatory, effective and internationally verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty, we cannot to sit on our hands or stand idle in 2010.

We believe that the holding of negotiations aimed at prohibiting the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices is a logical and realistic step on the disarmament track. Such a step would unquestionably make a substantive contribution to enhancing transparency and allow us to move forward towards the goal of ridding humankind of the nuclear threat.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.23.

Mr. Sinhaseni (Thailand): On behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and Thailand — I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.23, entitled "Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty)", under agenda item 96 (c).

The Bangkok Treaty was signed in December 1995 and entered into force in March 1997. The establishment of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) is a testimony to the strong determination of the 10 ASEAN member States to attain the shared regional and global objectives of

promoting nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We feel that the attainment of those objectives would contribute to the promotion of regional and international peace and security.

The importance that we attach to this issue is reflected in the ASEAN charter, which came into force in December of last year. In its article 1, the ASEAN Charter clearly states that South-East Asia will be preserved as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and be free of all other weapons of mass destruction. To ensure that the States parties are able to realize the goals and objectives set forth in the Treaty, the SEANWFZ Commission adopted a plan of action at its meeting in 2007 that identifies concrete measures and actions to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty. That will further reinforce the ASEAN political and security community and contribute to the maintenance of a peaceful and stable security environment in South-East Asia and in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. Since then, ASEAN has implemented the plan of action, which includes enhancing contacts with other nuclear-weapon-free zones and with relevant international organizations and convening workshops to promote nuclear safety.

There appears to be recent growing momentum in global nuclear disarmament efforts, with the ultimate goal of creating a world free of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution on SEANWFZ is submitted within that global context of renewed but cautious optimism. The adoption of the draft resolution in the General Assembly will further strengthen our efforts to achieve the objectives of the SEANWFZ Treaty and help to provide for a more secure region for its peoples. Equally important is the fact that the draft resolution's adoption should also contribute to global efforts to promote nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

It is the wish of all 10 ASEAN member countries that SEANWFZ be recognized as making a significant contribution to the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Universal support for this draft resolution, and for the Treaty itself, will help to demonstrate the joint determination of all States Members of the United Nations to achieve that goal. We were grateful for the strong support for this resolution at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. In the current session, we are particularly grateful to countries from various regions of the world for their sponsorship of

the draft resolution. We look forward to strong support from the First Committee.

Mr. Marschik (Austria): As this is the first time that I take the floor, let me congratulate you on your election, Mr. Chairperson, and thank you and the other members of the Bureau for the excellent work that you have done so far, which I am sure you will continue to do. I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Duarte and Hannelore Hoppe and their team for their excellent work in assisting us in our efforts and in moving ahead the multilateral disarmament agenda.

Austria associates itself fully with the statement on this thematic issue made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union, but let me touch on three points to which many representatives have already attached particular importance in their statements over the past days.

First, with regard to the new momentum towards a world free of nuclear weapons, over the past months, the goal of the eventual total elimination of nuclear weapons has been firmly put back on the global agenda. Last month, the Security Council summit chaired by President Obama signalled the intention of the United States to provide leadership, building on the commitment made jointly with the Russian Federation earlier this year to conclude negotiations by the end of 2009 on a new START agreement reducing and limiting strategic offensive nuclear arms. Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), which was adopted by consensus, enshrines a commitment by the Council — including the five permanent members, which have a particular responsibility in this regard — to create a world without nuclear weapons. The international community, with the vital involvement of civil society, must work to ensure that this commitment is not forgotten, selectively interpreted or disavowed. It must also seek to ensure that it is not postponed indefinitely.

My second point concerns the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Today, the NPT is at the core of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Next year's Review Conference will provide a unique and timely opportunity to seize upon the new momentum towards nuclear disarmament and to reflect it in the outcome of the Conference. For the Conference and beyond, Austria has identified a number of broad objectives that we deem necessary to promote.

On institutions and instruments, Austria supports the idea of a global nuclear weapons convention equipped with a sophisticated verification mechanism to ensure the irreversibility of cuts in nuclear arsenals. Until such a treaty enters into force, the NPT will remain the foundation of the international nuclear order, but to address the many challenges that exist, the NPT must be provided with a firm and effective institutional base. Austria will also work with other supporters and redouble efforts to secure the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The renewed commitment of the United States to support the CTBT can provide an important impetus to those efforts. We call on all other Annex 2 States to show similar leadership and ratify the treaty.

In tandem with those efforts, States with nuclear arsenals must commit to refrain from the development or qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, as that would run counter to the spirit of the commitment to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

Austria will also continue to support a comprehensive fissile material cut-off treaty, which would significantly contribute to nuclear disarmament. Reliable techniques for monitoring and verification have been developed over the past years. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is ready to make important contributions in that regard. As a current President of the Conference on Disarmament, Austria and the other 2009 Conference Presidents have stated their determination to further promote that goal. We look forward to negotiations beginning earnestly at the beginning of next year.

My third and last point pertains to non-proliferation. I fully agree with our colleague from the United States, who earlier stated that a world without nuclear weapons requires a strong and reliable non-proliferation regime. The nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the international concern about the Iranian nuclear programme show that there is much that needs to be done in that respect. Indeed, we must all contribute to promoting more trust and confidence in international relations. International monitoring and verification are an excellent means for doing so. For instance, Austria strongly supports the universalization and strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, effectively making the IAEA additional protocol the global verification standard.

We applaud the entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty in July. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are excellent means of building confidence. They would be useful in other regions, such as the Middle East, as well. Austria has also made proposals to strengthen trust and confidence through the multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle. By multilateralizing sensitive technology and products, we would all ensure together that they are not misused.

As a current member of the Security Council, Austria is also closely involved in the review of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and we hope that implementation can be strengthened in that process.

As we strive for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, and as that goal begins to see reflection in the official policies of nuclear-weapon States, the need for a long-term vision to address non-proliferation concerns gains in urgency. Given the mutually reinforcing nature of disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, it is vital to ensure that any progress towards the disarmament of nuclear weapons not be hindered in any way by concerns over non-proliferation.

The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the terrible consequences arising from the use of such a weapon. That should be our ultimate goal — to ban those weapons outright in the same way that nations have come together to ban other weapons of mass destruction, which can cause human suffering, ruin economies and endanger the environment and the future survival of our planet.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.6.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I take the floor to introduce to the Committee the draft resolution entitled “Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”, contained in document A/C.1/64/L.6. This is the third such draft resolution to have been submitted to the First Committee.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects,

was originally to be enforced for 25 years. The 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT extended the Treaty in a package of agreements and commitments that included, in particular, the obligation of nuclear-weapon States to undertake “systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goals of eliminating those weapons” (NPT/CONF.1995/32, Part I, p. 10). The Conference also adopted a resolution on the Middle East.

As a follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations, the 2000 NPT Review Conference agreed by consensus on 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. However, 14 years after its indefinite extension and 39 years after the entry into force of the Treaty, these nuclear disarmament obligations have yet to be implemented.

The international community has expressed on many occasions its concern about the lack of progress by nuclear-weapon States towards accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals with a view to achieving nuclear disarmament. Serious concerns have also been expressed over the development of new types and generations of nuclear weapons.

Considering the fact that the NPT Review Conferences provide a good opportunity to hold the nuclear-weapon States accountable with respect to fulfilling their nuclear disarmament commitments, the draft resolution before the Committee urges the States parties to the Treaty to follow up on the implementation of the nuclear disarmament obligations under the Treaty agreed to at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty within the framework of Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty and their Preparatory Committees.

The content of the draft resolution is self-explanatory and has been taken wholesale from the consensus documents of the NPT Review Conferences. The text of this year’s draft resolution is similar to that of the previous one except for technical updating and the last preambular paragraph, which notes with satisfaction that the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty finalized the procedural arrangements for the Review Conference.

We are confident that the draft resolution will be supported by the majority of Member States that are sincere in promoting the credibility and integrity of the NPT, as was the case at the last session.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The First Committee has thus concluded its thematic discussion on nuclear weapons.

At the Committee's next meeting, we will begin our thematic discussion on other weapons of mass destruction. At that meeting, we will hear a briefing by the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.