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Chair: Mr. Viinanen (Finland)

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

Agenda items 87 to 106 (continued)

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

The Chair: As foreseen in our programme, today we will have an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of international organizations with mandates in this field.

The panel will include the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte; the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Jarmo Sareva; the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü; and Mr. Geoffrey Shaw, representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I warmly welcome our guests here today, and will first give them the floor to make statements. Thereafter, we will switch to an informal mode so that delegations may ask questions or make comments.

I begin by inviting the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Duarte, to take the floor.

Mr. Duarte (High Representative for Disarmament Affairs): I am very grateful for the opportunity to participate in this panel, together with my colleagues,

Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW); Mr. Jarmo Sareva, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament; and Mr. Geoffrey Shaw, representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Each of the members of this panel is uniquely prepared to address the Committee on the broad theme of the panel — the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of the respective organizations.

Many of us here today have heard the adage “Where you stand depends on where you sit”, so it should shock no one that there might be some variations in perspectives here on arms control and disarmament issues, given the different vantage points of the diverse organizations represented on the panel. Yet most noteworthy of all is the extent of agreement that exists among us all. We certainly share a deep common commitment to the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Our common cause is not simply in regulating such weapons or limiting the risk or frequency of their use, but also in abolishing and eliminating them safely and securely. And we all recognize the need to achieve these goals through a multilateral process.

Because we all sit in organizations that are working to assist their member States to achieve their agreed disarmament and non-proliferation goals, it might be better to focus less on where we work geographically than on the fact that we are all part of a common process of international organization aimed at

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freeing humanity from the insecurities and horrors from the use or threat of use of the world's most deadly and indiscriminate weapons. We are more likely to achieve that goal through a larger collective process of international organization than we are through the exclusive actions of any one of our organizations, however important they may be.

In that light, the views we express on this panel represent something far more profound than reflections of the interests of our respective institutions. We are here instead to share our perspectives on the various processes under way in the world community to achieve a higher dimension of international peace and security, one that is rooted in mutual assistance and cooperation, rather than threats of mutual annihilation, the exhaustion of scarce public resources or the destruction of our common natural environment and the lives and livelihoods of future generations.

From this perspective, I believe I can say that the state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament is showing some signs of gradual improvement, though it remains difficult to make confident predictions of the sustainability of that progress in the years ahead. Support for the key multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties — in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) — remains quite strong, as is international support for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, while the capabilities of the Treaty's verification regime continue to grow.

The strengths of those treaties are seen in the global support for the fundamental norms they represent, in their gradual but persistent evolution towards full universal membership, and in the dedicated work of the professionals who work in the organizations associated with those treaties — or, in the case of the BWC, in the extent to which the global taboo on biological weapons has been accepted and integrated into domestic laws and policies.

To some extent, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) has also helped to strengthen domestic infrastructures in achieving the twin common causes of preventing the proliferation and terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction. A similar process, however, has yet to develop to ensure that norms in the

field of disarmament are reflected in mandates of specific national agencies, domestic laws, military plans and doctrines, regulations and policies.

I believe that civil society and enlightened leadership from national leaders will eventually succeed in giving such norms the solid domestic foundation they will need not just to achieve the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction but to ensure that they will not reappear. That foundation, in short, is needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of global weapons of mass destruction disarmament.

Of course, our focus today is not just on weapons of mass destruction but also on the broad subject of arms control — a goal that the United Nations Charter calls the regulation of armaments. After 65 years, there has not been much progress in the field of regulating conventional arms. We have the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons; we have made some progress in developing global norms against the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons; many of our Member States have joined treaties to outlaw anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions; and next year the United Nations will host a major international conference to negotiate an arms trade treaty.

It is essential not only that these efforts succeed, but that further efforts be undertaken to reduce military spending and to limit the production, trade and improvement of conventional arms. The achievement of weapons of mass destruction disarmament must never be viewed as an invitation to the proliferation of conventional wars. The fact that there is no representative of an international agency focused on limiting the production or proliferation of conventional arms is quite telling, as we consider the views of this panel.

I say this in recognition also of the history of well-intentioned but futile efforts to control such arms in our predecessor institution, the League of Nations. Perhaps now the world is finally starting to move its collective efforts to a higher plane. Perhaps the evolution of the rule of law will soon catch up with the growth in conventional weapons capabilities. If so, enlightened national leadership, coupled with persistent energetic efforts from civil society, will no doubt share much of the credit, as I hope will be the case with respect to disarmament in the field of weapons of mass destruction.

However, those are not the only actors that will contribute to this larger process of advancing the global disarmament agenda. The activities of each of the organizations represented in this panel today will also make their own important contributions, as will countless regional and subregional organizations worldwide that are working on behalf of disarmament goals that serve the common good.

I am sure each of the speakers here today will describe in somewhat more detail what they are doing to fulfil their important mandates, and that delegations will also contribute their views on their activities. One area that merits some specific attention, however, relates to the productive cooperation that is going on between our various organizations.

There are many good examples of this. Personnel from the IAEA and the OPCW have actively participated in joint workshops and seminars organized by my own Office, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, to promote the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Last month, the United Nations hosted a high-level meeting on nuclear safety and security, which focused on the results of a system-wide United Nations study of the tragic accident at Fukushima, undertaken in close cooperation with the IAEA and with the participation of 16 United Nations agencies. That collective effort shows that while diverse international organizations have their own mandates, they can work together in bringing their individual skills and resources to bear in addressing common international challenges.

I also wish to mention in this context the United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament, established in 1978 by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and which has a long-standing tradition of visiting the IAEA and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in Vienna and the OPCW in The Hague. Such visits allow the fellows to get a better understanding of the respective organizations' mandates and activities and to learn about the many synergies between them. I am sure my colleagues on this panel today will have additional details on their history of productive cooperation.

The world community's resolve to pursue disarmament goals is unshakeable, though it is continually subject to new challenges. One of the most stubborn has been the widely recognized need to

overcome the negotiating stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. In this respect, the high-level meeting convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September 2010 on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral negotiations, as well as the General Assembly's plenary follow-up meeting last July, represented much more than simply occasions to criticize the status quo; they were also opportunities for the world community to voice its support for new progress in this field — progress in bringing the rule of law to disarmament.

As we look ahead to future cooperation, I can find no better counsel than that provided by the Secretary-General, who stated, in his address to the General Assembly at its plenary meeting last July to follow up on the High-level Meeting on the Conference on Disarmament:

“What is needed most of all is a closer alignment between policy priorities and multilateral disarmament goals ... The road ahead will not be easy. Yet we must never abandon multilateralism or our respect for universal norms. We must remain true to the ideals of the United Nations. In addressing disarmament, as with other global public goods, our goal is not to advance the preferences of the few, but the common interests of all.” (*A/65/PV.113, p. 3*)

The Chair: I give the floor to Mr. Jarmo Sareva, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Sareva (Conference on Disarmament): Allow me to continue the discussion in this panel where the High Representative for Disarmament left off, namely, the state of play in the Conference on Disarmament.

In Geneva, among the members of the Conference on Disarmament, there is a broadly shared feeling that the Conference is not delivering as it should and that the situation is far from ideal. This is also reflected here in the First Committee, among the wider United Nations membership, where the Conference seems to be very much at the heart of our deliberations this year, probably more so than at any time in the recent past.

As members are aware, the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has made several calls for the Conference to resume its substantive work. In September 2010, he convened a high-level meeting in

New York in support of the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

In late July, the General Assembly held plenary meetings under agenda item 162, entitled “Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”.

In addition, the Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters devoted its discussions during its 2011 session to the revitalization of the Conference. The Board made a number of suggestions which are being considered by the Secretary-General.

But the reality is that, 15 years after the conclusion of the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and more than two years after the short-lived promise of the decision for the establishment of a programme of work for the 2009 session (CD/1864), we have to report, once again, that despite the genuine efforts of the successive Presidents of the Conference, negotiations on any issue on its agenda have been absent.

Looking around the room, it is evident that our panel reflects some of the finest creations of the Conference on Disarmament and its predecessors — the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), through the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), through the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW); and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. I would also like to recall that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), which, along with the conventions just mentioned, represents another fundamental pillar of the international community’s efforts to combat the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, is also a product of the Conference on Disarmament.

Although the Biological Weapons Convention does not have an international organization equivalent to the IAEA, the OPCW or the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, it is a vibrant and active forum and one of the more positive areas of disarmament and non-proliferation activity. A recent innovation under the BWC is the Implementation Support Unit, established by the Sixth Review

Conference in 2006, in response to a perceived need for an institutional presence for the Convention.

The Unit, a small unit based at the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs but funded by the States parties to the Convention, has a mandate that charges it essentially with helping States parties help themselves by facilitating communication, supporting intersessional processes, liaising with international organizations, non-governmental organizations and academia, facilitating and organizing workshops around the world, and acting as a clearing house for offers of and requests for assistance. The Unit is widely regarded as a successful experiment, demonstrating that a very modest investment in resources can have significant practical results in strengthening the effectiveness of a multilateral security regime.

Today, however, there is nothing like the NPT, the BWC, the CWC or the CTBT in the Conference on Disarmament pipeline. How are we then to continue trying to break the deadlock next year, and possibly beyond? Or should one contemplate more drastic action on the future of the Conference? In short, is the Conference on Disarmament glass more than half empty or is it still at least half full?

At last week’s opening meeting of the Committee (see A/C.1/66/PV.3), the High Representative spoke about two reinforcing trends currently under way that could positively influence our work this year and in the years ahead. The first one he mentioned was democracy coming to disarmament. The second, on which he also dwelled extensively this afternoon, was the trend towards the gradual but persistent strengthening of the rule of law in the field of disarmament.

How then is the Conference faring in the face of these two trends? As for strengthening the rule of law, the Conference should be at the forefront, as its *raison d’être* is to serve as the world’s single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Now, whether one wishes to call it the “single” or the “sole” multilateral disarmament negotiating forum is these days more of a matter of theology. The fact is that the Conference may no longer live up to either designation.

As for democracy coming to disarmament, the Conference on Disarmament will, and should, always remain a negotiating forum of and among Governments. However, closer interaction with civil

society would be in the interest of the Conference, to help it avoid becoming even more of an ivory tower. As for a review and possible expansion of the Conference membership, we all know that this is for its current members to decide. I would only note that the privilege of membership entails responsibilities towards the broader international community, and that one such responsibility is that of working harder to strengthen a rule-based international order.

This panel deals with the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of the respective organizations. I would contend that the current state of affairs still offers us a window of opportunity to further strengthen the rule of law in disarmament through multilateral efforts. However, that window may close one day. As the saying goes, one should hammer one's iron when it is glowing hot, but the Conference on Disarmament is clearly not hammering — that is, negotiating. It should not risk losing a historic opportunity.

The Conference on Disarmament glass therefore appears more than half empty to some observers and practitioners. They claim that the Conference is today more a part of the problem rather of the solution. Their reasoning is that, by missing a precious opportunity, the Conference adds negative value to the collective disarmament efforts of the international community.

Yet, a fundamental question arises: Would any other negotiating arrangement work better, especially in the area of weapons of mass destruction? Some of the laudable creations of like-minded disarmament processes of recent years in the conventional weapons field are still far from universal, more so than most creations of the CD. Like the United Nations itself, and despite all its imperfections, the CD belongs to that category of bodies which, if it did not exist, would have to be invented. It might be in a slightly different form and with somewhat different rules — addressing inefficiencies such as the monthly rotating presidency and the need to adopt the agenda and the programme of work on an annual basis — but we would have to try to establish something like the CD.

Such a task of invention or reinvention would, however, be immensely complex. Success would be far from guaranteed. Tearing something down is usually easier and much faster than rebuilding. Creating new institutions is easier after a fundamental crisis, simply because there may not be any other choice. Let us

therefore hope that we will not have to wait until an international crisis forces us to revitalize the disarmament machinery.

The glass, then, is at least half-full to some others. They point out that even under its current deliberative identity the CD is useful and irreplaceable. One can easily contend that the CD needs to be preserved to allow for the multilateral disarmament agenda to winter safely. Then the question just arises, as we ask in my native Finland, whether the crane will freeze to death before the swamp thaws in the spring.

At this moment, a number of wide-ranging proposals are being discussed here in the First Committee that may impact the future of the Conference. I believe this is one of the most important meetings of the First Committee in the history of the Conference on Disarmament. The recommendations of the General Assembly carry an immense weight of legitimacy, especially when adopted without a vote. However, any agreement to revitalize the work of the Conference will ultimately have to come as a result of an agreement among its members.

I wish to conclude by emphasizing that, as the Secretary-General of the Conference stated in his vision paper this past summer, every effort should be made to revalidate the Conference as a single platform for conducting multilateral negotiations on disarmament issues. This is also the approach that I hope will be adopted by the First Committee during the current, important session.

The Chair: I now call on Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Mr. Üzümcü (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons): It is a great pleasure for me to address the First Committee once again. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) attaches particular importance to its cooperation with the United Nations.

In April next year, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) will complete 15 years of operation. During this time, that unprecedented multilateral treaty has brought significant benefits and advanced the objectives of international security. It is the only international agreement that has led to the rollback of chemical weapons programmes. It has established a regime for the verification of the global

chemical industry to ensure that chemical weapons are never produced again. International cooperation activities, both for assistance with and protection against chemical weapons as well as for the promotion of chemistry for peaceful purposes, are an essential feature of the Convention.

Until now, chemical disarmament has remained the principal core objective of the OPCW. Eighty-five per cent of its inspection resources have traditionally been devoted to disarmament, verifying to date the destruction of nearly 70 per cent of the total declared stockpiles of chemical weapons. Three of the declared possessor States — Albania, a State party and India — have completed the elimination of their stockpiles. The two largest possessor States — the Russian Federation and the United States of America — continue to make progress towards the complete destruction of their chemical weapons. The Russian Federation has so far destroyed over 22,000 metric tons of chemical warfare agents. That represents 55 per cent of its chemical weapons stockpiles. The figure for the United States is 25,000 metric tons or 90 per cent of its stockpiles.

The situation in Libya has been a concern for the international community over the last few months. The secretariat has closely followed that situation and has remained in regular contact with the Libyan representatives to the OPCW, as well as with the national authorities. We have received assurances that the Libyan chemical weapons stockpile is under the effective control of the National Transitional Council forces. The secretariat is currently in discussions with Libya regarding the resumption of the destruction of its remaining chemical weapons.

The final extended deadline for the destruction of all declared chemical weapons will expire in April next year. The Russian Federation and the United States of America have both indicated that they will not be able to complete the destruction of all their chemical weapons by that date. Significant technical, financial and safety hurdles and challenges are the reasons for the delay. Over the past year, the Executive Council has been intensively deliberating this issue.

In statements issued as recently as 4 October, the Foreign Minister of Russia and the Secretary of State of the United States have reaffirmed their strong commitment to the Convention and their obligation to eliminate their remaining stockpiles as soon as possible. I feel confident that the policymaking organs

of the OPCW will take full account of the commitment of the two possessor States and will soon adopt a forward-looking decision based on the considerable work that has already been done in this regard. The gist of the emerging approach is to enable the two possessor States to complete their destruction programmes while they, on their part, agree to implement an enhanced package of transparency- and confidence-building measures.

By April 2012, three quarters of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles are expected to have been destroyed, and by the year 2016 only 1 per cent will remain to be eliminated. We envisage significant reductions in inspections to verify the destruction of chemical weapons in the coming years. In 2012, the size of the OPCW inspectorate will be reduced by nearly a quarter.

The long-term objective of the CWC — permanent security against the threat of chemical weapons — will, however, endure. To serve that end, the organization will need to transition from one that has so far primarily dealt with eliminating existing arsenals to one that prevents their re-emergence in the future. The OPCW will also promote security and protection against the misuse of toxic chemicals.

An advisory panel on future priorities of the OPCW that I commissioned has submitted its report, which was recently discussed informally with permanent representatives of States parties at a specially organized retreat. States parties have underlined their strong support for the Convention, as well as for its core objectives. At the same time, it was recognized that adaptation was necessary to ensure that the organization be able to respond to a fast-changing world.

A comprehensive debate on future priorities of the OPCW will continue in the coming months. Contributions of States parties to those discussions of a strategic nature will be most valuable. In this context, it would be useful to hold a meeting of senior disarmament officials from capitals early next year in The Hague.

A key area to strengthen is effective global implementation of the Convention at the domestic level. More than 50 per cent of States parties need to take action to ensure that their legislation covers all key areas of the Convention. Among the many changes in the security environment is the threat posed by

non-State actors. That calls for vigilance and for States parties to enact and enforce effective controls covering the manufacture, transfer and use of dual-use materials. This safety net needs to be anchored within their internal legal systems.

Preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons as well as their misuse is a multidimensional undertaking. It entails not only a strengthening of the industry verification regime of the Convention, but also a sustained effort to keep abreast of developments in science and technology. These could lead to the discovery of new types of chemical weapons, as well as novel methods of production that could include processes emerging from the convergence occurring in life sciences.

A broader approach to security also underlines the need to focus on chemical safety and security issues. Only last month, the Organization hosted a major conference on international cooperation and chemical safety and security, as a contribution to the International Year of Chemistry proclaimed by the General Assembly. A key result of the Conference is the clear recognition by States parties that the OPCW is a forum suited to and appropriate for concerted action in the field of chemical safety and security.

We must be prepared to deal with the threat of use of chemical weapons or use of toxic chemicals as weapons. The Convention is not yet universally accepted, and today there exist new threats such as terrorism. The OPCW must therefore continue to retain core competencies, particularly the expertise to handle chemical demilitarization, and conduct challenge inspections and investigations of alleged use.

We must also strengthen our ability to respond to the growing interest among our members to increase their national capacities for emergency response and consequence mitigation. The provisions of the Convention that entitle our States parties to receive assistance and protection in emergency situations will continue to remain of high importance.

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemistry was an important incentive for many countries to join the Convention and remains a major motivation for them to remain engaged. We look forward to deepening our international cooperation programmes while ensuring that they are optimized to serve the Convention's effective implementation as well.

The near-universal acceptance of the CWC with its 188 members is cause for satisfaction. However, the goal of a world free from chemical weapons is not assured without the adherence of eight States Members of the United Nations that have not yet joined the Convention. I wish to take this opportunity to appeal to all those States to accede to the Convention as soon as possible.

The CWC offers both a security guarantee and a humanitarian purpose. Its acceptance should be considered independent of regional considerations or other linkages. The inhumane nature of chemical weapons and the lengthy effort that led to their total prohibition have established a global norm. Accepting to be legally bound by this norm will signify support for the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and will promote regional security in regions such as North-East Asia and the Middle East.

In this context, the OPCW remains prepared to contribute to the conference to be convened in 2012 on the Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, as decided by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The General Assembly adopts by consensus an annual resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I wish to thank Poland for its consistent contribution towards the adoption of the resolution, which manifests the strong support that we receive from the United Nations. I am pleased to state that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has accepted my invitation to attend a session of the Conference of the States Parties. He has long considered a visit to the OPCW, and has tentatively agreed to address the closing meeting of the sixteenth session of the Conference later this year.

Given the importance of charting a future course while it adapts its programmes to contemporary needs, the OPCW will seek to organize a meeting during the high-level segment of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly next year. The purpose of that meeting will be to strengthen the traditional support that the OPCW has enjoyed at the United Nations, while benefiting from the vision and advice of senior officials who will be present in New York. The occasion will also lend support to our preparations for the third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which is envisaged to take place in 2013.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Geoffrey Shaw.

Mr. Shaw (International Atomic Energy Agency): Ensuring that nuclear science and technology are used exclusively for peaceful purposes is the basic pillar upon which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was established more than five decades ago. To achieve this goal, a central function of the Agency is verifying that States fully comply with their non-proliferation obligations to confirm that nuclear material is being used for peaceful purposes.

Most countries around the world use nuclear technologies in health care and nutrition, food security, the environment and water resource management, to name just a few. Some 30 countries currently use nuclear power to generate electricity. Continued growth in the use of nuclear power over the next two decades is expected, despite the Fukushima Daiichi accident, albeit at a slower rate than previously projected. Clearly, any expansion in the use of nuclear energy must occur in a way that is safe and secure and does not contribute to proliferation. The Agency has a central role to play in these efforts.

Through verification, the IAEA seeks to provide credible assurances to the international community that nuclear materials and technologies under safeguards are not misused for military purposes. Since he took office in December 2009, IAEA Director General Amano's approach to safeguards implementation has been very simple — all safeguards agreements between member States and the Agency, and other relevant obligations such as Security Council resolutions, should be implemented fully.

What is the current state of play of the safeguards system? As I reported to this body last year (see A/C.1/65/PV.9), the Agency's legal authority for verification is not universal. All non-nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are required to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency. Regrettably, there remain 15 non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT without comprehensive safeguards agreements in force. These States should bring such agreements into force without delay.

The Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) reaffirmed that comprehensive safeguards agreements pursuant to article III of the Treaty provide for verification by the IAEA of the correctness and completeness of a non-nuclear-weapon State's declaration. Although the Agency has the authority under a comprehensive safeguards agreement to verify the peaceful use of all nuclear material in a State, the tools available to the Agency under such an agreement are limited.

Since their inception, safeguards have continually evolved. The additional protocol, introduced in 1997, greatly enhances the Agency's verification capability by expanding access to information and relevant locations. It enables the Agency to provide credible assurance not only about the non-diversion of declared nuclear material but also about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. Such credible assurances build international and regional confidence and thereby contribute to reducing perceptions of threat and thus the risk of the further spread of nuclear weapons.

So far, 110 countries have brought additional protocols into force. The IAEA Director General continues to encourage remaining States to conclude additional protocols as soon as possible. He also calls on States with small-quantity protocols that have not yet done so to amend or rescind those protocols.

I would now like to turn to nuclear disarmament. Credible verification is central to a transparent disarmament process. With its knowledge and expertise, the IAEA can facilitate disarmament by independently verifying that nuclear materials removed from dismantled weapons are never again used for military purposes. The Agency was asked last year by the Russian Federation and the United States to verify implementation of their agreement on the disposition of plutonium no longer required for defence purposes. Agency experts have been working with both countries on a draft agreement, and good progress has been made. It will represent a unique example of transparency in this field. The Agency is preparing an information paper on this subject that will be presented to the IAEA Board of Governors in the coming weeks.

The Agency can also assist in the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, when requested. The existing nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties recognize the verification role of the IAEA through the

implementation of Agency safeguards. The IAEA has been asked to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards in the Middle East to support the efforts by States to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region.

To this end, Director General Amano will convene a forum for IAEA member States in Vienna on 21 and 22 November. The forum will provide an opportunity to look at the relevance of the experience of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones for the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. The Permanent Representative of Norway to the IAEA, Ambassador Jan Petersen, will serve as chairperson for this important gathering. Consultations have begun and will continue over the coming weeks to help ensure that the Forum is a success.

Finally, let me turn to nuclear security, which remains an extremely important issue for all States. While it is primarily a national responsibility, the Agency helps countries to develop a sustainable nuclear security capacity to protect nuclear and other radioactive material and associated facilities against malicious acts. The Agency's nuclear security programme covers everything from developing standards and providing legislative assistance to advice on physical protection and radiation detection and response. It helps States to ensure nuclear security at major public events, for example the London Olympic Games next year. Such practical assistance also helps States to meet the requirements pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Illicit trafficking remains a real and current concern. The Agency receives reports virtually every second day of a new incident involving unauthorized possession or attempts to sell or smuggle nuclear material or radioactive sources. Much has been done to improve nuclear security globally, but more clearly needs to be done.

Progress towards the entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material remains slow, six years after its adoption. Adherence to the Amendment can significantly reduce the risk of nuclear material falling into the wrong hands. Parties to the Convention are urged to work to accelerate the entry into force of the Amendment.

Many of the challenges facing the IAEA today are very different from those envisaged by our

founders more than 50 years ago. The possibility of nuclear terrorism, for example, was simply not an issue in the 1950s. Today, it is high on the agenda of world leaders. Despite those challenges, the Agency's "Atoms for Peace" mandate of making the benefits of nuclear science and technology available for peaceful, but not military, purposes remains valid. The Agency's verification and nuclear security activities contribute to ensuring the safe and secure use of nuclear technology and assist efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Chair: I thank Mr. Shaw for his statement.

In order to provide for an interactive discussion with our panellists, I will suspend the meeting to enable us to continue in an informal mode.

The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 4.05 p.m.

Mr. Tilegen (Kazakhstan): Since closing down the world's second largest nuclear-test site and renouncing the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world on 29 August 1991, soon after its independence, Kazakhstan has been in the vanguard of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation within the context of multilateral action for the past two decades. Marking the twentieth anniversary of that historic decision, my country is moving ahead with long-term goals, as well as taking practical steps towards achieving the abolition of nuclear weapons within the context of global multilateral action.

The immediate target before the international community is to implement the action points that emerged from the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). As a key step, Kazakhstan therefore calls upon all Member States to ensure the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to accept the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the additional protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement.

The continued stagnation and ineffectiveness of the NPT regime have made possible the spread of nuclear weapons and the emergence of new de facto nuclear States. Kazakhstan supports the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) without further delay, so that its Preparatory

Commission can become a full-fledged verification organization. Through our own five 24-hour tracking stations, my country is engaged in the development and functioning of the international monitoring system and on-site inspection techniques.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is striving vigorously to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament (CD). It is now up to Member States to demonstrate an unequivocal political commitment to overcoming differences. The CD must once again become a robust catalyst for the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and on the issue of peaceful uses of outer space through a legally binding treaty. Those are among the most pressing items on the global security agenda. It is imperative to further advance the agenda for the prevention of an arms race in outer space by engaging other international bodies that address the issues relating to space exploration, on which many countries are embarking.

With the increasing demand for nuclear energy, Kazakhstan supports multilateral approaches and is ready to host a nuclear fuel bank under IAEA auspices to allow countries to purchase nuclear fuel, which would help to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. My country supports the legitimate and inalienable right of every NPT State party to develop and use peaceful nuclear energy in compliance with the agreed regulations imposed by the IAEA, and thereby eliminate all possibilities of any monopoly or double standards, an issue that our President has repeatedly brought to the world's attention.

As a member of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, Kazakhstan is meeting its obligations with regard to preventing nuclear proliferation and terrorism by conforming with the requirements of the relevant IAEA legal instruments and enacting the corresponding national legislation at home. However, it is crucial that the nuclear Powers extend full negative guarantees in order for the Zone to be viable, a point explicitly made by President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan when he addressed the General Assembly in the general debate on 21 September (see A/66/PV.11). My country is also a vocal proponent of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone and is ready to engage actively in all deliberations and actions aimed at the achievement of that goal. We will also continue our efforts to ensure that the entire world eventually becomes a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Kazakhstan ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism on 14 May 2008, and is an active partner in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Last month, Kazakhstan hosted a training workshop of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for Central Asian experts, with support from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Governments of Norway and the United States.

Lastly, the International Day against Nuclear Tests, observed for the second time this year at the initiative of my country and other sponsors of resolution 64/35, has served as an effective advocacy vehicle for harnessing Government and public opinion in the quest to eliminate nuclear tests and nuclear explosions. To mark the Day and the twentieth anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, a Forum for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World is being held today in Astana.

In his address to the Assembly this year, President Nazarbayev also proclaimed the need to begin drafting a universal declaration for a nuclear-weapon-free world, as the most acceptable step that can be taken before a legally binding Convention or framework of arrangements is put in place.

We thank the previous President of the Assembly, Mr. Deiss; Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; Member States; the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte; the Office for Disarmament Affairs; and the Department of Public Information, as well as civil society, for their solidarity with Kazakhstan's efforts to work steadily towards the goal of the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Gumbi (South Africa): The 2011 session of the First Committee is taking place at a time when the idea that nuclear weapons can and should be eliminated has attracted greater interest and achieved more credibility. In that connection, the idea has acquired high-profile supporters, while the international community has also been addressing it constructively through the "global zero" discourse.

Despite the fact that South Africa, like most non-nuclear-weapon States, welcomes those developments, our hopes are beginning to dwindle owing to the absence of meaningful progress towards nuclear disarmament. South Africa believes that the

situation could be salvaged if civil society and non-nuclear-weapon States were to combine their efforts to prevent nuclear-weapon States from procrastinating or even reneging on the implementation of their nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Any actions on our part inconsistent with that objective would perpetuate nuclear proliferation and even jeopardize our efforts to combat nuclear terrorism.

South Africa has consistently reaffirmed its full commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons and to the multilateral system that seeks to advance that objective. South Africa strongly believes that the only absolute guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination and the assurance that they will never be produced again. The longer nuclear weapons are possessed and modernized, and their use legally is rationalized by some, the harder it will be to achieve their elimination and prevent their proliferation.

It is regrettable that significant progress has not yet been realized in the area of nuclear disarmament. South Africa has always been of the view that any presumption of being able to have nuclear weapons for an indefinite time will lead only to increasing insecurity and a continuing arms race. South Africa also believes that neither the possession of nuclear weapons nor the pursuit of such weapons can enhance international peace and security, and that the primary responsibility for their elimination lies with those States that continue to regard nuclear weapons as central to their security. Those States should engage, without further delay, in an accelerated process of negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

South Africa believes that a step in that direction would augur well for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which continues to serve as the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. In addition to that, South Africa believes that increased momentum towards nuclear disarmament will serve the good purpose of reconfirming the relevance and validity of past NPT agreements, including the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to complete the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament. Such a step would also bolster the credibility of the Final

Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), which contains a number of important new measures aimed at achieving our goal of a world free from the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

Over the years, we have agreed on a number of measures for nuclear disarmament. My delegation believes it is imperative that those undertakings now be turned into concrete actions in order to restore confidence in nuclear disarmament. In the view of my delegation, such actions should not only entail reductions in the number of nuclear weapons but should also include a fundamental review of security doctrines, as well as other transparent, irreversible and verifiable measures aimed at achieving a world free from the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

South Africa is committed to a systematic and progressive approach to nuclear disarmament aimed at constructing a comprehensive framework of mutually reinforcing instruments for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. In that connection, South Africa believes that progress towards nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament would benefit from the commencement of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. South Africa believes that a step in that direction would fulfil both non-proliferation and disarmament objectives.

Likewise, South Africa is of the view that those countries that have not yet done so should redouble their efforts to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in order to achieve its long-overdue entry into force. The CTBT is a key instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Our common objective, namely, a world free of the threat of nuclear weapons, is being impeded by the continued non-entry of the Treaty into force. The Treaty's entry into force remains a pressing goal and a non-negotiable commitment.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, States that have foresworn the nuclear-weapons option have the right to negative security assurances. The NPT is the primary international legal agreement under which non-nuclear-weapon States have forgone the nuclear-weapons option. South Africa therefore regards the provision of internationally legally binding security assurances as a key element of the NPT, and will

consequently continue to pursue negative security assurances within that framework.

Furthermore, South Africa believes that a further step towards the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons could include a legally binding instrument banning the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Such an instrument would be consistent with the 1996 International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (see A/51/218) and could serve as a useful interim step towards total elimination.

South Africa is of the view that in order to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons, it is incumbent upon us all to begin timely preparations that will culminate in the negotiation of a nuclear-weapons convention or a framework or set of instruments for the complete and sustainable elimination of nuclear weapons.

South Africa continues to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world, including in the Middle East. South Africa welcomes the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference aimed at the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and in particular the convening of a conference on the subject in 2012. South Africa also welcomes the ratification of Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Pelindaba by the Russian Federation and the intention of the United States of America to do the same.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that nuclear disarmament remains our highest priority. Nuclear weapons are a source of insecurity, not security. They have no place in today's security environment — a new reality marked by growing interconnectedness and common threats that transcend traditional boundaries. That reality requires a different approach that takes into consideration not only the narrow national security interests of States but also shared, international and human security dimensions.

Ms. Kennedy (United States of America): Since President Obama outlined his agenda for nuclear disarmament in Prague in 2009, much has been achieved in moving towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. As we look forward to the work that remains to be done, the United States firmly believes that the best way to achieve that worthy goal is to

proceed via a series of realistic, progressive and mutually reinforcing steps.

Such steps include continued reductions in the numbers and roles of nuclear weapons, an end to nuclear testing worldwide and an internationally verified legal ban on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. In that way, each step builds on the accomplishments and momentum of the preceding ones and takes into account changes in the international security environment.

In contrast, there are those who want to skip intermediate steps and immediately begin work on a mandate to begin negotiations on a nuclear-weapons convention by creating an all-in-one framework with a fixed timeline for dealing with all the complex issues surrounding nuclear disarmament at once. While we recognize the noble objectives of such an effort, we believe seeking a nuclear-weapons convention — or a conference on nuclear disarmament with a mandate to negotiate a nuclear-weapons convention — is much less likely to produce progress on the goals we all seek. Trying to combine all the issues into a single negotiation would be a formula for deadlock, in our view, draining away the international community's energy and attention from practical, achievable steps it could undertake.

Indeed, it could undermine the step-by-step approach to disarmament adopted by parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which has resulted in actual progress towards disarmament, including the elimination of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons since the end of the Cold War. The United States accepts that progressive steps among States possessing nuclear weapons are necessary to making real progress towards nuclear disarmament. Those steps are also critical to maintaining and strengthening the non-proliferation regime, which in turn will help foster an international security environment conducive to that effort.

The Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms — commonly known as the New START treaty — which entered into force on 5 February 2011, is such a step. When it is fully implemented, the Treaty will result in the lowest number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed by our two countries since the

1950s. I am delighted to note that next Thursday, 20 October, we will have our lead negotiator on that Treaty, Assistant Secretary Rose Gottemoeller, here to give a joint briefing, with her colleague from the Russian Federation, on the extraordinarily good implementation of that Treaty. I hope everyone here will join us and our Russian colleagues.

The United States is committed to continuing to reduce the number of nuclear weapons through a step-by-step process, including the pursuit of a future agreement with Russia for broad reductions in all categories of nuclear weapons — strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed.

In addition to such bilateral steps, we are continuing the multilateral dialogue among the nuclear-weapon States, begun in London in 2009 and continued in Paris last summer, to address issues of greater transparency, verification and confidence-building measures. That undertaking reflects the fundamental importance of transparency in building mutual understanding and confidence, and the need to discuss issues such as reporting, nuclear doctrine and verification, if we are to establish a firm foundation for further disarmament efforts. In order to facilitate the evolution of that dialogue into a regular process, we have agreed to hold a third conference in the context of the 2012 Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference. Further, as agreed at Paris, the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) met in Geneva on 30 August to discuss how to launch negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament, and then met again here in New York with other relevant parties on 7 October to continue that discussion.

Just as important as reducing the numbers of nuclear weapons is constraining the capability to develop new weapons. Key steps in that regard will be the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. The United States is committed to pursuing the ratification of the CTBT and its entry into force at the earliest possible date. While the United States has abided by the core prohibition of the CTBT through our nuclear testing moratorium promulgated in 1992, the principal benefit of the Treaty — that of constraining all States from testing in a legally binding manner — still eludes us.

While a fissile material cut-off treaty remains a top priority for the United States and a majority of other countries, the inability to achieve consensus within the Conference on Disarmament so as to have negotiations begin continues to be a source of great disappointment. In that regard, the United States, the P-5, other partners and indeed the international community continue to meet with a view to charting a productive path forward on that important issue.

Moreover, the United States and the Russian Federation recently brought the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement and its 2006 and 2010 Protocols into force. The Agreement, as amended, commits each country to dispose of no less than 34 metric tons of excess weapons-grade plutonium, which represents enough material for about 17,000 nuclear weapons.

Finally, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones represents an important step in advancing the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and is a high priority for the United States. In May, the Obama Administration submitted the protocols to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the Treaty on the South-Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone to the United States Senate for its advice and consent for ratification. We have consulted with the parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and have been working intensively, here in New York, with our partners in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other P-5 States to be in a position to sign the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty protocol.

The United States has been working hard with fellow depositaries, the United Kingdom and Russia, and in consultation with the Middle East region, for the appointment of a host and facilitator for a regional conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. On behalf of my Government, let me reaffirm our commitment to achieving the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Mihut (Romania): As this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your assumption of your position and assure you of our full readiness to support you in accomplishing your tasks.

Our current debate on nuclear issues should take into account that it is taking place almost one and a half years after a successful Review Conference of the

Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and a little over six months prior to the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the next Review Conference. We therefore believe that it is high time that we take stock of what has been achieved in implementing the Action Plan and identify areas that we have to focus on in the short term.

We should start by reiterating that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation system, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with the Treaty's article VI and an important element in the further development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Its core objectives are even more valid today, given the current proliferation risks, and they must be preserved and further strengthened.

Romania welcomes the relevant recent developments that have taken place in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. For example, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) gained in stature with the Berlin statement of 30 April, which contains concrete measures to be taken in the near future. Moreover, active engagement towards reaching "global zero" was also acknowledged by the third NPDI ministerial meeting, which took place in New York on 21 September.

Another major event that occurred this year was the follow-up meeting to the 2010 NPT Review Conference held by the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) — nuclear-weapon States — in Paris on 30 June. We highly value the fact that the P-5 reaffirmed their determination to implement the commitments made at the 2010 Review Conference and achieve further progress on the objectives of the NPT.

As a member of the European Union (EU), Romania took an active part in the seminar organized by the EU in Brussels last July in preparation for the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, planned for 2012. Bearing in mind the delicate process involved in the lead-up to next year, we would of course encourage all parties to work diligently towards a fruitful conference.

As we all know, the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means was the

theme of the general debate of the current session of the General Assembly. Inspired by that theme, Romania has worked to facilitate consensus in some of the debates held by the international community this year in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. For example, Romania held the presidency of the fifty-fifth regular session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), held in Vienna from 19 to 23 September. The representatives at the Conference expressed during an assessment of the session that the debates had benefited from a positive and constructive atmosphere that made possible the adoption of several decisions relevant to the Agency's future activities, such as the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and the IAEA's programme and budget for 2012-2013.

As a country with a civilian nuclear programme that conforms to international standards, Romania has promoted respect for each nation's right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, provided that non-proliferation, safety and security requirements are entirely met.

Another concrete action undertaken by Romania was the 2011 National Data Centres Evaluation Workshop, jointly organized by the Romanian Government and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and held in Bucharest from 3 to 7 October. The Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission attended the opening of the workshop and confirmed that he had held talks with high-ranking Romanian officials on the implementation of the Treaty.

The workshop itself benefited from the presence of dozens of experts from 32 States signatories of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which demonstrated the fact that the CTBTO verification regime is already operational. Nevertheless, the Treaty's entry into force is still pending.

In conclusion, let me say once again that Romania's immediate priority in the realm of nuclear weapons remains the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, along with verification provisions, as a means of enhancing disarmament and non-proliferation, in line with documents agreed at the Conference on Disarmament. We also maintain that there is a connection between the

launch of negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty and the revival of activity in the Conference on Disarmament, where a deadlock has, unjustifiably, prevailed over the past 15 years.

Ms. Adamson (United Kingdom): The continued existence of nuclear weapons has implications for everyone's security. The ways in which we seek to prevent their spread and to move safely to a world without them are critically important for all of us. This year's session of the First Committee provides us with an essential opportunity to take stock of the progress that has been made on the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda and to look forward to the future challenges that we must meet. While it is right that we mark successes and express appreciation for positive developments, we also have to look forward so as to ensure that we have the structures and the shared commitment to address the real challenges of today and the future.

The United Kingdom is committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We have a strong record of fulfilling our disarmament commitments and of living up to our international legal obligations that flow from our membership in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a nuclear-weapon State.

While nuclear weapons exist and while the future security environment remains so uncertain, the Government of the United Kingdom remains committed to retaining a credible minimum nuclear deterrent. We set out a number of new disarmament measures exactly a year ago in our Strategic Defence and Security Review, announcing that by the 2020s we would reduce the number of warheads on-board each of our submarines from 48 to 40; reduce the requirement for operationally available warheads to no more than 120; reduce the number of operational missiles on the Vanguard class submarines to no more than 8; and reduce our overall nuclear-weapon stockpile to no more than 180.

We also announced a new, stronger security assurance that the United Kingdom will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States that are parties to the NPT and in compliance with their obligations under the Treaty. On 29 June, we announced that the programme for implementing those warhead reductions had

commenced and that at least one of our submarines now carries a maximum of 40 nuclear warheads.

So where are we now? The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was a success. We secured for the first time a cross-pillar Action Plan with real commitments across all the pillars and a decision on the Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We need to continue to build on the momentum from that success and use it to strengthen the NPT as the cornerstone of the international rules-based architecture.

Work has already begun on translating the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. 1)) from a plan into tangible action. We should all recognize and welcome both the bilateral and multilateral progress that has been made in 2011. In February, the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty entered into force. At the end of June, the five NPT-recognized nuclear-weapon States took part in Paris in the second conference of the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5). We are also delighted to have resumed discussions, together with our P-5 partners, with the States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, on how the P-5 might be able to sign the Protocol to the Treaty of Bangkok.

The P-5 meeting in Paris was a vital opportunity for the five nuclear-weapon States to focus on concrete progress towards fulfilling our NPT disarmament obligations. It was significant not only for the substantive discussions we had, but also for building trust and confidence among the five nuclear-weapon States, and for the public outreach event with non-governmental organizations and non-nuclear-weapon States. We were delighted that the conference set in motion a number of new confidence-building initiatives on which the P-5 will collaborate, including a working group on nuclear weapons definitions and terminology. Our discussions covered the range of disarmament, transparency and confidence-building issues. We look forward to continuing those discussions in the months and years ahead. The P-5 also discussed the report that we are called upon to present under the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan.

But the NPT is not just about the role that the P-5 plays in fulfilling its disarmament commitments. All parties to the NPT share the responsibility to strengthen it, to ensure that all three pillars are strengthened, to deliver on the agreed Action Plan and to report their progress in doing so. The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative is a great example of countries taking a lead to make progress across the pillars of the NPT. And we have been working for a number of years with a non-nuclear-weapon State, Norway, to try to overcome some of the challenges associated with the verification of nuclear disarmament.

The United Kingdom-Norway initiative, which is the first of its kind, has seen our two countries carry out groundbreaking research into the verification of nuclear-warhead dismantlement. The work was founded on the principle that any future disarmament process should be underpinned by a verification regime that can demonstrate with confidence that nuclear disarmament has taken place. The collaboration has successfully demonstrated that nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States can work together to take forward our disarmament commitments without breaching our respective non-proliferation obligations under the NPT, compromising national security or undermining standards of safety and security. Developing effective and mutually trusted solutions to technical and procedural disarmament obstacles will be vital for enhancing trust between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States and for building an effective system of verification.

We look forward to hosting, in partnership with Norway, a technically focused workshop in London in early December to develop this work and to share our progress with technical experts from those non-nuclear-weapon States that have expressed an interest in the research conducted to date. As announced following the P-5 conference in Paris, the United Kingdom will also host a separate confidential expert-level meeting with our P-5 partners to discuss lessons learned from the research.

In addition to the work that the United Kingdom has been doing unilaterally, bilaterally and with other nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States on disarmament, we continue to press strongly for progress on the key multilateral instruments that will help us to move towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) continues to be one of the United Kingdom's key disarmament priorities. We were one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Treaty, and we continue to maintain a voluntary moratorium on nuclear-test explosions. We welcome and congratulate Ghana and Guinea on their ratifications during the past year, bringing the Treaty closer to universality. In support of that aim, the United Kingdom is backing a project to promote ratification among small island countries.

The United Kingdom strongly supports the work of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) in building up the Treaty's global verification regime. We have provided experts to assist with efforts to establish such a viable regime, which is ready for entry into operation. The United Kingdom looks forward to co-hosting with the CTBTO an on-site inspection meeting for P-5 experts later this year. We are pleased that the integrated field exercise is on track to take place in 2014.

In addition to the entry into force of the CTBT, we urgently want to see the start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). We see such a treaty as a vital component in our ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons, constituting an important building block of the international architecture, alongside a strengthened nuclear non-proliferation treaty and the entry into force of the CTBT.

We share the international community's overwhelming feeling of frustration that another year has gone by with the Conference on Disarmament still unable to start negotiations or even agree on a programme of work. Having said this, we must recognize that some progress has been made. Our Australian and Japanese colleagues got the ball rolling by holding a number of productive side events in Geneva, which gave us the chance to conduct informative technical discussions on some of the elements of a future treaty. Since then, the P-5 have been working closely together to fulfil our commitment in Paris to renewing efforts to promote negotiations in the Conference. We met in Geneva at the end of August, and last Friday we met with other relevant parties to discuss the way forward.

There are many complex issues associated with an FMCT. Breaking the deadlock in the Conference on

Disarmament will not be easy, and we must focus our collective efforts towards that end. The Conference remains the only option for negotiations on an FMCT because it includes all of the key nuclear players. The inclusion of all the key players in any treaty is essential if that treaty is to fulfil the international community's ambition to strengthen the global disarmament and non-proliferation framework in a meaningful way and enhance global security.

At this point I will truncate my statement, but it should be considered delivered as in its written form.

With regard to some of the other important issues of non-proliferation, the agreement to hold a regional conference in 2012 to discuss issues relevant to a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery, represented a major step forward. We believe that that goal is achievable, but it will not happen overnight or without the commitment and support of all States in the region. The United Kingdom has been working hard, with the United States and Russia and in consultation with the region, towards the appointment of a host and facilitator for the conference. We look forward to an announcement on this soon.

I also wish to mention that the challenge to our collective endeavour and collective responsibility is nowhere more evident than in the threat posed by the development of nuclear weapons in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran. In the interests of time I will not read all of my prepared statement on that subject, but it would have been delivered as presented in the written version.

Finally, I will conclude by reiterating the United Kingdom's commitment to continue to work both with other nuclear-weapon States and with non-nuclear-weapon States to strengthen the NPT as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime. It is incumbent on all of us to take those essential mutually reinforcing steps as we seek our goal of a world without nuclear weapons and from which we have removed the incentives for proliferation.

The Chair: We have now heard the last speaker on my list for today. Before we adjourn, I would like to remind all delegations that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions, as agreed at the

organizational meeting, is tomorrow, Thursday, 13 October, at 12 noon. I urge all delegations to submit their draft resolutions as soon as possible — in the next few hours, I hope. However, I have been approached by a number of delegations asking that the deadline be moved to a later date. The reason for those requests is that more time is needed to finalize ongoing negotiations on the texts of some of these draft resolutions. I therefore propose that the deadline be moved to Friday, 14 October, at 3 p.m., which gives us 27 more hours to prepare draft resolutions. Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to proceed accordingly.

It was so decided.

The Chair: I urge all delegations to kindly adhere to that deadline, so as to enable the Secretariat to process documents in a timely manner. As I said earlier, the sooner draft resolutions are submitted, the better for the organization of the Committee's work.

I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Alasaniya (Secretary of the Committee): A meeting of the sponsors of the draft resolution entitled "Compliance with non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament agreements and commitments will be convened by the delegation of the United States of America on Thursday, 13 October, from 1.15 to 2.15 p.m. in Conference Room A.

The Permanent Mission of Bulgaria will organize a briefing by the President-designate of the Preparatory Committee for the fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons tomorrow at 1.15 p.m. in Conference Room 3.

The Chair: The next meeting of the Committee will be held tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m. sharp in this conference room. We will continue hearing statements in the thematic debate under the nuclear-weapons cluster. Since I do not have too many speakers on my list at the moment, my aim is to continue immediately, if time permits, with the segment concerning other weapons of mass destruction. Delegations wishing to take the floor under that cluster should be prepared to do so.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.