



# General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

## First Committee

**18<sup>th</sup>** meeting

Monday, 28 October 2013, 3 p.m.  
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Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Dabbashi ..... (Libya)

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

### Agenda items 89 to 107 (continued)

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

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): We will begin today with a panel exchange on the cluster “Regional disarmament and security”, after which we will continue hearing from the remaining speakers under the clusters “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”, “Conventional weapons”, “Other disarmament measures and international security” and “Regional disarmament and security”.

I now have the pleasure to welcome to the Committee the members of the panel on “Regional disarmament and security”: Ms. Virginia Gamba, Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; Mr. Marco Kalbusch, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa; Ms. Sharon Riggle, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific; and Ms. Carolyne Mélanie Régimbal, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

I shall first give our panellists the floor, after which we will switch to an informal mode to afford delegations an opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

I now give the floor to Ms. Gamba.

**Ms. Gamba** (United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa): I welcome this opportunity to address and update the First Committee on regional disarmament under agenda item 100, specifically on the activities of the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA). The three Centres continue to provide support to States and regional organizations through training, capacity-building and legal and technical assistance, as well as by sharing information and raising awareness. In keeping with their mandate, the Regional Centres promote regional disarmament at the request of States, taking into account the specific characteristics of each region, in order to enhance States’ security and contribute to regional and international peace and security.

The core operational costs of the Regional Centres are funded in part by the regular budget of the Organization, while activities are funded by voluntary contributions. I would like to express my gratitude and that of the High Representative to those States that have made financial or in-kind contributions to the Centres. I am particularly grateful to those States within the Centres’ regions that have chosen to fund activities in their own countries aimed at strengthening their own capacities, with technical, legal and policy assistance from the Centres, a demonstration of their keen interest in the Centres of their own regions.

In the past year, the Centres engaged in more than 80 activities, with a total budget of more than

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\$3.2 million from extra-budgetary contributions. Again in the past year, we started to see marked progress in cross-branch coordination between ODA and the Centres, as well as improved delivery on the ground. I would like to highlight some of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC). The Directors will then take the floor to further elaborate on their Centres' activities.

In Africa, UNREC continued to provide policy support on disarmament issues to the 11 States of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, in cooperation with the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa. In particular, UNREC is exploring how to assist States in preparing to implement the Kinshasa Convention on small-arms control, which the Central African subregion adopted in April 2010. Additionally, UNREC also trained 23 security sector officers in Côte d'Ivoire on the control of small arms and light weapons in the context of border management. The Centre is now engaged in a second phase of assistance to the national commission for additional training and capacity-building. Finally, UNREC provided support to States in the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty, as requested by them, and facilitated dialogue in preparation for the Final Conference. Particularly notable in that regard was the UNREC-African Union joint meeting held in March, which included the participation of nearly all 54 African States, as well as subregional organizations.

Meanwhile, in Asia and the Pacific, UNRCPD continued to contribute to regional dialogue and confidence-building by organizing conferences such as the eleventh United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, hosted by the Republic of Korea, and the twenty-fourth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, in cooperation with the Government of Japan in Shizuoka. UNRCPD also continued to provide support for disarmament and non-proliferation education through a project in Nepalese schools that aims to reach about 300,000 eighth graders. Pupils will receive new tools for dealing with conflict in schools, and their teachers will get curriculum training. Lastly, UNRCPD has undertaken projects to strengthen national capacities. In particular, in December 2012, the Centre

held a workshop in Thailand on national implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to further understanding of the instrument, in which more than 50 officials from 20 national agencies dealing with small arms participated.

Turning to Latin America and the Caribbean, UNLIREC supported public policy dialogue on small-arms issues, including national action plans, and a review of national legislation in 13 States that has resulted in the development of national policies, regulations and national action plans in Latin America and the Caribbean. With regard to technical assistance for practical disarmament measures, UNLIREC has implemented stockpile management and weapons destruction activities, as well as training courses on eradicating illicit trafficking in small arms for States in the Caribbean and Central America. More than 41,000 weapons and 51 tons of ammunition have been destroyed, while 130 stockpile facilities had their safety and security protocols updated.

Furthermore, all three Centres continued to assist States in their implementation of instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, in particular the Biological Weapons Convention. Additional activities are foreseen in 2014 in the areas of support for nuclear-weapon-free zones and implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Building dialogue and enhancing partnerships with regional and subregional organizations are essential conditions for the success of the Centres' work. The Centres engage with a number of regional and subregional organizations and look forward to developing those partnerships further. The Centres also look forward to continuing to work in close coordination with Member States that request assistance and with the relevant regional organizations, as well as with donor Governments. We also look forward to the Committee's continued engagement and support for the activities undertaken by the three United Nations Regional Centres.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Kalbusch.

**Mr. Kalbusch** (United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa) (*spoke in French*): I am grateful for this opportunity to present the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC). The Centre is part

of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in particular the Regional Disarmament Branch. We are funded by the regular budget and by voluntary contributions of Member States. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Togo for its hospitality since 1986, and to thank donors for their voluntary contributions, which have made the work of the Centre possible.

Upon their request, the Centre provides support to African States, the African Union and the continent's regional organizations. That support takes into account the specific nature of security issues in the region and includes responding to new challenges for peace and disarmament in Africa and contributing to reducing conflict and armed violence in Africa.

The General Assembly has mandated UNREC to

“provide, upon request, substantive support for initiatives and other efforts of Member States of the African region towards the realization of measures of peace, arms limitations and disarmament in the region” (*resolution 40/151 G, para. 2*).

In addition, the Centre has been mandated to work in cooperation with the African Union and to coordinate the implementation of regional activities in Africa to bring about peace and promote arms control and disarmament.

(spoke in English)

How does UNREC fulfil its mandate? We work in partnership with Governments and regional and subregional organizations. We develop partnerships with academic and regional institutions and civil society organizations in order to work on our thematic priorities. To add to the report of the Secretary-General (A/68/114), allow me briefly to update the First Committee on the activities conducted in 2013.

In the area of peace and security, UNREC has continued to support the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. Twice a year, we provide analysis of the disarmament situation in the Central African subregion, with specific focus on the advances in the implementation of international, regional and subregional instruments. At the Committee's thirty-fifth ministerial meeting, held in Brazzaville, we reported on the specific challenges States faced in identifying and stopping arms trafficking by sea. At the thirty-sixth meeting, in Kigali, we reported on the

advances in the Kinshasa Convention, the Sao Tome Declaration and the Code of Conduct for Security Forces. We look forward to the thirty-seventh meeting, to be held in N'Djamena in December.

We provided assistance to Member States in security sector reform activities. Our contribution focused mainly on disarmament and arms control. For instance, in Togo and Madagascar, UNREC, in cooperation with the national electoral commissions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme, conducted training for security forces in the proper use of weapons to secure elections. That training package is currently available in English and French and can be adapted to specific situations as needed. We also support the African regional seminar on the universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was held in Lomé in preparation for the fourth Meeting of States Parties.

On small arms and light weapons, UNREC, in cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), is currently conducting a pilot project and applying the standards and procedures on marking adopted by ECOWAS. Togo is one of the four pilot countries. We also supported the national small arms commission of Togo in developing a national action plan on small arms and light weapons, which has been submitted to the Government for review.

The Government of the Sudan invited UNREC to conduct a needs assessment to identify priority areas for assistance, which took place in December 2012. A follow-up project has been prepared and we are looking for funding.

At the request of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, UNREC supported the country's national commission in addressing small-arms control and community safety issues. Those include the training modules on small arms marking and tracing, with a focus on border security; a guided self-assessment of arms and ammunition depots; rehabilitation of depots and four gendarmerie posts; an assessment of the use of small arms by the private security sector; and follow-up activity focused on physical security and stockpile management.

At the regional level, UNREC provided substantive support to the development of the African strategy and action plan for the control of small arms and light weapons and to the African Union-European Union

project to fight the illicit accumulation and trafficking of fire arms in Africa.

On the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), UNREC worked closely with African Member States, the African Union and subregional organizations. In cooperation with the African Union, UNREC facilitated meetings to develop a coordinated African approach to the negotiation of the ATT.

On weapons of mass destruction, UNREC is currently working with the Governments of Benin and Burkina Faso in the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. And we are preparing a series of seminars for African States on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), with a focus on reporting obligations.

In the coming months, UNREC will continue to provide support to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa and the African Union Regions Steering Committee and to engage in the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel by providing expertise on all disarmament-related matters. We will support Member States in addressing new disarmament challenges, especially in the Sahel, the Gulf of Guinea and the Central African region. We will support African States in ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty, promote the universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention and work with Member States in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In addition, we hope to strengthen our outreach information activities by updating our website and making the UNREC focus available to everyone who is interested. Of course, the Centre continues to stand ready to work with Member States and regional and subregional organizations on any other peace and disarmament issue in Africa.

Please allow me once again to thank the Governments of Australia, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Togo, as well as the United Nations Development Programme, for their support over the past year.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Ms. Riggle.

**Ms. Riggle** (United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific): It is a pleasure to be here once again before the First Committee to talk about the work of the United Nations

Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD).

As many members of the First Committee know, we are based in Kathmandu. We cover 43 countries across Asia and the Pacific — “from Turkmenistan to Tonga and from Mongolia to the Maldives”, is how I often describe it. Our area includes over half of the world’s population and a very diverse region. We are very happy to say as well that we have just celebrated five years of being based in the Asia-Pacific region, after having moved from Headquarters, which has helped our work exponentially.

During the past 12 months, UNRCPD provided Member States with dialogue forums, bilateral capacity-building, treaty support, disarmament education and outreach to promote disarmament and non-proliferation in the Asia-Pacific region. That increased range of activities reflects UNRCPD’s strategic vision to engage in more direct technical assistance, on a requested basis, as well as greater advocacy for disarmament issues in general in the region.

One of the areas of our work includes providing discussion forums for the countries in our region, as well as internationally. As many members of the Committee know — I have certainly seen many members at our annual conferences in the Republic of Korea and Japan — in December 2012 we held the eleventh annual United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues. We focused on conventional weapons and on missiles, and we brought together many experts and 50 participants from around the world to discuss those important issues.

In January and the beginning of February, we celebrated our twenty-fourth annual United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, which is held in a different country each year. This year we held it in Shizuoka, Japan, and I know that a few of those here today were present at that meeting. We had a very successful meeting on a range of disarmament topics. We discussed humanitarian issues and nuclear weapons, nuclear-weapon-free zones, small arms and light weapons control, nuclear safety and security and the role of civil society. One of the highlights was a special role for students to play through student presentations. Getting young people involved in those issues is a parallel goal of our Centre.

In terms of capacity-building, we also help on a regular basis to build capacity in States to implement global instruments. For example, on the request of



the Thai Government, in December 2012 the Centre organized a workshop on implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Bangkok. The workshop brought together more than 50 Thai officials from 19 different Government agencies dealing with small arms and light weapons. The combination of participants also helped build inter-agency networks critical to controlling small arms and light weapons, and the translation of key materials into the Thai language ensured that the outcomes of the event could be sustainably disseminated to other relevant personnel across Government and used in future. That is a model that we will soon be using in Myanmar in the beginning of next year.

On the issue of treaty support, I would like to highlight our Asia regional meeting to facilitate dialogue on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The meeting was held in February at Kuala Lumpur, just in advance of the final negotiations. It brought together 19 Member States and 50 senior delegates, who discussed how the draft treaty related to their concerns, shared information on ATT issues of mutual interest and helped countries formulate their national positions through dialogue with experts and each other. By arranging the meeting at a key moment prior to the Treaty negotiations and in close consultation with the countries of our region to ensure that the meeting responded to their needs in advance of the negotiations, and by inviting speakers from the Asia-Pacific region, we had an event that addressed issues of uppermost importance to Member States and, through several breakout sessions, participants were able to discuss with one another, one on one, and collectively tackle those complex issues. We will also hold a meeting at the end of next month. The second Asia regional meeting on the Arms Trade Treaty will be held in Manila.

Another quick word on treaty support: we are also supporting Nepal in our region in the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention.

With regard to our peace and disarmament education project, in which we work with children, we are piloting a model in Nepal for peace and disarmament education specifically tailored to a post-conflict country. If members visit our web site, they can watch a four-and-a-half minute video showing more about that. We began that effort in response to multiple General Assembly resolutions calling for peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education. We are taking the disarmament education part of United Nations Office

for Disarmament Affairs mandate to the regional level. It is an exciting new area of work for us. We hope to shape the next generation's knowledge, values and behaviours towards peace and disarmament.

As a start, the Centre is working with the Government of Nepal to integrate peace and disarmament education into existing curriculums and textbooks. Once it is rolled out nationally through Government institutions, those materials will sustainably reach more than 300,000 children per year. What I also like about the project is that it has a small footprint and works within existing initiatives and structures. It is a model that we are keen to bring to other post-conflict countries in Asia and the Pacific, and we are already putting together a project to do that in the next several months.

Outreach is something else we spent time in the past year. We work with Governments, regional organizations and civil society. To further engage our regional stakeholders with the relevant disarmament information, the Centre has expanded its activities in that area. We have just launched a new web site, which showcases our work and provides information specific to the Asia-Pacific region. I would draw members' attention to the country profiles down at the bottom of the slide being displayed. I noticed, just before this meeting, that there was a glitch. At the moment, it is only showing the mobile version, even if accessed from a personal computer. I would ask members to bear with us as we work through the bugs in the new web site, but the information is there.

We have also launched a quarterly newsletter, which members can see here, and have started a Twitter stream to provide updates on disarmament issues in the Asia-Pacific region. That has resulted in greatly increased contact from States and donors looking to partner with us.

Finally, I wanted to thank all of the donors who have supported us. This is my opportunity to thank my donors publicly, so I hope members will bear with me. I would like to thank Austria, China, Finland, Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, the Netherlands and Turkey for their support to our Centre.

On a final note, in the coming year we will be working more on the Arms Trade Treaty. We are putting together projects to further in the Asia-Pacific region. We are going to hold a workshop on cyber security. We are going to continue our Programme of Action

workshops, peace and disarmament education roll-out in the Asia-Pacific region and more work on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). And, of course, we will be holding our Japan and Korea conferences again.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Ms. Régimbal.

**Ms. Régimbal** (United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean): Since we last met, in October 2012 (see A/C.1/67/PV.15), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) has carried out more than 70 activities in 20 countries of the region, covering the entire gamut of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control issues. For today's meeting, however, I will focus my statement on the support we have provided on small arms and light weapons and the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention.

It continues to be the case that the main focus of UNLIREC's activities, as requested by States, is to sustain States' efforts to combat illicit small-arms trafficking and offset its negative impact on public security. To minimize the risk of diversion into illicit trafficking rings and to protect against accidental stockpile explosion, UNLIREC helps States to reinforce sound stockpile management practices by delivering operational support based on the International Small Arms Control Standards and International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, as well as much-needed security and safety equipment. The result is the enhancement of more than 130 stockpile facilities throughout the region.

Another key mitigation measure is supporting the destruction of weapons and ammunition. By destroying weapons, we avoid their re-entry into illicit channels and reduce the overall number in circulation. Since October of last year, States have made use of UNLIREC-provided technical equipment and onsite training on International Small Arms Control Standards and International Ammunition Technical Guidelines for 180 officials, who participated in the destruction of more than 41,000 weapons and 51 tons of small-arms ammunition. I commend the Latin American and Caribbean States for their commitment to disarmament measures such as those.

Creating sustainable and specialized human resource capacity has been a long-standing goal of UNLIREC. Most recently, UNLIREC and the

Government of Trinidad and Tobago worked together to establish the regional Caribbean armoury management training centre. In addition to the national courses carried out this year in Port of Spain, the second of which is due to debut next week, the next phase of activities in Port of Spain will train and target more than 100 regional armourers from the various security forces of the Caribbean. The result will be a regional pool of professionals with improved skills to account for and secure the storage of weapons. That constitutes yet another tangible contribution to reducing the risk of small-arms proliferation.

As part of its broad gamut of stockpile management tools, this year UNLIREC has developed technical guidelines for marking small arms and ammunition. The guide, which has been distributed to all 33 States of the region, is a tool aimed at facilitating the standardization of firearms and ammunition marking practices in the Latin American and Caribbean region. It is based on the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and best practices of States in the region. Training on its use is ongoing in the Andean and southern cone States of Latin America, and will begin in Central America next month.

For the period 2013 to 2014, and throughout the next reporting period, UNLIREC will continue to focus on stockpile management and weapons-destruction assistance in the Caribbean region and, hopefully, funding permitting, to expand its comprehensive programme to Central American States. UNLIREC also looks forward to continuing its unique bilateral collaboration with Argentina in assessing and securing its stockpile facilities, which serves as a regional best practice and model for incorporating the provisions of ISACS and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines into national stockpile management practices.

UNLIREC continues to invest and sustain its efforts to provide security-sector personnel with specialized training on a wide range of small-arms-control matters, and to bolster the collective regional capacity to seize, intercept and trace illicit weapons. Making use of its curriculums and specialized methodology, including its flagship course on combating illicit firearms trafficking, as well as its specialized training courses for legal operators, UNLIREC undertook more than a dozen training activities resulting in more than 266 security-sector personnel trained in the Caribbean and Central American region this year. Also worth

mentioning is the fact that UNLIREC training continues to be incorporated into police academy curriculums, yet another indication that we are on the right track to creating sustainability.

Also, in response to States' calls for improved tracing practices, UNLIREC delivered a series of new training courses and practical tools to enhance forensic ballistics evidence management and technical capacities. The ballistics activities carried out in Central America and the Caribbean are available to all States, and aim to reinforce the subregional ballistics information-exchange mechanisms and technologies already in place. UNLIREC anticipates that its ballistics tools will continue to be in high demand throughout the next reporting period.

I am pleased to announce that in December, in keeping with the spirit of resolution 65/69, on women and disarmament, UNLIREC will offer its second women-only training course on combating illicit firearms trafficking. Additionally, UNLIREC recently completed the development of a regional project, for which funding is being sought, with the aim of empowering women as a force for change in making our region more secure by combating the illicit use of trafficking in weapons.

In the first half of 2014, in keeping with the times, UNLIREC expects to roll out its first-ever Arms Trade Treaty training course, which will target control and regulating authorities from the various sectors of Latin America and the Caribbean, such as customs, police, defence forces and civil aviation and port authorities. The course will focus mainly on the scope of application, import-export control measures and risk assessments. Authorities will also be introduced to UNLIREC's new model and user certificates currently being developed for the region, with a view to standardizing the control measures and documentation needed when carrying out international transfers, all in keeping with ATT obligations. UNLIREC will also continue to seek funding to advance the development of training tools to strengthen Caribbean capacity to mitigate the diversion of weapons in maritime contexts, and to establish policy and legal frameworks to address transshipment, regulate trade and combat sea-borne illicit trafficking.

To address the scourge brought on by the proliferation of illicit weapons, States need adequate legal frameworks and the capacity to enforce them, as well as integral policies and plans. This year, UNLIREC held more than 30 policy forums and provided legal

assistance initiatives to 15 States. Besides that, UNLIREC supported 13 States in revising and updating their national small-arms legislation, in keeping with international instruments. During the reporting period, UNLIREC stimulated dialogue and forged channels for national and regional information exchange, resulting in the advancement and strengthening of national action plans in more than a dozen States. That assistance also allowed States to better align their national priorities and activities with regional security agendas. For the years to come, UNLIREC will continue to support States in further preventing armed violence and combating illicit trafficking by working with them in putting together disarmament and amnesty campaigns, as well as by helping States to incorporate marking and tracing practices into their national policies and legislation.

In addition to the small-arms and light-weapons assistance delivered this year, and at the request of the Andean States, UNLIREC provided legal support for implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). That technical support entailed cooperation with the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre and the BWC Implementation Support Unit, and UNLIREC coming together with States to sit down at the drafting table to reform and improve relevant legislation related to weapons of mass destruction and to support States incorporating criminal sanctions for illicit activities related to biological and chemical weapons.

During the meetings, UNLIREC and its partners also had an opportunity to spearhead the establishment of national commissions to oversee the implementation of the related non-proliferation treaties. Before year's end, to complement the efforts of other actors in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, UNLIREC will launch its new, multi-year, Caribbean-wide assistance project on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which aims to promote regional dialogues on strategic controls and strengthen national legislation and policy frameworks for improved 1540 implementation.

In conclusion, I wish to thank our donors — Argentina, Canada, Finland, Germany, Guyana, Mexico, Peru, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America — for their generous support, without which none of the activities I have mentioned would have been possible. I would also like to appeal to States, in

particular those in the Latin American and Caribbean region, to continue to support the Centre, through either bilateral or in-kind contributions. I reiterate UNLIREC's commitment to continuing to develop, improve and implement pioneering tools to counter the proliferation of illicit weapons and make our region a safer one. I look forward to receiving the Committee's feedback on the Centre's impact in the field and on how we can better focus our efforts to meet Members' disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control needs.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): In keeping with the Committee's established practice, I shall now suspend the meeting to give delegations an opportunity to hold an interactive discussion with our panellists and to enable us to continue in an informal mode.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.*

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): We will now continue with the remaining list of speakers under the cluster "Outer space (disarmament aspects)". I appeal once again to all delegations to kindly adhere to the time limit and to be as brief as possible when taking the floor. If we do not do so, we run the risk of not completing our work within the time period allocated to us.

**Mr. Hashmi** (Pakistan): The Pakistani delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) under this cluster (see A/C.1/68/PV.17).

For more than three decades, our endeavours since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament and the General Assembly have focused on one key objective, namely, ensuring that outer space remains free of arms and weaponization.

In recent years, space has come to be no longer the exclusive preserve of a few developed States. Today developing countries are tapping into space technology in diverse areas, and their reliance on space technology will only grow further in the years to come. If history is any guide, monopolies of the few will not last for too long. It is therefore an urgent imperative for the international community to prevent the possibility of outer space being weaponized and to do so now. Further delay will be counter-productive. Let us avoid the mistakes made in the case of chemical weapons, whereby we witnessed decades of production before the Chemical Weapons Convention was concluded.

The development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems and their integration into space assets have added a worrying dimension to the issues relating to outer space. An arms race in, and the weaponization of, outer space would not only endanger the peaceful uses of outer space but also aggravate the intensity of conflicts on Earth, with potentially disastrous consequences for international peace and security.

The rapid growth and change in space technology has widened gaps in the existing international regime pertaining to outer space. Those gaps need to be filled by a new legal instrument. It is against that backdrop that Pakistan has consistently opposed the weaponization of outer space and called for negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on this contemporary issue of interest and concern.

Despite the growing dangers of weaponization and the attendant repercussions for international peace and security, some States continue to oppose the commencement of negotiations on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament. On the other hand, growing lament has been expressed over the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament over the past four years. Some States have found it convenient to attribute the stalemate to one of the four core issues on the Conference's agenda. Facts speak for themselves, and one inconvenient fact is that the Conference on Disarmament, despite overwhelming support for negotiating a legal instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, has been prevented by a handful of States from doing so. The international community must therefore ask for a clear expression of the underlying reasons that oblige those States to oppose negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We have not heard a convincing case from those States as to how negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space would negatively affect their security interests. In any case, those States should acknowledge their responsibility in perpetuating the Conference's deadlock.

Aside from the efforts directed at preventing an arms race in outer space and establishing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space, a comprehensive, universal and non-discriminatory agreement that addresses concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of anti-ballistic missile systems is needed. Anti-ballistic missile systems have wide-ranging implications for regional and international security and stability.



Similarly, we note that efforts are under way to conclude a code of conduct for outer space activities. Those are useful, but we believe that such initiatives should be pursued in an inclusive, universal and participatory manner, taking into account the security interests of all States.

We take note of the report and recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Outer Space Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189). We agree that transparency and confidence-building measures should be implemented to the greatest extent practicable and in a manner that is consistent with States' national interests.

While such proposals and initiatives can be useful interim steps, Pakistan is of the view that they cannot and should not obviate the quest for a legally binding treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space at the Conference on Disarmament.

**Mr. Lim Sang-beom** (Republic of Korea): Since the space age began, more than five decades ago, the international community has made continued efforts to ensure that outer space is used for peaceful purposes only. Our ventures into space have already contributed to the improvement of human life through the rapid development of space science and technology and the broad expansion of space applications.

The increase in the number of space actors and space users, however, has also led to a more congested and competitive space environment. Against that changing backdrop, enhancing international cooperation to ensure the peaceful uses of outer space has become a matter of priority for the entire international community. The United Nations treaties on outer space represent a robust legal framework, crucial for supporting space activities and for strengthening international cooperation to that end. The Republic of Korea, as a State party to all major treaties on outer space, supports adherence to the United Nations space treaties and the principles contained therein as necessary conditions for conducting peaceful space activities.

The application of the existing treaties on outer space should be constantly reviewed to ensure the relevance of the current space law regime, given the current developments in space activities. In this vein, the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be strengthened, and the interaction

among the Committee and its two sub-committees should be further intensified.

The changing space-activity environment also requires the international community to take a substantive and visionary approach to practical issues relating to ways and means of using outer space for peaceful purposes. We believe that, in order to maintain the peaceful nature of space activities and prevent an arms race in outer space, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should cooperate and coordinate with the Conference on Disarmament and the relevant committees of the United Nations.

With regard to the repeated allegation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on its right to peaceful outer space activity, my delegation would like to recall that any launch using ballistic missile technology by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, which prohibit such activity. It goes without saying that all United Nations States Members should abide by Security Council resolutions, which are legally binding.

Strengthening safety, security and long-term sustainability in outer space is a key priority for the international community. The importance of transparency and confidence-building measures cannot be over-emphasized in that regard.

The Government of the Republic of Korea therefore welcomes the conclusion of the report by the Group of Governmental Experts on Outer Space Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189) in July of this year. We also welcome the efforts led by the European Union to develop an international code of conduct on outer space activities. The Republic of Korea has actively joined the efforts to bring such a code of conduct to fruition. We also hope that the upcoming open-ended consultations on the proposal for an international code of conduct for outer space activities in Bangkok this November will make further progress in strengthening transparency and confidence-building measures on outer space activities.

As the number of countries and actors participating in space activities increases, the global community should look into how the space-faring and non-space-faring nations could use space in a collaborative way. Such collaboration will contribute to bridging the development gap and enable us to proceed together

towards the common goal of sustainable development. International cooperation in the fields of space activities and capacity-building should be further enhanced in this vein.

For its part, the Republic of Korea emphasizes the importance of enhancing international cooperation. We have been providing data from the multipurpose satellite KOMPSAT to support disaster-relief and -mitigation efforts around the globe. We have also assisted partner countries in using space technology by hosting an annual international space training programme since 2010, to mention just a few of our activities.

In conclusion, the Government of the Republic of Korea reaffirms its strong commitment to the sustainable and long-term use of space for the benefit of humankind as a whole. We stand ready to further strengthen international cooperation to that end.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.40.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): As a pioneer in outer space and one of the modern-day leaders in the field, the Russian Federation bears particular responsibility for ensuring that all the necessary conditions for the enjoyment of the inalienable right of all States without exception to space exploration are met and for ensuring access to the benefits brought about by the peaceful use of outer space. To that end, we have consistently endeavoured to prevent a new arms race in outer space. We believe that goal is particularly important to the maintenance of international peace and the strengthening of equitable and indivisible security for all States of the United Nations.

In our view, our efforts in this field provide a foundation on which broad international dialogue should be based with regard to issues of security, transparency and the sustainability of activities in outer space. We are convinced that, without resolving the issue of preventing the placement of weapons in outer space, achieving any substantive results with regard to the other issues of security in outer space would be extremely difficult. For that reason, Russia has always supported the annual draft resolution submitted by Egypt and Sri Lanka on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which is supported by the vast majority of Member States.

Cognizant of the fact that achieving the main goal of keeping space free of weapons is possible only by concluding international agreements on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and on the threat or use of force against outer space objects, Russia, together with our partner, China, presented a draft treaty to the Conference on Disarmament in 2008. We believe that document is appropriate for the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The draft treaty is a fully justified and achievable disarmament initiative in today's world. As long as there are no weapons yet in outer space, it should not be difficult to prohibit the placement of weapons of any kind there. In doing so, we would save the world from a host of problems, which we have experienced in particular in attempts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons on Earth and to ensure gradual progress towards nuclear disarmament.

In response to the growing international concern with regard to the threat to global stability and international security posed by the unresolved issue of preventing an arms race in outer space, Russia drafted a proposal, with Brazil, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, which recently joined the Russian initiative, and all Collective Security Treaty Organization member States, on preventing a first placement of weapons in outer space, which is known in English as the no-first-placement initiative. We have presented a promising draft resolution on that initiative during this session. We will continue our comprehensive work towards advancing our initiative over the course of the year, and we intend to officially present the draft resolution on no-first-placement for consideration by the First Committee at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We consider the no-first-placement initiative to be an important step in promoting the gradual development of a legally binding treaty on that matter.

Russia is an active participant in the discussion on and development of all other international instruments to ensure security in outer space activities. Upon our initiative, pursuant to resolution 65/68, a Group of Governmental Experts on transparency- and confidence-building initiatives was established and worked fruitfully under our chairmanship. As we all know, the work of the Group concluded with the adoption of a consensus-based report (see A/68/189), which was submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly. It is our view that the consensus adoption of the report is a good basis for continuing

work on transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs). That work should be carried out at the Conference on Disarmament and in the Disarmament Commission and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and other specialized forums. The recommendations contained in the report are aimed at a gradual implementation of TCBMs in outer space activities and at integrating them into international practice by individual States and the relevant international institutions and organizations of the United Nations system.

In order to consolidate the positive results of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts this year, with an unprecedented group of sponsors — namely, Russia, China and, for the first time in the history of the First Committee, the United States — we presented draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.40, entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”. It already has more than 50 sponsors. We invite all conscientious States join the sponsors. We call on all Member States to support the draft resolution and adopt it on the basis of consensus.

In addressing issues related to the exploration and use of outer space, Russia maintains an integrated approach. We are making efforts to prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space. For more than six years, we have been participating in the drafting of an international code of conduct on outer space. We consider the European Union’s work an important element of international efforts to ensure the security and sustainability of outer space activities.

All of those steps taken by Russia in its national capacity, as well as together with like-minded States, are an affirmation of the genuine nature of our intentions not only to continue efforts to keep outer space free of weapons of any kind but also to create the necessary conditions for the further reduction of nuclear weapons. There is an obvious interlinkage. By preventing the deployment of any kind of weapons in outer space, and thus eliminating one of the major factors undermining strategic stability, we are simultaneously solving the problem of creating favourable conditions for dialogue. The dialogue will elaborate further steps for gradual progress towards the noble goal of nuclear disarmament.

I would call attention to some breaking news. Today the full-scale deployment began of the United States strategic missile system element in Romania. Against whom is that system directed? Our American partners are trying to reassure us that all this is not against Russia.

Fine, we say. Let us record that in a legally binding treaty. The answer is known to all. Simultaneously, our neighbour and good partner, Romania and other countries from the NATO military bloc — and I underscore the nuclear bloc of NATO — are actively participating in nuclear disarmament initiatives at the United Nations. What is this? Is that simply childish naivete or is it cynical deception of the international community? We would like Member States, at least at the United Nations, to speak more responsibly about their national disarmament steps, rather than limiting themselves to general statements and contradictory slogans.

We should not delude ourselves. Without resolving the issue of ballistic missile defence, without a comprehensive prohibition on the deployment of weapons in outer space, without resolving all pending problems regarding strategic stability, further progress towards a “nuclear zero” is objectively impossible. We call upon all States to actively support our efforts at preventing an arms race in outer space.

**Mr. Shen Jian (China)** (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese Government consistently supports the peaceful uses of outer space and is committed to relevant international exchange and cooperation. China has actively and constructively participated in the work of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and in the process of establishing relevant international rules. The Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), initiated by China, is taking a lead in regional exchange and cooperation in outer space. We encourage more Asia-Pacific countries to join the organization.

China successfully launched the Shenzhou-10 manned spacecraft last June, which successfully implemented a rendezvous and docking experiment with the space station Tiangong-1. China’s manned space programme is entering a new stage of research and development for a space station. We will continue to take concrete measures to honour our commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space.

Lasting peace and security in outer space has a bearing on the security, development and prosperity of all countries. We need to properly handle the relationship between space security and space development. The equal rights of all countries to the peaceful uses of outer space should be ensured. At the same time, we should bear in mind that the use of outer space is not a field with unlimited scope. All countries have the

responsibility to ensure long-lasting peace in, and the sustainable development of, outer space.

With the increasing activities of humankind in the use of outer space, the risks of the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space are on the rise. Space security is confronted with growing uncertainties. All countries have a common interest in ensuring the peaceful uses of outer space and preventing the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space. In recent years, a growing consensus has emerged in the international community, one that opposes both the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space. Successive General Assembly sessions have overwhelmingly adopted resolutions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and called for the negotiation of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

China firmly opposes the weaponization of outer space and an arms race in outer space and is dedicated to maintaining peace and security in outer space. As a sponsor of the General Assembly resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, China actively promotes the implementation of the resolution in the CD. In 2008, China and Russia jointly submitted to the CD a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We hope that the CD will start substantive work on the basis of the draft treaty as soon as possible. We welcome comments and suggestions from all parties to improve the text.

China attaches importance to outer space transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs). We believe that appropriate and viable TCBMs are conducive to enhancing mutual trust, reducing misconceptions, regulating outer space activities and maintaining outer space security. They can be complementary to the process on the prevention of the weaponization of outer space and an arms race in outer space. However, given their obvious limits, TCBMs can by no means be a substitute for the negotiation of outer space arms-control treaties.

China welcomes the consensus report by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities (A/68/189). The report is the balanced outcome of pragmatic and thorough discussions by all members of the Group. In that connection, China appreciates the constructive efforts

of all parties concerned and encourages all countries to actively implement the proposed TCBMs on a voluntary basis, in order to consolidate the outcome of the Group of Governmental Experts.

China appreciates the European Union's efforts to draft an international code of conduct on outer space activities and has constructively participated in the discussions. Meanwhile, we believe that, as a voluntary outer space TCBM, the code of conduct should focus on the peaceful uses of outer space and should by no means dilute the work in the CD on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The code of conduct process should ensure broad participation by the relevant parties, fully accommodate their substantive and procedural concerns and carry out discussions on an equal and open basis in order to conclude an international code of conduct acceptable to all.

Outer space is the common heritage of humankind. China is ready to work closely with all parties to safeguard long-term peace and stability in outer space.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.41.

**Ms. Govinnage** (Sri Lanka): We have experienced arms races on land, sea and air. Outer space must not be another arena for an arms race. The deployment of weapons in outer space could seriously threaten the security of outer space assets, which benefit all humankind, and has the potential to harm the Earth's biosphere.

Sri Lanka's long-standing position is that outer space is our common heritage. Outer space must be explored and used for peaceful purposes for the benefit and interest of all humankind, in a spirit of cooperation. We believe it is much easier to prevent an arms race from taking place rather than to control it or roll it back once it has begun. We are ready to work with all parties to contribute to maintaining lasting peace and security in outer space.

For many years, Sri Lanka and Egypt have alternately introduced the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which calls for the negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This year's draft resolution (A/C.1/68/L.41), which my delegation is introducing, recognizes the long-held general understanding regarding the issue and therefore



closely follows last year's resolution 67/30, with only technical updates.

The text of this year's draft resolution, as in previous years, emphasizes the complementary nature of bilateral and multilateral efforts and stresses the importance of greater transparency in sharing information on all bilateral efforts in this field. The draft resolution also recognizes that the CD has the primary role in addressing the issue.

We believe that the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and on the threat or use of force against outer space objects, introduced at the CD by China and the Russian Federation, is the most viable basis for talks to begin on a legally binding instrument. We hope that the CD will commence substantive discussions on the draft treaty as soon as possible.

Sri Lanka attaches importance to transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs). In that regard, we welcome the constructive discussions and the report (see A/68/189) to the General Assembly of the Group of Governmental Experts. TCBMs can promote mutual understanding and reduce misperceptions among States. Although such measures are complementary to a legally binding international instrument, they are not legally binding on States and their success depends upon the political commitment of States. We therefore reiterate the need for a legally binding treaty that would take into account all the complexities and different perspectives on space security.

We encourage all members of the Committee to support the draft resolution as a manifestation of the general desire of humankind to prevent an arms race in outer space.

**Mr. Ponomarev** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The active development of space technology and the growing number of States with outer space programmes require additional measures at the international level to prevent the placement of weapons in outer space. In the past year, Belarus launched its first satellite and joined the ranks of space-faring States. We therefore attach priority to keeping space peaceful. We believe that this issue should receive serious attention from the international community, both here in the First Committee and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and other international forums. We note that a number of important initiatives on the demilitarization

of outer space and on strengthening outer space verification measures are already on the table.

Since 2005, as a member State of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, we have upheld our regional obligations on the non-placement of weapons in outer space. We urge all States with the capacity to launch outer space apparatus to join that moratorium, as well as those with outer space research and exploration programmes. We fully support the idea of adopting a comprehensive treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, as well as the use of force or the threat thereof against space objects. The draft of such a treaty has been introduced at the Conference on Disarmament, but unfortunately, due to systemic issues within the CD, serious progress in that regard has not been made. We are convinced that the adoption of such a treaty would be an important legal contribution to strengthening international security in outer space and could remedy existing gaps in outer space law. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibits the deployment in outer space of any type of weapon of mass destruction. However, the Treaty does not touch on other types of weapons.

We also welcome the consensus-based adoption of the report (see A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts on the drafting of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. We view that as an important contribution to increasing the responsibility of States with regard to their activities in outer space. We joined the Russian Federation as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.40, which approves the report.

Drawing up a code of conduct on outer space is also an important step in strengthening trust among States conducting outer space activities. We are convinced that the code of conduct could be an important addition to legally binding treaties on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. Along those lines, we support the European Union-initiated open-ended consultations process towards agreement on an international code of conduct in outer space and stand ready to actively participate in the forthcoming event in November in Bangkok.

**Mr. Masmejean** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The outer space environment has undergone profound change in recent years. The number of actors with access to space or who make use of spatial systems is in sharp ascent, and outer space has thus become

increasingly saturated and competitive. Furthermore, outer space plays a growing role in military operations and has led, as a corollary, to the development of systems designed to neutralize spatial systems. Those spatial systems have become a critical and essential component of the infrastructure for the prosperity and security of many States. Therefore, the difficult issue of ensuring the sustainable use of space is a subject of growing importance.

Guaranteeing the security of that critical infrastructure can therefore only be a shared objective. In that context, the Swiss delegation welcomes the report (see A/68/189) adopted by consensus by the Group of Governmental Experts on confidence-building and transparency measures in outer space. We thank the members of the Group, in particular its Chair, Mr. Victor Vasiliev, for the work accomplished, and we commend them for the excellent proposals contained in the report.

At the outset, allow me to welcome the fact that the report serves to build bridges between two communities that are working to achieve the same goal, namely, to preserve the stability and security of outer space as well as the safety and long-term viability of spatial activities. On the one hand, there is the disarmament and arms control community, and, on the other hand, the community for the peaceful uses of outer space. We particularly welcome that development, as those two communities should work together to achieve the common goal of preserving space to ensure its use by future generations.

The Group's report and its recommendations represent an important step in that direction. Moreover, the report underscores the role and importance of existing institutions, such as the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). It calls for greater consistency in information exchanges among United Nations entities involved in outer space affairs, which we also welcome.

Among the other measures recommended in the Group's report, Switzerland would highlight the importance of pre-launch notification, as well as notification and information-exchange upon the return of outer space objects, whether controlled or uncontrolled. My country also supports the recommendations concerning pre-notification in cases of the intentional destruction of on-orbit satellites.

In terms of scientific and technological issues, further efforts are necessary to fine-tune observation

and calculation technologies in order to better understand the space environment of objects in orbit around the Earth. The dissemination and sharing of orbital data is therefore equally essential in determining the measures necessary to prevent collisions between satellites in orbit.

The Swiss delegation fully supports the dissemination of the report of the Group of Experts to the CD and to COPUOS, to enable those two entities to define measures to implement the report's recommendations with a view to ensuring the long-term use of space for the benefit of all.

**Ms. Street (Australia):** In outer space, as in other realms of human endeavour, a rules-based approach to State activity is paramount for stability and security. Along with other Member States, Australia shares a deep interest in ensuring that access to space is protected for the benefit of all humankind.

The benefits of a peaceful and predictable space environment are clearly evident. Day by day, the reliance of all nations upon services enabled by satellites and upon data gathered by satellites increases. Australia therefore places high value on current efforts to develop international norms to guide States' behaviour in space and to enhance cooperation and collaboration.

Australia has for some time supported the growing focus on transparency and confidence-building measures for space. We therefore welcome the consensus report (see A/68/189) of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, established in response to resolution 65/68. Although not a member of the Group, Australia contributed to its work through a substantive submission on the application of the broad range of existing international law to State activities in outer space.

The Group's report highlights the benefits of closer consultation and coordination among States to build trust and reduce the potential for misperception and miscalculation in space. Accordingly, its conclusions and recommendations contribute to enhancing international security and usefully complement the existing international legal framework pertaining to space.

Australia welcomes the endorsement by the Group of Governmental Experts of the development of multilateral codes of conduct to encourage responsible and peaceful uses of space. In that regard, Australia

places particular value on the European Union's proposal for an international code of conduct on outer space activities to guide States' behaviour in space. An important component of the proposed code is addressing the pressing problem of space debris, which threatens the space-related activities of all nations alike.

Australia believes that the proliferation of space debris, in particular long-lived space debris, constitutes a severe and imminent threat. Given the levels of investment in space-enabled infrastructure and the critical nature of the functions that it enables, a failure to address the issue could have severe economic and strategic consequences. There is therefore an imperative need to develop norms against the creation of further space debris, whether by accidental or deliberate means.

Anti-satellite testing is highly likely to create debris, as we have seen in the past. The development and testing of anti-satellite weapons is therefore of concern in that regard. Australia has been actively supporting the development of the proposed code of conduct and advocating that others do the same.

There is now increasing international understanding of the urgency of the problem, and corresponding urgency for action in response. Momentum has been building around the initiative, as involved countries work towards the second open-ended consultations on the code, to take place in November in Bangkok. Australia urges full participation in those important consultations, to ensure that all voices are heard in the development of the code. Broad participation will ensure that the code represents a truly international view. The initiative is timely, it is practical and it is in the interests of all nations, as space users, to protect our joint access to this precious resource.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is also making an important contribution to efforts to preserve the space environment through its Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. As co-Chair with Italy of expert group D, Australia has taken the lead on developing a report on regulatory regimes and guidance for actors in the space arena. The report, along with reports from the other expert groups, will inform the work of the working group and contribute to the preservation of the space environment for future generations.

Space is a common resource. There is therefore a particular premium on a cooperative approach. In the light of that, Australia has also been working

with others in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum (ARF) to encourage further consideration of space security. ARF Ministers noted this year the interest of ARF participants in continuing consideration of the issue, building on the successful ARF Space Security Workshop co-hosted with Viet Nam in December 2012.

Space is an arena where actions taken by one have the potential to affect all. Australia therefore urges all nations to play a constructive role in securing a peaceful and sustainable environment for current and future generations.

**Mr. Kim Ju Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation aligns with the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/68/PV.17)

Outer space and the celestial objects that are humankind's shared heritage should be used only for peaceful purposes. In recent years, continued attempts to use outer space for military purposes, which pose a threat to world peace and security, have been a source of serious concern for the international community. The establishment of anti-missile systems is one such typical example. Today some actors are working on a major scale on launching military missiles into outer space. The establishment of anti-missile defence systems is nothing but an extension of Cold War-era confrontational policies, with the purpose, ultimately, of gaining military hegemony while creating an arms race in outer space.

Despite our efforts, what cannot be overlooked are the excuses used to justify such anti-missile defence systems, disguised as efforts against non-existent ballistic missile threats from somebody else. Launches done for peaceful purposes are therefore questioned on the pretext that they utilize ballistic missile technology, thus running roughshod over a sovereign country's legitimate right, officially recognized under international law, to exploit outer space. The only way to launch satellites into outer space is with rocket technology, which has been used in every case without exception. However, the logic that some are allowed to use it while others are not, because it is dual-use technology, does not make sense and runs counter to the Charter of the United Nations, which states that the principle of the sovereign equality of States is fundamental to all United Nations activities.

Under international law, all States have the right to use outer space for peaceful and development

purposes. Such a legitimate right should not be applied in a discriminatory way. In particular, despotic and arbitrary acts used to monopolize the pursuit of military and strategic interests in outer space, which is the commonwealth of humankind, should not be tolerated under any circumstances. In that connection, my delegation supports Russia's and China's 2008 draft treaty on preventing the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against objects in outer space.

In conclusion, we stand firmly by our position opposing and rejecting the militarization of outer space and every effort to provoke an arms race there. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a State party to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and the 1975 Launch Registration Convention, will persist in its efforts aimed at the peaceful development of outer space, drawing actively on mutual exchanges and international cooperation, while also contributing actively to the development of science and technology and the welfare of humankind.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to introduce draft decision A/C.1/68/L.8.

**Mr. Shishechiha** (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.17).

My delegation strongly reaffirms the universally agreed principle that outer space is the common heritage and province of all humankind and should be explored and utilized exclusively for peaceful purposes and the benefit of present and future generations of all peoples. Iran also emphasizes the importance of the full observance of the principles of non-ownership of outer space and the freedom of all States to exercise their sovereign equality in discovery and research in outer space. In that context, we stress the need for promoting non-discriminatory cooperation and mutual assistance in peaceful activities conducted in outer space. The Islamic Republic of Iran also believes that the principle of non-intervention in other States' programmes for exploring and utilizing outer space for peaceful purposes should be fully respected. Likewise, the principle of non-interference in the activities of States using space-related technology should be fully observed. In that regard, we would like to stress that space science and technology should be utilized in

accordance with international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and particularly in promoting international peace and security.

In our view, space science and technology and their applications, such as satellite communications, Earth observation systems and satellite navigation technologies, are indispensable tools for sustainable development. In fact, such technologies can contribute effectively to development efforts in various regions of the world aimed at improving people's lives, conserving natural resources and enhancing preparedness for disasters and alleviating their consequences. The Islamic Republic of Iran therefore stresses that access to outer space through space science, techniques and technologies should be available to all countries without restrictions or discrimination. Iran strongly opposes any measure aimed at turning space and space technology into the monopoly of a few countries. In our view, monopolizing outer space is neither legitimate nor achievable.

Relying on its own indigenous space technology, the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to continue with its long-term plans to explore and utilize space for peaceful purposes. They include establishing a monitoring and prediction system for rice yields using satellite imagery, continued satellite monitoring and control of the environment and natural resources, modelling and predicting droughts, a telemedicine project based on space technology and a remote sensing laboratory.

The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the importance of preventing an arms race in outer space and is deeply concerned about the negative implications of weaponizing space. In our view, developing projects under the pretext of creating missile defence systems, as well as pursuing advanced military technology capable of being deployed in outer space, contributes to further eroding an international climate that is conducive to strengthening disarmament and international security. Given the inadequacy of existing legal instruments for deterring an arms race in outer space, and taking into account attempts to weaponize outer space in order to seek military and strategic superiority there, which endangers international peace and security, Iran shares the view that the prevention of an arms race in outer space requires more urgent attention.

Anti-missile-system development under the pretext of a purported missile threat is simply an effort to



attain supremacy over nuclear-weapon States in Europe and the Far East. It is extremely difficult to convince international disarmament observers that the main reason for spending billions of dollars on developing an anti-missile system based on the so-called Star Wars system of the 1980s is for protection against the purely defensive missile programmes of a couple of other countries. Such a missile system would certainly not add to the security either of its host countries in Eastern Europe and elsewhere or of the country operating such a system. It would only trigger a new arms race in outer space.

With regard to some of the new initiatives on outer space, we fully support the Non-Aligned Movement's position, which underlines the importance of adopting a universal, non-discriminatory and comprehensive approach and stresses that any proposal or initiative on outer space should be pursued within the competent United Nations bodies and that any possible decision on such proposals should be made by consensus.

Before concluding, I would like to introduce, on behalf of my delegation and those of Egypt and Indonesia, the draft decision contained in document A/C.1/68/L.8, entitled "Missiles", submitted by our delegations to the First Committee. In line with the position of the Non-Aligned Movement on addressing the important issue of missiles in all its aspects within the framework of the United Nations, Iran has previously introduced the decision on missiles, which has been regularly adopted by the General Assembly since 1999. We will continue with that initiative and hope to see it adopted again by consensus.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker on the cluster "Outer space (disarmament aspects)".

Before proceeding, I would like to update the Committee on how I propose to conduct our work this week. The Committee is scheduled to begin its action phase on Wednesday, 30 October. However, as of today, there are still approximately 100 speakers under the three remaining clusters of the thematic discussion. We have also yet to hold the traditional exchange of views with civil society. To ensure that we complete our work in a timely manner, I propose that we close the list of speakers in 30 minutes. I would also encourage delegations to please limit their statements to no more than five minutes, so that the list of speakers can be exhausted before 30 October. If by that date speakers still remain, I propose to schedule an additional meeting

on that date to complete the list. In the meantime, I will ask the Secretariat to prepare the traditional informal action paper by 30 October. Any revisions based on a change of dates can be issued as needed. I appeal to one and all to abide as much as possible by the five-minute time limit in order to complete our work on 30 October.

We will now continue our discussion on the cluster "Conventional weapons".

**Ms. Richards** (Jamaica): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 40 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM is pleased to participate in today's First Committee debate on conventional weapons, and in so doing submits that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects threatens peace, safety, security and stability at the national regional and international levels.

CARICOM has stated on numerous occasions in the First Committee that, despite the fact that member States of the region are neither manufacturers nor large importers of conventional weapons, we have not escaped the devastating impact of the trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. In CARICOM's view, those are the real weapons of mass destruction. They represent a relentless force that not only threatens the sustainable development of many States in the region, but that also undermines the very fabric of our societies. The control, prevention and eradication of the illicit trade in such armaments therefore remain a top regional priority.

On 4 July 2011, CARICOM Heads of Government adopted the CARICOM Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons as a regional mechanism in the collective effort to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. In so doing, CARICOM noted with grave concern that the widespread availability of illegal guns had fostered an alarming rise in murders and gun violence throughout the region. CARICOM has developed a targeted approach within the framework of the 2013 CARICOM crime and security strategy, an important component in our arsenal to fight the war against crime. We look forward to the assistance of the United Nations in its implementation, including through the long-awaited reopening of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Barbados.

Developments over the past few years within CARICOM — including the commissioning of the

Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, the Council of Ministers responsible for national security and law enforcement and the designation of security as the fourth pillar of CARICOM — have demonstrated an unprecedented level of cooperation on regional security issues. Those milestones and improvements in the management of CARICOM's crime and security agenda have brought greater focus, responsiveness, integration and functional cooperation to the Community's approach to security.

Notwithstanding our efforts at the regional level, we remain firm advocates of action at the hemispheric and global levels to assist us in combating the illicit trade in small arms, light weapons and their ammunition. In our view, 2 April 2013 ushered in a new era of hope for the international community. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has the potential to assist in the reduction and eradication of armed violence that has adversely affected our people. We are heartened that small arms and light weapons are indeed included in the scope of that landmark instrument.

CARICOM's support for the Arms Trade Treaty has been demonstrated by the signature of 13 of our members, four of which have already ratified the Treaty. Those actions are clear indications of the political commitment of the Governments of our region to address the poorly regulated, irresponsible and illicit proliferation and transfer of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, as well as of other conventional weapons, under the ATT. The adoption of the Treaty is a significant achievement for CARICOM countries, which had called for strong provisions on diversion to be included, bearing in mind that diversion is the biggest problem associated with the illegal trade in those weapons.

CARICOM reaffirms its commitment to cooperate with its partners, including non-governmental organizations, concerning the ratification, entry into force and full implementation of the ATT. In that connection, CARICOM has endorsed the candidature of Trinidad and Tobago to host the ATT secretariat. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to providing the required financial, human and other resources to secure the site of the secretariat of the ATT in our region and is working assiduously with other States to achieve that objective.

CARICOM wishes to underscore the importance of the full implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate

the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and its International Tracing Instrument. Those non-violent instruments, as well as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, are vital in assisting Member States in dealing with the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons. Our region is pleased that the 2012 Review Conference of the Programme of Action resulted in the adoption of a consensus outcome document. Even though the Review Conference revealed that the implementation of the Programme of Action remained uneven and that challenges and obstacles were ever present, the overall success of the Conference and the adoption of an outcome document demonstrate that considerable work is being done to implement the Programme of Action by Member States around the world.

In its bid to continue the progress made in implementing the provisions, CARICOM pledges to support the Biennial Meeting of States to be held from 16 to 20 June 2014, and again in 2016, and the one-week open-ended meeting of Government experts to take place in 2015. CARICOM urges States to further demonstrate the political will and mobilize the necessary resources to implement the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, in the bid to achieve clear and tangible results by the third Review Conference in 2018.

Three years after its entry into force, the Convention on Cluster Munitions has proven to be a key component of the broader normative framework for the protection of civilians. CARICOM continues to support the aims of the Convention and is working to ensure that all its members adhere to it as soon as possible. We look forward to the fifth Meeting of States Parties, which will take place in Costa Rica in 2015.

At this time of global financial and economic uncertainty, many States are finding it difficult to mobilize adequate resources to address many issues, including the illegal trade in conventional weapons of all types. CARICOM therefore applauds the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, for the increased assistance rendered to our countries, including through capacity-building and technical assistance programmes as well as outreach activities to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as reported in the Secretary-General's report (A/68/134). We commend the United

Nations for its work in the region and call on all Member States to continue to support the work of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and its regional centres.

The year 2013 has been a landmark year in which significant strides have been made in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The monumental adoption and subsequent signature, ratification and eventual entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty will add immeasurably to the regional security architecture throughout CARICOM and beyond. CARICOM is therefore hopeful that our deliberations on conventional weapons will resonate outside these walls and be translated into real, concrete actions to end the senseless suffering of so many people in the world.

**Mr. Hasan** (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Kingdom of Bahrain delivers this statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States. The Group associates itself with a statement to be made by Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Group notes the intensive efforts made by Ambassador Peter Wolcott, in cooperation with all participating parties, in his capacity as Chair of the United Nations Final Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which the General Assembly adopted by a vote on 2 April. The Group actively participated in the proceedings during the Conference, ensuring all the conditions for its success. The Kingdom of Morocco coordinated the proceedings of the working group dealing with drafting the preambular section and the purposes and objectives of the Treaty.

The Group supports regulating the arms trade for humanitarian purposes and for the maintenance of peace and security at the national, regional and international levels. The Arab Group stresses that the implementation of the Treaty must be in line with the legitimate rights of States to self defence and ensuring the safety of the territories, as well as the right to self-determination that is due to peoples under foreign occupation. It also notes that it is unacceptable to occupy the land of others and that there is a right to produce, export, import and transport conventional weapons. The Arab Group believes that exporting States bear a special responsibility.

The Group of Arab States would like to express its concern over explosives and mines that have remained in our territories, especially after the Second World War,

in particular landmines, which continue to cause human and material damage, obstructing the implementation of development plans in some Arab States. The Group calls on the States responsible for planting those mines and for leaving behind explosives in Arab territories to cooperate with the States concerned in sharing information on the location of such mines and explosives and to offer technical support to cover the cost of their removal. We also call on them to compensate Arab States for any loss caused by those mines.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mali to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.9.

**Mr. Traoré** (Mali) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time that I take the floor since our work began, I wish to convey to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau the heartfelt congratulations of the delegation of Mali for your election to the First Committee. I assure you of my country's full support in helping you fulfil your tasks. My delegation will seek to abide by the time limit you have set, in order to ensure that we can finish our work within the given deadline.

I take the floor on behalf of the 15 member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Latvia, Liberia, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and my own country, Mali — to introduce the annual draft resolution entitled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and collecting them", as contained in document A/C.1/68/L.9. The following States are also sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Andorra, Australia, Belgium, Cameroon, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Ireland, Italy, Lesotho, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

The trade and illicit trafficking in light weapons continues to fuel numerous outbreaks of conflict, exacerbating violence, contributing to the displacement of civilian populations, flouting the principles and rules of international law and international humanitarian law and stoking terrorism and organized crime. Combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and eliminating the illicit trade in such weapons will be

effective only if it is carried out in a coordinated and cooperative manner.

In that regard, the member States of ECOWAS welcome the progress that has been made since the adoption, on 26 September, of Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) and the General Assembly's adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty on 2 April. The former, which is the Council's first-ever resolution on light weapons, recalls the threat to global peace and security posed by the illicit transfer, accumulation and diversion of small arms and light weapons. It also urges States and regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations to provide assistance to States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty as part of the struggle against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. On the Arms Trade Treaty, the member States of ECOWAS played a crucial role in the negotiations that led to the adoption of that Treaty, an important and legally binding tool for the eradication of the arms trade. To date, the 15 member States of ECOWAS have already signed the Treaty. We welcome the role played by civil society organizations to ensure the adoption of the Treaty.

In addition to the necessary technical updates, today's draft resolution replicates the exact language of the resolution adopted last year by consensus (resolution 67/58). Members will note the inclusion of a new preambular paragraph, as follows:

“Welcoming the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in context of the Arms Trade Treaty as well as the inclusion of the international assistance in its provision”.

That paragraph replaces two paragraphs that had initially been proposed.

In terms of its content, the draft resolution on assistance to States for curbing the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and for collecting them invites the international community to provide technical and financial support in order to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to combat the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and to help collect these weapons. It also encourages States to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Convention, which came into force on 29 September 2009. In that regard, I am pleased to welcome the considerable support provided to ECOWAS by the European Union in the fight against the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

In conclusion, we thank those States that support the ECOWAS States every year in sponsoring the draft resolution and remind members that the list of sponsors remains open for signing by those wishing to join us.

**Mr. Raafenberg** (Suriname): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

The States members of UNASUR recognize the contribution and qualitative difference made by the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in providing a comprehensive and multidimensional response to the problems arising from those illicit activities. Nevertheless, we remain concerned about the effects of the illicit production, transfer and circulation of firearms and ammunition and their proliferation in the hands of civilians, which in many regions have various consequences and pose a challenge to the sustainable development of our societies. We also reiterate our concern at the close link that exists between the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and organized crime.

The effective implementation of the Programme of Action is a matter of high and urgent priority for UNASUR. We consider it important to continue promoting the consolidation of international cooperation and assistance and national capacity-building, as their cross-cutting and multidimensional nature make them essential tools for the effective implementation of the measures recommended in the Programme of Action.

While we recognize the contribution made by the Programme of Action, UNASUR States wish to reiterate the position stated on previous occasions regarding the the Programme of Action, namely, that by referring to the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, it must necessarily include ammunition and explosives. We therefore consider that one of the remaining challenges for the implementation of the Programme of Action is the comprehensive consideration of the issue.

The UNASUR States consider ammunition to be an integral part of small arms and light weapons, which also includes explosives. We have also reiterated that the non-legally binding nature of the Programme of Action is also an obstacle to its effective implementation.

The States members of UNASUR consider that the central role of the Programme of Action in the field of small arms and light weapons makes it necessary to have



a close and continued follow-up of its implementation by the international community.

In that regard, while welcoming the positive outcome achieved during the second Review Conference to examine the Programme of Action through the consensual adoption of the final documents, the States members of UNASUR look forward to the convening of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms, to be held in New York from 16 to 20 of June 2014. In our view, that Meeting will provide an excellent opportunity to deepen our discussions on international cooperation and assistance and on marking, record-keeping and tracing in the framework of the International Tracing Instrument.

Taking into account the primary responsibility of States to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects across borders, in the framework of the Common Market of the South, a working group on firearms and ammunition comprising UNASUR members and associated States was established in 2001. Its purpose is to share national experiences, working towards the harmonization of national legislation to control firearms and ammunition and coordinating policies in the field. That forum of exchange has become a useful tool for the coordination of the positions of UNASUR members and associated States.

In that context, UNASUR welcomes the deposit by Ecuador and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in September of their respective instruments of ratification of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

With regard to this agenda item, States members of UNASUR express their support to Colombia, South Africa and Japan in their annual initiative to introduce the draft resolution entitled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects”.

Along the same lines, States members of UNASUR underscore the need to address the issues related to the unregulated trade in conventional arms and their diversion to the illicit market. In April, the Arms Trade Treaty was adopted by the General Assembly. UNASUR hopes that the first legally binding instrument on the arms trade can help to provide an effective response to the serious consequences that the unregulated trade in arms and their illicit trafficking have for many

people and States, in particular through their diversion to unauthorized non-State actors or users, which is often linked to transitional organized crime and drug trafficking. It is expected that the Treaty will contribute to the prevention of armed conflict, armed violence and violations of international law, including international human rights instruments and humanitarian law. At the same time, in anticipation of the Treaty’s entry into force, UNASUR calls for the Treaty to be implemented in a balanced, transparent and objective manner that respects the sovereign right of all States to self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The States members of UNASUR reiterate their support for the efforts of the international community to regulate cluster munitions, with the purpose of significantly reducing the humanitarian, social and economic consequences of the use of those weapons for civilians, in accordance with international humanitarian law. In that regard, the Plurinational State of Bolivia deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions last April.

Likewise, UNASUR member States reaffirm the need to eliminate anti-personnel mines. In that regard, we highlight the efforts made and the results achieved in the field of demining and victim assistance in our region, which has been possible because of the cooperation that exists among our countries, as is the case with the joint demining carried out by Peru and Ecuador and by Peru and Chile. We also highlight the international assistance extended by countries of our region for demining, such as the assistance provided by Brazil in South and Central America.

The member States of UNASUR attach the utmost importance to the consideration of international cooperation and assistance in the framework of the Ottawa Convention. We welcome the fact that a relatively greater amount of time will be given for a more in-depth discussion of the issue and of ways to increase resource mobilization in that regard at the thirteenth Meeting of States Parties, to take place in Geneva from 2 to 5 December.

Finally, through the Declaration on South America as a zone of peace, adopted in November 2012, the Heads of State and Government of UNASUR affirmed their resolve to undertake actions with a view to establishing South America as a zone free of anti-personnel landmines and to continue to negotiate a protocol on

peace, security and cooperation within the framework of the South American Defence Council.

The full text of my statement will be posted on the website.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.47.

**Mr. Adejola** (Nigeria): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the African Group. The Group aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. The African Group affirms its continued cooperation and support in the course of the remaining debates and deliberations.

The African Group remains deeply concerned about the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons, including their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, particularly in Africa. We view the full implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument as a key element in promoting long-term security and creating the conditions for security and sustainable development in Africa.

African States have indeed been guided by efforts to address the menace of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on the continent within the framework of the Programme of Action. In that regard, we welcome the conclusion in 2012 of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. With the successful conclusion of the Conference, we continue to emphasize the importance of the balanced, full and effective implementation of its consensus outcome.

The Group also stresses that international cooperation and assistance are essential to the full implementation of the Programme of Action. We look forward to the 2014 fifth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the Programme of Action and promise full support for the Chair-designate in the efforts to ensure its successful outcome.

The Group stresses the urgency of international efforts and cooperation aimed at combating this illicit

trade and in that context reaffirms the absolute validity and vital importance of, and need for, the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action as the main international framework for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The African Group continues to be concerned about the adverse humanitarian impact caused by the use of landmines and cluster munitions and expresses its sympathy with the affected countries. We take note of the convening in 2014 of the fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the third Review Conference on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The Group supports the humanitarian objectives of the two instruments. We take this opportunity to call on States in a position to do so to provide the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to landmine clearance operations and the social and economic rehabilitation of victims, as well as to ensure affected countries' full access to material, equipment, technology and financial resources for mine clearance.

The African Group welcomed the adoption, on 2 April, of the resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty, which should be implemented in a balanced and objective manner that protects the interests of all States and not just the major international producing and exporting States. We take note of its signature and ratification by some States and look forward eagerly to its future contribution to international and regional peace, security, stability and cooperation. In practice, the full and balanced implementation of the Treaty is achievable with the cooperation of all.

At the same time, the Group recognizes and reaffirms the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. We acknowledge that an unregulated conventional arms transfer system fuels illicit trade and, in some cases, leads to unfettered access and unauthorized use by non-State actors, where no one may be immune to the indiscriminate use of such arms by unauthorized individuals and groups. The Group urges major arms suppliers to ratify the Treaty and supports ratification after its entry into force. We wish to encourage Member States to address the gaps created by the unregulated transfer of conventional weapons, and we urge that no undue restriction be placed

on States' sovereign right to acquire conventional arms for self-defence.

We believe that one genuine confidence-building measure is an actual reduction of military expenditures by major arms-producing countries, in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments. In that regard, we urge such countries to devote their resources to global economic and social development, particularly the fight against poverty and disease.

We note the impact of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa in its assistance to numerous African States in implementing the various conventions dealing with the control of small arms and light weapons, their ammunition and all parts and components. Such efforts should correspond to those rendered to its counterparts across other regions.

On behalf of the African Group, the Nigerian delegation would like to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/68/L.47, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa". The text of the draft resolution has already been circulated to delegations. We note with satisfaction the overwhelming support that has been shown for this resolution in past General Assembly sessions and call on all delegations to continue to support it. The draft resolution is introduced to ensure, among other things, a redoubling of efforts on disarmament education and support for African States in addressing the challenges of arms proliferation.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Ms. Ganslandt** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

The EU warmly welcomes the adoption of the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the General Assembly. It is the outcome of a comprehensive, inclusive, seven-year-long process within the Organization. It is a landmark for the United Nations, achieved thanks to the tireless efforts of Governments, diplomats, non-governmental organizations and industries in every corner of the world. The EU supported the Treaty

from the outset by promoting its principles through worldwide awareness-raising activities.

The Treaty establishes robust and effective common international standards for regulating and improving the regulation of international trade in conventional arms, and provides a new multilateral framework for transparency and accountability in that trade. It also helps prevent arms from being transferred irresponsibly and illegally. We have seen how the illicit and poorly regulated trade in arms can create instability and exacerbate conflicts, atrocities and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The ATT is the first treaty that addresses those risks at a global level, by establishing clear and legally binding criteria with regard to, among other things, international human rights law and international humanitarian law. It also recognizes the link between gender-based violence and an illicit or poorly regulated international arms trade.

When effectively and widely implemented, the ATT will contribute to more responsible and transparent international arms transfers and help eradicate the illicit trade. By signing and ratifying the Treaty, States can sustain the international momentum it has generated. The EU member States are playing their part. They are all signatories of the Treaty, and national ratification procedures are either complete or well under way. Let me take this opportunity to warmly welcome the new signatures — 29 in the month of September alone — and ratifications registered so far, and to call on all States that have not yet done so to become signatories.

For the Treaty to work, it must be implemented globally and effectively. The EU, for its part, intends to contribute to addressing those challenges in ways that include a new Council decision, expected to be adopted before the end of the year, that will enlarge the EU assistance portfolio by funding national implementation assistance programmes and regional awareness-raising seminars, among other things.

Twelve years after the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the EU continues to consider that politically binding international instrument as a key universal tool for responding to the challenges posed by the illicit trade in and excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons at national, regional and global levels. The EU is very pleased that the 2012 Review Conference on the Programme of Action agreed on a

substantive outcome document that affirms our renewed commitment to full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and provides for concrete measures and steps to achieve that aim.

The EU remains convinced that efforts to better control small arms and light weapons have to be intensified, in particular in those areas where significant obstacles to full implementation persist. We believe that these areas are the issue of diversion of small arms and light weapons, stockpile management, stockpile security and stockpile destruction, marking and tracing, the integration of ammunition, the gender perspective and the need to better address the humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The potential of technological progress in the past decade to enhance the effective implementation of the Programme of Action should be further explored, too. The EU remains strongly committed to the effective implementation of the International Tracing Instrument, which is one of the most important achievements of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, inter alia through an increased exchange of tracing results and information-sharing. We look forward to the first informal consultations in preparation for the fifth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms and a focused discussion with the aim of identifying priority topics for that Meeting.

The EU welcomes the recent adoption of Security Council resolution 2117 (2013), on 26 September, on small arms and light weapons. The resolution, the first one adopted by the Security Council on this topic in five years, takes on board the recommendations of the August 2013 report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/503) and allows for further momentum on the dynamics initiated by the ATT. Six EU member States sponsored the resolution.

The EU reiterates its strong support for the Register of Conventional Arms. We call upon States to report regularly to that transparency instrument. The EU believes that small arms and light weapons should constitute a mandatory category of the Register.

We are proud that all 28 EU member States are now States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, thus demonstrating our collective commitment to the goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. Since the last Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held in Cartagena, Colombia, significant progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Convention, but much remains

to be done. We are, inter alia, particularly interested in moving ahead in our efforts to effectively address post-mine-clearance challenges, ensure long-term support to victim assistance, promote further universalization and donor coordination and explore the potentials for further complementarity with other instruments, as applicable. The EU will continue to work in close cooperation with the countries concerned and provide, where possible, assistance to address the significant remaining challenges.

The European Union has supported the organization of two regional workshops: in Lima with the participation of Ecuador, and in Dushanbe. A third workshop will be held in Kinshasa in November.

Our high-level task force on universalization, which includes His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan, Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium and Colombian international celebrity Juanes, has already started high-level missions to engage with leaders of States not party to the Convention. The European Union also supports the holding of a high-level conference on victim assistance, which will take place in Medellín, Colombia, in April 2014. In addition to the significant contributions made by its member States, the EU committed more than €47 million in total to mine action in heavily affected countries and areas in 2012.

We look forward to the annual Meeting of States Parties and to the Review Conference preparatory meeting in December, and we stand ready to engage constructively on the road to the third Review Conference, to be held in Maputo.

The European Union supports the humanitarian goal of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We are deeply concerned about the reported use of cluster munitions against civilian populations by Government forces in Syria. We call upon the Syrian regime to refrain from the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions.

We took note of the Lusaka Progress Report, which monitors progress and identifies the key questions addressed by States parties in Lusaka last September with regard to implementing their commitments.

For the European Union, victim assistance is a core component of mine action, and there is also a clear commitment to strengthening the care, rehabilitation and socioeconomic reintegration of victims. We also wish to highlight the strong linkage with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



While recognizing the sovereign right of States to be bound only by the treaties to which they have acceded, the European Union supports the development of synergies in the implementation of international humanitarian disarmament instruments, as applicable. Respect for the relevant international law is crucial to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

With a view to strengthening international humanitarian law, the EU remains firmly committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols, which is a unique forum for gathering diplomatic, legal and military expertise and addressing emerging issues.

The EU is concerned by the alleged use in Syria of incendiary weapons, which have unacceptable humanitarian consequences, in attacks by military jets against civilian targets.

For the EU, the universalization of the CCW is an issue of high importance. Unfortunately, the rate of adherence remains low in Africa, South-East Asia and parts of the Middle East. We therefore welcome the accession of Kuwait and Zambia to the Convention and to all its annexed Protocols this year. We furthermore note that many States not yet party to the CCW are affected by mines and explosive remnants of war. Therefore, the universalization of the CCW and all its annexed Protocols should remain a priority objective.

We look forward to the CCW annual meetings in November to further discuss ongoing and future topics and find more effective ways to advance our common objectives.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now give the floor to representatives who wish to make statements in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Kim Ju Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (*spoke in French*): As members know, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched, with great success, the second version of Kwangmyongsong-3. We launched that satellite pursuant to all procedures contained in international treaties. However, the United States and its supporters continue to speak of the use of ballistic missile technology. We have a simple question for those countries like the United States: when they launched their satellites, what technology did they use? The answer is obvious: it was ballistic missile technology.

(*spoke in English*)

My second question is whether there are any articles in the relevant treaties that state that only specific countries can access outer space with updated technologies like ballistic missile technology. I think the answer is surely no. This is a clear double standard being applied to the peaceful uses of outer space. As I have mentioned before, outer space is not a parking garage for the United States where only select countries can have permission to enter. It is the common property of all humankind, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is part of that, exercising its legitimate sovereign right.

Once again, we strongly reject those Security Council resolutions adopted as a result of the hostile policy of the United States and would like to remind them that we will keep on exercising our legitimate right to peacefully develop outer space. The United States is totally mistaken if it thinks that it can frustrate us through its sanctions and Security Council resolutions.

A last word for the South Korean delegation: before talking about an à la carte menu and other fabricated issues, he must think about and discern what is right and wrong for the Korean nation, instead of blindly following his American master.

**Mr. Lim Sang-beom** (Republic of Korea): Let me be clear and point out that Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013), as well as the relevant presidential statements, clearly demand that North Korea not conduct any launches using ballistic missile technology. It seems that only North Korea does not understand the reason and meaning of the clauses contained in the relevant Security Council resolutions and presidential statements. Such launches will lead to the development of ballistic missile technology, which is the concern of the international community.

I would also like to recall that the Security Council made it very clear, through presidential statement S/PRST/2012/13, issued in April 2012, that North Korea's launches are serious violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions, "even if characterized as a satellite launch or space launch vehicle".

Given the track record of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's repeated nuclear tests and missile launches, North Korea has no justification.

**Mr. Kim Ju Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I will be very brief. The more South Korea goes on talking and placing blame illogically, the more times I will have to brief the Committee about the reckless military exercises that it is conducting with the United States in an attempt to bring down their fellow countrymen jointly with foreign aggressors. But I think it is pointless to have a discussion with somebody who does not actually understand the language.

**Mr. Lim Sang-beom** (Republic of Korea): I am sorry to take the floor once again.

North Korea still does not understand the obligation currently imposed on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by Security Council resolutions and other instruments.

According to Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States should accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. Furthermore, Article 48 of the Charter states that the action required to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security should be taken by all Members of the United Nations.

As I mentioned, according to Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009) and 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013), which were adopted under Chapter VII, all Member States must carry out their obligations in accordance with those resolutions. Article 4 of the Charter clearly restricts United Nations membership to peace-loving States that accept and carry out their Charter obligations. North Korea cannot accept one obligation while rejecting the other.

*The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.*