



General Assembly

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First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)

Thematic discussions on specific subjects and the introduction and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chair: There remain 17 speakers on the list for the cluster “Conventional weapons”. However, in accordance with Committee’s adopted timetable, before continuing with the list we will first hear from a panel under the cluster “Regional disarmament and security”. I understand that, before the panel discussion this morning, the Acting Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Department of Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Xiaoyu Wang, will make a short statement on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kim Won-soo.

It is now my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our panellists: Mr. Xiaoyu Wang, Acting Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Department of Disarmament Affairs; Ms. Olatokunbo Ige, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa; Ms. Mélanie Régimbal, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean; and Mr. Yuriy Kryvonos, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific.

The reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Regional Centres are contained in documents A/71/125, A/71/127 and A/71/128.

I will first give the floor to our panellists to make their statements. Thereafter, we will change to an informal mode to afford delegations an opportunity to ask questions. To ensure that we have adequate time for an interactive discussion on the subject, I urge the panellists to kindly keep their statements concise.

I now give the floor to Mr. Xiaoyu Wang.

Mr. Xiaoyu Wang (Acting Chief, Regional Disarmament Branch, Department of Disarmament Affairs): With your permission, Mr. Chair, we invite the First Committee to watch a short film that was made to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the three United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament.

The members of the Committee viewed a video presentation.

The Chair: I once again give the floor to Mr. Xiaoyu Wang.

Mr. Xiaoyu Wang (Acting Chief, Regional Disarmament Branch, Department of Disarmament Affairs): It is an honour for my colleagues and me to address the First Committee today on regional disarmament, under agenda item 99, and specifically on the activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs’ Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In keeping with their mandates,

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the Regional Centres support regional disarmament measures at the request of States, while taking into account the specific characteristics of each region, with a view to enhancing the security of States and contributing to regional and international peace and security.

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. During the past three decades, the Regional Centres have worked very closely with their partners, especially Member States, in advancing regional initiatives to promote arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in their respective regions. Since last year's First Committee session, based on requests from Member States and the programme priorities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the three Regional Centres have undertaken activities mainly in the following three areas.

First, they have provided capacity-building and legal and technical assistance programmes to assist Member States in their efforts to accede to and implement global, regional and subregional instruments, including on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and controls thereon, the Arms Trade Treaty, various instruments related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The Regional Centres' second area of focus is on promoting dialogue and confidence-building through global and regional conferences and workshops on both WMD and conventional-arms issues, as well as on regional security challenges. The Centres' third area of focus is on undertaking advocacy and outreach activities to promote global treaties and raise public awareness on disarmament and non-proliferation, including through education programmes on peace and disarmament. I will leave the details of those activities to the three Directors of the Regional Centres.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the inseparable and mutually reinforcing link between sustainable development and peace and security. Target 16.4, under Sustainable Development Goal 16, points to the need to address and reduce flows of illicit arms, which forms a key part of a coherent and integrated approach to the prevention of armed violence with a view to achieving sustainable peace and development.

In the final report of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States, the States Members of the United Nations

noted that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons had implications for the realization of several Sustainable Development Goals, including those relating to peace, justice and strong institutions, poverty reduction, economic growth, health, gender equality, and safe cities and communities. States underlined the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument for attaining Goal 16 and Target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

This recognition underlines the valuable role that the three Regional Centres can play in contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16. The Regional Centres will continue their close cooperation with Member States that request assistance and with relevant regional organizations, as well as with donors and other partners. We also look forward to the continued support and engagement of Member States in the activities undertaken by the three United Nations Regional Centres.

The Chair: I now give the floor to Ms. Ige.

Ms. Ige (Director, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa): I have the pleasure to report to the First Committee on the activities of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC) during the period from October 2015 to October 2016.

I would like to express my appreciation for the support received from Member States, in particular donor Governments, and our institutional partners, including the African Union, the European Union, the regional economic communities in Africa and the Group of Five for the Sahel. I would especially like to thank the Republic of Togo for hosting and supporting us since the establishment of the Centre, in 1986.

As UNREC celebrates 30 years of existence, we have an opportunity to look back at its achievements and reflect on the future. In the past 10 years alone, the Centre has conducted over 130 activities for the benefit of more than 7,500 national authorities from all over the African continent. As an observer member of the African Union Regions Steering Committee on Small Arms and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, UNREC has continued to work closely with the African Union and the regional economic communities to support the implementation of the African Union strategy on small arms and light weapons.

The Centre and the African Union are discussing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 16, on reducing violence and illicit flows of arms, and examining synergies with the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 programme.

UNREC continued to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel by providing technical assistance on small-arms control, physical security and stockpile management. It actively participated in inter-agency coordination efforts led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel.

UNREC provided substantive support on disarmament, arms-control and non-proliferation issues to the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. That support has contributed to the elaboration of the African Union charter on maritime security and development in Africa.

(spoke in French)

The Regional Centre has continued to provide technical support to the national commissions of countries in the Sahel region. With a view of reinforcing coordination with all partners, UNREC has contributed substantially to initiatives for the control of light arms led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic Community of West African States and the Mines Advisory Group.

UNREC assistance to Mali took the form of a training session on the marking of weapons provided to security and defence agents. A total of 1,780 governmental weapons were marked, with the assistance of experts from Côte d'Ivoire, thereby supporting South-South cooperation. UNREC also contributed to awareness-raising programmes on the marking and registration of private security companies and makers of artisanal weapons. UNREC cooperated with the Office on Drugs and Crime in support of the process of harmonizing national legislation with international and regional instruments.

To assist the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument and the African Union strategy on small arms and light weapons, UNREC organized,

together with the African Union, a training course on identifying and tracing small arms and light weapons for States members of the Economic Community of Central African States. The training was supported by experts from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the non-government organization Conflict Armament Research.

In the context of the Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, UNREC carried out an assessment on light weapons in nine countries of the Sahel and neighbouring areas — Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria, the Central African Republic, Senegal and Chad — together with the United Nations Development Programme, the Small Arms Survey and the Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security. That evaluation directly contributed to the development of a three-year project on physical security and stock management in order to reduce the risk of misappropriation of these weapons. That project on physical security and stock management in the Sahel was launched during an international conference organized together with Wilton Park. Subsequently, UNREC held national consultations to draft legislative and administrative measures on arms control and on identifying pilot stockpiling sites for remediation efforts. In order to improve the ability of States to prevent non-State groups, including terrorist groups, from illegally obtaining weapons, the Centre is implementing a project to tighten control of light weapons and prevent them from being diverted to the Lake Chad basin countries.

(spoke in English)

Activities in support of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) include an analysis of synergies and complementarities between the Treaty and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on Small Arms, undertaken in cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission. UNREC also collaborated with Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the African Union in convening a workshop on identifying specific steps for States to take to implement their ATT obligations relating to human rights and gender-based violence. In cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, UNREC concluded a mapping of assistance activities in support of the Arms Trade Treaty in sub-Saharan Africa between 2011 and 2015, which is available through the Arms Trade Treaty website.

On issues related to weapons of mass destruction, UNREC and the Implementation Support Unit for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction assisted African States in promoting universal adherence to the Biological Weapons Convention and in developing national capacities for its implementation. The Centre stands ready to work with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy in support of the implementation of the Pelindaba Treaty.

Similarly, the Regional Centre is assisting States in implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors, through national round tables, and supported an assistance review meeting hosted by the African Union. The Centre also organized a workshop in the Niger on controlling strategic goods. The Centre and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs shared their expertise during regional events on resolution 1540 (2004) that were organized by the African Union and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

UNREC continued to provide advocacy and outreach to all its stakeholders. Its electronic newsletter — *UNREC Focus* — is distributed to more than 7,300 subscribers. Likewise, new interactive features continue to be added to the Centre's website, which has recorded 83,000 visitors as of today.

In celebration of Disarmament Week, the Centre developed an online platform of ideas and resources for commemorative activities for all African United Nations Resident Coordinators. It also screened a documentary entitled *The Man Who Saved the World* for more than 100 young people, followed by a discussion on weapons of mass destruction in Togo. UNREC also organized a high-level panel discussion on building partnerships for Silencing the Guns in Africa.

The Centre continues to emphasize gender-mainstreaming. On the occasion of International Women's Day, UNREC briefed participants of the Women, Peace and Security Institute of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre on ways to increase the participation of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, in line with resolution 65/69 and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

(spoke in French)

The Centre continued its collaboration with the International Organization of la Francophonie in the development of a practical guide in French on disarmament in Africa for African disarmament experts.

The constant volume of aid requests from States and regional organizations attests to the importance of the Regional Centre's work. Guided by its experience, the Centre continues to develop and implement new projects adapted to the priority needs of the States. In that regard, the Centre and the United Nations participated in the African Union Summit on Maritime Security and Development in Africa in an effort to support Togo and the African Union.

(spoke in English)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our donors, whose voluntary contributions, whether financial or in-kind, have made the activities of the Centre possible over the past 30 years. The United Nations and the African Union have long engaged in a fruitful collaboration on peace, security and disarmament. This collaboration found concrete expression 30 years ago, in 1986, when the General Assembly — responding to a call by the then-Organization of African Unity — established the Regional Centre. I would like to echo the call by the Chairperson of the African Union for States, and in particular African countries, to make financial contributions in support of the Centre's work.

The Chair: I now give the floor to Ms. Régimbal.

Ms. Régimbal (Director, Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean): Since we last met, in October 2015 (see A/C.1/70/PV.20), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) has undertaken close to 50 activities in 13 different countries, reaching more than 17,000 young people and adults. That assistance was delivered in the form of specialized training, technical assistance and legal and policy support covering the entire gamut of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues.

In keeping with requests, the Centre supported Member States in their implementation of various international instruments, most notably the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; International Tracing Instrument; the Arms

Trade Treaty; Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); and resolution 65/69, on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. In that regard, I would like to share with the First Committee a few highlights of the Centre's work and assistance over the past year.

In recognition of the essential link between sustainable development and security, UNLIREC continued to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development as part of a United Nations multi-year, multi-agency project being implemented in northern Peru.

UNLIREC's contribution in 2016 focused on promoting youth dialogues and on the benefits of performing arts as successful vehicles to raise awareness about the use of small arms and their impact on societies and communities. Additional prevention initiatives included small arms and explosive-risk public-awareness campaigns, which reached close to 1,000 youth and community members. This community-based approach complemented local and national law-enforcement efforts and resulted in the destruction of over 10,000 weapons, close to 2,000 of which were seized directly from those communities and permanently removed from circulation.

A newly updated regional study on the impact of stray bullets was released earlier this year as part of UNLIREC's public-security outreach efforts. As follow up, a first comprehensive report on the use of less-lethal weapons in the region will be disseminated before the end of the year.

With a view to helping States mitigate the diversion of small arms, parts and components and ammunition, UNLIREC developed a first-of-its-kind training tool to facilitate the prohibition of illicit trafficking through postal shipments. This x-ray identification guide gives postal and customs agents the tools they need on the ground to instantaneously detect and identify weapons. It is hoped that this unique guide will help to counter this new trafficking modality, which thus far has been virtually uncontrolled. The guide and accompanying training course are due to be piloted in Costa Rica during the first trimester of 2017.

In 2015, UNLIREC joined forces with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) to launch a new project in response to the growth of private security companies offering armed protection services in the region. To date, numerous

joint activities have been carried out in both Central and South America. Through the integration of small-arms-control standards and the professionalization of the sector in general, the risk of diversion into illicit markets and into the hands of illegal actors can be substantially reduced. Activities in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru concentrated on training 60 private security companies on improving the use and management of weapons and ammunition stockpiles and undertaking the secondary marking of close to 1,500 weapons. In fact, later this week, UNLIREC and DCAF will present the main findings of a baseline study on the private security sector in the region, conducted earlier this year. Everyone is welcome to join us for this side event on Thursday.

Three hundred persons were reached throughout the Caribbean thanks to the collaborative efforts of UNLIREC and the Caribbean Community, to bolster the capacity of States to gather, trace and share information drawn from forensic ballistics evidence — in other words, firearms-related evidence. The main aim of those efforts is to reduce impunity in cases of the use of illicit firearms and illicit trafficking.

In 2016, UNLIREC supported the provision of basic laboratory materials and equipment and training and the incorporation of 17 newly developed standard operating procedures into national systems, as well as the implementation of national competency-testing frameworks for firearms examiners, reaching close to 300 beneficiaries. Through the standardization of national practices, the project is designed to leverage the important work undertaken by the Caribbean Community at the regional level and to strengthen information-sharing networks.

Support for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) continues to be a top priority of the Centre. Since October of last year, UNLIREC has helped States to improve their strategic trade controls and modernize their legislation and policy frameworks. The Centre also supported the elaboration of voluntary resolution 1540 (2004) national action plans and their subsequent implementation. Such plans are a key tool through which Governments can establish priorities in implementing the obligations under the resolution. The roll-out of UNLIREC's new counter-proliferation financing guide was of particular note. While originally tailored for use by Trinidad and Tobago, that tool is now available for adoption by all States of the region

in support of their efforts in countering the threat of proliferation financing.

In addition, a new resolution 1540 (2004) tool was launched during the reporting period, in the form of a new Caribbean control list and guidelines. This new assistance tool is designed to provide Caribbean States with a two-track solution for safeguarding against the illicit proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The original full list enables States to establish strategic trade controls in the area of nuclear, chemical, biological and related materials and their means of delivery, as well as to integrate these controlled items into national legislative frameworks, while the Caribbean-focused “complementary” list serves as a practical guide based specifically on the patterns of the most frequently traded WMD dual-use items in the subregion. The tailor-made list currently includes 37 items, complete with an identification and description of each element, aimed at facilitating the work of customs and control authorities. We are also pleased to announce that the project recently expanded to several South American countries, including Guyana, Peru and Suriname.

(spoke in Spanish)

During 2016, UNLIREC continued to support States in their efforts to implement the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Assistance focused on national controls, sharing the risk assessment tool developed by UNLIREC and disseminating tools for end-user documentation in order to standardize control measures and documents necessary for international transfers, in accordance with ATT obligations.

Legislative reform and integrating national control lists are also part of UNLIREC technical assistance to Central and South American States. In addition to tailored support provided to national authorities, UNLIREC continued to conduct the ATT Implementation Course, which has thus far trained more than 150 officers in Central and South America.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that UNLIREC is firmly supporting the spirit of General Assembly resolution 65/69, on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, which we have done by actively promoting the inclusion of women in initiatives relating to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. Those efforts involve more than 650 women participating in UNRILEC activities, an increase over the preceding period.

I cannot conclude without thanking those without whose support our activities could not have been carried out in the past year. In particular, we thank Canada, Germany, Guyana, Mexico, Peru, Spain and the United States, as well as the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, for their support. We also thank all the other States that have provided generous support.

I would also like to reiterate UNLIREC’s commitment to continue developing and implementing innovative tools aimed at preventing the proliferation of illicit weapons, with a view to creating a safer region. I hope that we can continue to build on the results achieved over the past 30 years and contribute even more — going beyond the 4,000 security officers and law enforcement officers who have been trained, improving upon the more than 160 arsenals that have been set up and destroying even more than the 75,000 weapons and 70 tons of ammunition already eliminated. Together we can move ahead as we work to ensure a safer region.

The Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Kryvonos.

Mr. Kryvonos (Director, Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific): I have the pleasure to report to the First Committee on the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), for the one-year period from October 2015 up to now. This year concludes the 30-year period of the Centre’s activities to support Member States of Asia and the Pacific in their efforts to maintain peace and security in the region through the implementation of a variety of global agreements in the field of arms control, confidence-building, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Over the last eight years, since its establishment in the region, the Centre has managed to achieve a positive dynamic in its operations. A total of 37 projects were implemented individually, and an additional 34 were undertaken in cooperation with other actors in the region. During the reporting period, UNRCPD conducted seven workshops, organized one international conference and engaged in seven collaborative projects, reaching over 500 delegates and trainees.

Promoting dialogue and confidence-building remains a priority in the region. In that regard, the Centre cooperated with the Republic of Korea to organize the fourteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

Issues, held in Seoul in December 2015. With over 120 delegates and experts representing 50 Member States, the conference focused on regional nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament issues. It also addressed issues of sustainability and security in outer space activities and nuclear security, including actions that should be taken by the international community following the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit.

In the area of national capacity-building, UNRCPD carried out several projects to assist Member States with the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In cooperation with the Governments of the Philippines and Myanmar, the Centre conducted capacity-building workshops in November 2015 and February 2016, respectively, with a focus on small-arms and light-weapons control through the Programme of Action. The workshops engaged over 40 delegates in each country and consisted of plenary sessions, discussions, group exercises and interaction. Special attention was given to the utilization of the International Small Arms Control Standards and its assessment tool to establish a national coordinating mechanism and national action plan to improve control over small arms and conventional ammunition. Concrete measures on strengthening weapons control were formulated for further inclusion in national action plans. The projects were made possible thanks to contributions by the Governments of Germany and the United Kingdom.

Furthermore, in March 2016, the Centre organized a national workshop for Thailand that served to enhance the country's capacity in implementing the Programme of Action and meeting standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, as stipulated in the Arms Trade Treaty. The workshop brought together 33 participants to discuss approaches and measures designed to combat illicit trafficking in small arms. National representatives requested UNRCPD to assist in consolidating regional efforts to address growing risks caused by illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The workshop was sponsored by the Government of Germany.

The Regional Centre also conducted two subregional capacity-building workshops aimed at building States' capacity to implement the ATT. One of them, sponsored through the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, was held in Bangkok

in April 2016, and served to foster interactive regional dialogue among representatives from eight countries of the South-East Asian region and to enhance the capacity of Governments in meeting the requirements of the ATT. During the workshop, 25 representatives of the region participated in in-depth discussions relating to legal and technical issues, the maintenance of a national control system for conventional-arms transfers, as well as the Treaty's requirements on reporting. The workshop was also supplemented by a side event on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which focused on the ongoing 2016 comprehensive review of its implementation.

The second workshop, which took place in Apia in September 2016, brought together 25 participants from the 12 Pacific island States. The workshop aimed at highlighting the relevance of the Treaty to the region, provided guidance on developing national legislation and a national control list, thereby enhancing States' capacities to accede to and implement the ATT. In addition, the workshop identified region-specific approaches for Pacific States to fulfil the Treaty's reporting requirements. The workshop was made possible with the financial support of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand.

The Centre also conducted three events in the framework of the joint Office for Disarmament Affairs-Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) project on facilitating the regional implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), consisting of a series of country-specific dialogues in the Central Asian region. The first training session, in which representatives from four Central Asian States took part, was co-organized with the OSCE and held in Kaliningrad, Russia, in July. At the event, participants discussed national legislative and regulatory frameworks and the enforcement of legislation, transshipment, illicit trafficking and brokering control. The role of the national points of contact in supporting the implementation of those measures was also clarified and highlighted. The second event, which took place in August 2016, brought together 38 participants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Belarus in a peer-review meeting in Minsk. The first-ever event of its kind held in a trilateral format, the meeting provided participants an opportunity to share experiences and discuss progress in their work, as well as to visit national facilities and familiarize themselves with the work of their counterparts from Belarus. Finally, in September 2016, the Centre organized a

national round table meeting of 1540 (2004) Committee experts with representatives of State ministries and agencies of Kyrgyzstan involved in the implementation of the resolution, in order to discuss progress in their work and identify further tasks to include in the national action plan.

In addition to those activities, the Regional Centre continued its outreach and advocacy efforts to engage regional stakeholders and ensure the regular dissemination of accurate and timely information about its work and relevant disarmament issues. UNRCPD continued to publish its quarterly fact sheets and biannual newsletters, as well as to showcase the Centre's work on its website and on Twitter, engaging in real time with audiences of over 1,400 followers through its social-media platforms.

In addition, UNRCPD continued to successfully engage with many stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region in order to strengthen partnerships and contribute substantively to their regional workshops and training activities. Through cooperation with regional organizations, other United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations, the Regional Centre has expanded its ability to reach a greater number of countries in the region and support their efforts in implementing their respective commitments in the field of arms control and disarmament. These joint activities covered conventional-arms control, nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation, and peace-and disarmament-education issues.

The reporting period was quite a productive year of activity for the Centre, which was possible thanks to the support of our sponsors — both donor States and countries of the region that assisted with in-kind contributions to our projects. UNRCPD would like to express its sincere gratitude to the donors, without which the results we achieved would not have been possible: Australia, China, Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Kingdom, as well as Risho Kosei-kai of Japan. In addition, the Centre would like to thank Japan and Switzerland for the staffing support they provided to the Centre in the form of one United Nations Volunteer and one junior professional officer, respectively.

Looking forward, a priority for UNRCPD is to complete its transfer back to Kathmandu in order to enable the resumption of its operations in Nepal as

soon as possible. The Centre is also working with donor States and other funding bodies to secure resources for new projects and to lay the groundwork for activities in 2017. Our ability to continue delivering target-oriented, effective activities each year depends not only on financial support, but also on the availability of staff who can execute projects. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to request that the Committee consider supporting UNRCPD's efforts by financing associate experts, junior professional officers and volunteers or seconded staff from the United Nations for the Regional Centre.

The Chair: In keeping with the Committee's established practice, I shall now suspend the meeting in order to afford delegations an opportunity to hold an interactive discussion with our panellists through an informal question-and-answer format.

The meeting was suspended at 10.50 a.m. and resumed at 11.10 a.m.

The Chair: On behalf of all delegations, I wish to thank all our panellists for that very interesting exchange.

I have been informed that, due to unforeseen engagements, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kim Won-soo, will not be able to address the Committee at this time. Accordingly, Mr. Xiaoyu Wang, Acting Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, will take the floor on his behalf.

I now give the floor to Mr. Xiaoyu Wang.

Mr. Xiaoyu Wang (Acting Chief, Regional Disarmament Branch, Department of Disarmament Affairs): High Representative Kim Won-soo would have liked to address the First Committee himself. However, an emergency has prevented him from coming to speak to the Committee. He has asked me to convey his apologies and read out a statement on his behalf on the issue of voluntary contributions to the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, which is a topic that a number of Member States raised in their interaction with the panellists.

"I would like to thank the Chair for giving me this opportunity to speak during this meeting. I also want to thank the regional panellists for their presentations, as well as to thank Member States for their valuable comments and suggestions today. Those comments reflect Member States' recognition of the quality work that has been done

by the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament over the past 30 years.

“That quality work would not be possible without the financial contributions of Member States. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all donors for their generous support. I especially thank those donors that have supported the Centres in a consistent manner for many years. I also take this opportunity to thank the three Member States that host the Centres — Nepal, Peru and Togo — for their partnership, especially when it comes to the operation of the Centres.

“The Office for Disarmament Affairs has circulated a paper outlining financial contributions from Member States and organizations to the three Regional Centres over the past decade, that is, for the 2005-2015 period. As Committee members will see, the total contribution from donors has been steady over the years, with only a brief dip in 2009 to just above \$60,000, following the global financial crisis of 2008. Committee members can also see that contributions bounced back quickly in 2010, to more than \$2 million. The total average annual contribution from all Member States is more than \$2 million. That does not include in-kind contributions to the Centres.

“In 2015, we saw the highest level of voluntary funding to date. Those contributions demonstrate recognition by Member States and other donors of the important work undertaken by the Centres. However, they are also a strong indication of the increasing demand from recipient States for the capacity-building and technical assistance provided by the Centres as they attempt to address the challenges facing their countries and their regions.

“Over the past three decades, the Regional Centres have accumulated valuable regional expertise and become better equipped to expand their technical assistance to more Member States in need. Unfortunately, because of limited available financial resources, many of the calls for assistance from States cannot be answered.

“The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — the Sustainable Development Goals — formally recognizes the link between sustainable development and peace and security, including disarmament. This comprehensive approach provides an opportunity for the Regional

Centres to use their unique experience and expertise to play a regional leadership role in that context. If the Centres are to take on that role and also meet growing demands, they will need continued, strengthened and ongoing financial support and partnership from Member States. I count on all Member States, especially those from the regions covered by the Centres, to ensure that the next 30 years of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament are as successful as the last three decades have been.”

The Chair: The Committee will now resume its consideration of cluster 4, “Conventional weapons”. I once again urge all speakers to observe the time limit of five minutes when speaking in a national capacity and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of a group. The Committee will continue to use the buzzer to remind delegations when the time limit has been reached.

Mr. Eloumni (Morocco): The Moroccan delegation’s full statement has been posted on PaperSmart. In the light of the time constraint, I will just highlight a few points.

First, the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and the illicit trafficking therein in particular, has had catastrophic economic, social and human consequences, especially in Africa. The growing links with organized crime and terrorism represent a real threat to the stability and territorial integrity of States, in the Sahel region in particular.

For Morocco, regional and subregional cooperation is important if those challenges are to be addressed. International cooperation and assistance are crucial to States’ efforts aimed at preventing and combating the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. In that context, Morocco reiterates its firm support for the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and for the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. As these are political instruments, consensus and the political commitment of States are highly important to their objectives being fulfilled. An example of the commitment required can be seen in the joint statement delivered during this session by the representative of France on behalf of a group of States on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (see A/C.1/71/PV.16).

Morocco calls for the full implementation of all agreed outcomes and for continuing dialogue on issues raised at the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action and the meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts. Those include the impact of technological developments and capacity-building, and technology and know-how transfers.

We congratulate France on its chairmanship of the upcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and look forward to early preparation for a successful outcome. This year Morocco is once again a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.25, on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.32, on assistance to States in curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

Morocco is following the efforts of States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty with interest. We emphasize that, if the Treaty is to fulfil its objectives, it must be implemented fairly, transparently and with full respect for the right of States to acquire the means or weapons they need to defend their independence, unity and territorial integrity.

Mr. Zulu (Zambia): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered previously by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria, respectively, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of African States (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

Zambia is cognizant of the fact that the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, continue to pose a serious threat to security. They fuel conflict and result in significant loss of life and serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Furthermore, they undermine conflict prevention and hinder post-conflict reconstruction and development. With regard to the outcome of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the discussions of the Group of Governmental Experts, the Government of the Republic of Zambia is working to ensure the full implementation of the

Programme of Action, and expects it to meet Member States' expectations.

Zambia is fully aware that individual Member States are primarily responsible for mitigating the threats posed by illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of arms and ammunition, and will therefore continue to renew its efforts to fully implement the relevant regional and international instruments through nationally led and owned programmes. We also realize that porous borders in our region make dealing with the problem significantly harder. In that regard, we welcome the calls for regional approaches based on strong inter-State cooperation fostering the sharing of intelligence and information about suspected traffickers, trafficking routes and diversion activities.

Zambia, a landlocked sub-Saharan country whose extensive borders are shared with eight other nations, has sought to make use of its geographic location by establishing itself as a trade-friendly transit hub. In enforcing transit control, we issue transit and shipment permits and devote serious resources to controlling the transfer of strategic goods through our territory. Any entity seeking to move arms or military equipment through Zambia's territory is therefore required to apply for transit permission in order for shipment to be authorized either by the Ministry of Home Affairs or, in certain instances, the Ministry of Defence.

As a developing country itself, Zambia supports the call for assistance to sub-Saharan countries to enable them to build adequate institutional capabilities. We also need help with technical resources in order to fully implement and effectively enforce the various instruments that we have to abide by.

Lastly, Zambia is of the view that it is vital for women, who are most affected, directly and indirectly, by armed violence, to participate in combating the illicit trade in small arms, and that they should therefore be encouraged to actively advocate for awareness. Zambia has therefore been working to engage women in formulating policies and conducting workshops dealing with armed domestic violence and the gender dimensions of armed violence.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.4.

Mr. Kadurugamuwa (Sri Lanka): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered previously under this cluster by the representative of Indonesia on

behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

The category of conventional weapons is perhaps less dramatic in nature and more limited in scope as compared to that of weapons of mass destruction. However, owing to their wide use in internal and international armed conflicts, conventional weapons continue to inflict death and tremendous damage globally on a daily basis. The situation is further aggravated because the illicit trade and unregulated spread of conventional weapons have allowed non-State armed groups to use them in ways contrary to the principles of international humanitarian law, and their victims are largely innocent civilians.

The situation has gravely affected developing countries dealing with prolonged conflicts. As a country that suffered from an internal armed conflict that lasted three decades, Sri Lanka is also well aware of the ramifications of the use of conventional weapons. In that context, it is time for us as States to pay greater attention to the implementation of conventions, treaties and regulations pertaining to conventional weapons and to compliance with them, as well as to strengthen international law in this area, with the aim of alleviating undue suffering, helping to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16 and promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

Sri Lanka values the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) as a principal instrument of international humanitarian law that strikes the right balance between States' legitimate security concerns and assurances of compliance with the principles of international humanitarian law. The Convention, which was born of a growing belief internationally that certain conventional weapons' effects are excessively injurious and indiscriminate, has contributed to regulating the use of conventional weapons both internationally and nationally. The decision to retain it as an evolving instrument and provide it with room to develop adequate and timely responses to the complex challenges posed by advances made in warfare and in sophisticated weapon technologies makes it unique compared with other conventions pertaining to international humanitarian law.

In that context, we welcome the ongoing discussions on lethal autonomous weapon systems under the CCW framework. Sri Lanka particularly welcomes the outcome of the 2016 Meeting of Experts on Lethal

Autonomous Weapon Systems, which agreed on a set of recommendations in line with the mandate agreed on at the 2015 Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, which Sri Lanka had the privilege to chair. We hope that the recommendation on establishing a group of governmental experts to discuss lethal autonomous weapon systems in 2017 will attract favourable consideration by States parties at the upcoming fifth Review Conference, to be held later this year.

On behalf of the outgoing Chair of the 2015 Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the CCW, I also wish to take this opportunity to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.4, this year's version of the annual resolution on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which is submitted by Sri Lanka. It includes some technical and several substantial updates. The text of the draft resolution has been agreed to by Geneva-based delegations and widely circulated in both New York and Geneva. We believe it has been drafted in a manner that is acceptable to all delegations and are seeking support for its adoption by consensus, in keeping with past practice.

Mr. Herráiz España (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain fully associates itself with the statement delivered previously on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

Every year more than 500 million people all over the world die as a result of violence involving firearms. The serious consequences of the proliferation and trafficking of such weapons go beyond the military sphere to affect the security and stability of States, thereby causing more civilian casualties than other types of weapons.

Spain believes that firearms should be controlled on two levels — by responsibly regulating the legal trade in such weapons and by combating illegal trafficking in them, coordinating with United Nations action where appropriate.

The universalization and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) are two key elements in preventing conventional weapons from being used to endanger the security and stability of regions and States or violate human rights and international humanitarian law. The second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Geneva, consolidated the Treaty's

institutional structure, and we welcome the creation of a Voluntary Trust Fund designed to facilitate its full implementation by States parties. Spain collaborates actively in various outreach and support initiatives for implementing the ATT, both bilaterally and in close collaboration with international organizations such as the European Union and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and has contributed for many years to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation.

Spain underscores the importance of resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015) of the Security Council, which focus on small arms and light weapons, as well as resolution 2242 (2015), on the role of women in policies aimed at combating illicit trafficking in such weapons. We also support the declaration coordinated by France during the current session, which my delegation has endorsed.

In line with target 4 of Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Spain attaches great importance to the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In that regard, we firmly support the International Tracing Instrument and are also committed to 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 as the only legally binding universal instrument in the field of firearms. I would also like to stress the importance of an issue often relegated to second place, which is the importance of strengthening control of the trade in ammunition, a key issue that should be part of the core of the Programme of Action on Small Arms.

In terms of conventional weapons, Spain encourages all measures aimed at building confidence, transparency and mutual predictability agreed on at the multilateral, regional or subregional level. We also greatly value related mechanisms such as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, as well other transparency mechanisms such as the reports on military expenditures and budgets and on legislation on exports of military equipment and dual-use goods, as well as other regional reports.

The Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,

Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Maputo in 2014, has helped to relaunch our efforts in that area. Spain wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the 2014 Maputo Action Plan, as well as to the goal of universalizing the Convention.

Spain is also firmly opposed to the use, development, production, acquisition and stockpiling of cluster munitions. The first Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in Dubrovnik in 2015, was a success, thanks to its adoption of the Dubrovnik Political Declaration and Plan of Action. However, we are deeply concerned about the alleged use of cluster munitions affecting civilians in various parts of the world, and we urge all parties involved to refrain from such use and fully observe the principles of international humanitarian law.

Lastly, we will soon hold the next Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. We hope to have a constructive discussion of the achievements and pending tasks of that multilateral instrument and to agree on courses of action to strengthen it in the medium and long term.

Mr. Hellgren (Sweden): Sweden fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/71/PV.15). I will therefore limit myself to some additional points in my national capacity.

Sweden welcomes the positive outcomes achieved at the second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, which put the international community in a position to step up its efforts in the fight against irresponsible, unregulated and illicit arms trading. We are confident that the coming years will illustrate the benefits of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) very clearly and show that it is in every State's interest to participate in these efforts.

Transparency and reporting play an important role in this area, and Sweden will continue to contribute to efforts in the ATT and other forums to facilitate increased transparency. Sweden's support to the ATT is also financial. The newly established ATT Voluntary Trust Fund and sponsorship programme, both of which are important to ensuring the Treaty's successful implementation, should be receiving contributions from Sweden before the end of the year.

Sweden's commitment to transparency is also demonstrated by our participation in this year's Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts (see A/71/259) and its recommendations were presented last week by its Chair, Ambassador Paul Beijer of Sweden. This year is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Register, and Sweden encourages all Member States to report annually to this important confidence-building mechanism.

The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, together with the ATT, provides us with a comprehensive toolkit for tackling the illicit trade in small and light weapons. While the ATT addresses cross-border trade, the Programme of Action focuses on domestic measures aimed at suppressing the diversion of arms to the illicit market. Small arms and light weapons and their ammunition continue to destabilize societies and thereby undermine both peace and development. Awareness of those negative societal effects energized the work of the Programme's recently concluded sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Sweden welcomes those results and will follow up on them.

Last year's Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions set important goals through the Dubrovnik Action Plan, further reaffirmed at the recent sixth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention. As one of the Convention's first signatories, Sweden takes an active part in its work. We fully share its goals in banning this inhumane weapon, including a complete ban on its use. For that ban to become truly effective, it is also important to ensure that the world's largest manufacturers and users of cluster munitions join the Convention. Sweden joins those expressing deep concern about the reports of the use of cluster munitions affecting civilian populations, and calls on all actors to strictly observe international humanitarian law.

Under the heading "Finish the Job", the International Campaign to Ban Landmines has noted that the promise of the Ottawa Convention will be fulfilled when the norm against the use of anti-personnel mines becomes universal and when States parties to the treaty have fully implemented their key obligations. One important theme of the Review Conference of the States Parties

to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction in Maputo was that the goal of a mine-free world can be achieved if our efforts are sustained. The example of Mozambique itself has shown that this is a real possibility, since the country was recently able to declare itself mine-free. Sweden is proud to have contributed to that achievement. All in all, Sweden has contributed more than €100 million to mine action worldwide over the past decade.

Sweden also remains firmly committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its protocols. We believe that it also provides us with an effective and flexible means for responding to future weapons technology developments. Sweden very much appreciates the discussions held on lethal autonomous weapon systems. Our basic position is that humans should always be ultimately responsible when it comes to questions of life and death. We welcome the continued discussion of such weapon systems within the framework of the CCW, and we will support a decision at the Convention's Review Conference in December to create a group of governmental experts to further examine the issue.

I would like to conclude with an observation that is important to my Government. Without women's full participation in discussions on disarmament and arms control, in line with the agenda on women and peace and security, we cannot achieve effective and lasting results. Sweden will continue to support a gendered approach, in cooperation with civil society and throughout the United Nations system.

Mrs. Mohamed (Ethiopia): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

In the volatile situation that our world currently finds itself in, the irresponsible proliferation and illicit transfer of conventional weapons aggravate conflicts in many regions. That is a grave and pressing concern for us and our region, as well the international community. The proliferation and illicit transfer of weapons are increasingly becoming significant contributing factors in the expansion of armed conflicts and instruments for serious violations of international law and human rights. Such weapons continue to claim the lives of innocent civilians, particularly the most vulnerable among

them, including women and children. They continue to be a major factor in challenges to regional and global peace and security in many parts of the world. They also have long-term negative effects on hard-won peace and security, especially in post-conflict situations, and are an obstacle to many countries' socioeconomic development efforts. They aggravate armed violence and organized crime, which in turn lead to increased numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, which in itself is a serious challenge to international peace and security.

In addressing such challenges and their adverse consequences, Ethiopia has been working closely with partners in its subregion and with the international community. We are working diligently to enhance collective efforts to combat the illicit brokering and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. In that regard, it is worth mentioning that the East and Central African region, through the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, has continued to coordinate and assist Member States in effectively controlling arms transfers within and outside the region.

We believe it is vital to ensure that all countries join the efforts to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects at national and regional levels as well as at the international level, since the problems caused by light weapons and small arms often transcend national frontiers. We welcome the successful convening of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action and its consensus outcome document and look forward to participating actively in the Programme of Action's third Review Conference, in 2018.

As part of efforts to reduce and control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, it is extremely important to ensure the full implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, and Ethiopia joins others in encouraging all States to adhere to it and support every effort to promote its universalization in all the relevant forums. Ethiopia is committed to assisting, caring for, rehabilitating and promoting the social and economic reintegration of mine victims. In that regard, we recognize the efforts of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the

International Campaign to Ban Landmines and other non-governmental organizations around the world.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate Ethiopia's commitment to continuing its efforts to address the growing danger represented by the proliferation of conventional arms, particularly small arms and light weapons. We call on all stakeholders to work together in a spirit of cooperation and to demonstrate the level of political commitment required to address the devastating impact that such weapons have on the lives of millions.

Mr. Bai (Fiji): Fiji aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

One of the most challenging goals in international relations is the achievement of general and complete disarmament. We have to not only get rid of nuclear warheads and other weapons of mass destruction but also to reduce and control conventional weapons. Fiji believes that we cannot have one kind of disarmament without the other.

The 1945 founding Charter of the United Nations calls for the international regulation of armaments in order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security while ensuring that the world's human and economic resources are diverted to armaments as little as possible. When we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we pledged to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development by working to reduce all forms of violence. Fiji is concerned about the fact that, when conventional weapons land in the wrong hands, they can kill hundreds of thousands, destroy cities, ruin societies and spur migrations that can cause suffering and disruption. Like nuclear weapons, conventional arms pose a great threat and risk, and it is our duty to reduce that threat and risk.

Fiji firmly believes that conventional arms control is about making people feel safe and secure by helping to reduce tensions and threats while building confidence and trust. In that connection, we believe that we must apply the same level of attention to conventional types of weapon as we do to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

Fiji considers curbing the proliferation, collection and stockpiling of conventional weapons to be a top

priority. We recently submitted our national report on our implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We understand the need for enhanced regional and international cooperation and proper and effective border controls, customs and legal measures in order to ensure that such weapons are not smuggled across frontiers. Like other small island developing States, Fiji is vulnerable to the challenges of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We do not have the resources to combat such activities, and it is therefore only through global partnerships that we can secure a sustainable and peaceful future. We need concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons. Their uncontrolled circulation has humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences, and they pose a serious threat to peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability and sustainable development at every level.

The successful implementation of the Programme of Action is our responsibility. In that regard, we encourage Member States to further strengthen that implementation and to voluntarily submit national reports on it. In addition, we urge them to adopt transparent measures regarding the stockpiling and amassing of conventional weapons.

In conclusion, Fiji is committed to the conventions and treaties relating to conventional weapons with the goal of achieving sustainable peace and inclusive societies.

Mr. Davison (Canada): Canada is strongly committed to reducing the impact on civilian populations of the use of conventional weapons in armed conflict and to preventing and combating the illicit trade in conventional arms. We call for rigorous adherence to international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians. We are working to ensure the responsible use of conventional weapons and to restrict or ban systems that are prone to indiscriminate effects or are excessively injurious. We have made progress regarding weapons such as anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions and small arms and light weapons, but there is much more to do.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction has made great strides

in eliminating such mines, with more than 160 States now party to it, including those most heavily affected by mines. Stockpiles have been reduced by 49 million and the number of victims has dropped from 26,000 a year to around 3,700. But even one victim is too many. A world free of landmines will be achieved only through dedicated action and the universalization of the Convention. We encourage all States parties to fulfil their obligations and urge others to join the Convention so that together we can end the human suffering that these weapons cause and achieve the vision of the Maputo Declaration by 2025.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is a step forward for international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians from the effects of armed conflict. It is remarkable that more than 100 States are already party to such a young treaty. The only way to end all use of cluster munitions and the humanitarian problems they cause is by universalizing the Convention, and the Committee can rest assured that Canada will be a committed partner in advancing that important goal. This past year, Canada contributed \$13.7 million to mine action — addressing mines, cluster-munition remnants and other explosive remnants of war as part of the more than a quarter of a billion dollars given to such efforts in the past decade. We continue to work in affected areas such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Colombia, where Canadian contributions have helped to achieve substantial results in terms of land cleared, declining casualties, mine education and physical and psychological support to mine victims.

(spoke in French)

There is still a pressing need to deal with explosive weapons. In too many conflicts, civilians, including humanitarian workers and medical personnel, are being illegally targeted or otherwise affected. The deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, has had devastating long-term consequences. If we are to address the problem of explosive weapons, it is urgent that we strengthen respect for international humanitarian law through education, accountability and sharing of best practices. Canada has been an active participant in discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems. We also support the consensus recommendation made at the 2016 Informal Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, held in April. Canada stresses the importance of continuing engagement with civil society, including

academic and various other experts, in order to ensure a comprehensive understanding of this complex issue.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Canada's commitment to becoming a State party to the Arms Trade Treaty. Unregulated arms transfers intensify and prolong conflicts, lead to regional instability, contribute to violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses and hinder countries' social and economic development. Canada strongly supports the objectives of the Arms Trade Treaty and especially those aimed at improving international and regional peace, security and stability, reducing human suffering and promoting cooperation, transparency and responsible action by States parties in the international trade of conventional arms. Canadian officials are working to achieve domestic compliance with all articles of the Treaty and we hope to become a State party next year. We urge all other States that are not yet party to this important Treaty to do the same.

Mr. Luque Márquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today, as we commemorate 71 years since the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, I would like to congratulate everyone and wish all of us a happy United Nations Day. As we are also beginning Disarmament Week, I hope that it will be a fruitful and potentially historic one.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.15), and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of the Union of South American Nations, respectively (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

Faithful to its commitment to disarmament, universal peace and strict adherence to human rights and international humanitarian law, Ecuador reiterates its firm commitment to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and once again calls for its universalization. International public opinion condemns such horrific weapons, wherever or by whomever they are used. For that reason, we urge the States of the world to condemn them too, with no double standards, and we welcome Palau's ratification of the Convention and Cuba's accession to it.

Ecuador also wishes to express its full support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. In that respect, we would like to highlight our goal of ensuring that

our borders become areas of effective unity and safe integration by conducting development projects both on our own and together with our neighbours, to which end we would like to emphasize the importance of all the humanitarian demining programmes that Ecuador is carrying out with Peru along our shared border. Over the past 15 years, we have cleared and destroyed 10,558 mines across an area of 463,635 square metres, which was emphasized by the Presidents of Ecuador and Peru at their joint national Cabinet meeting on 7 October. My country will be an active participant in the fifteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention, to be held in Santiago from 28 November to 2 December.

With regard to small arms and light weapons, my delegation wishes to highlight the importance 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 Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons as the main universal international consensus framework for dealing with such weapons. We would also like to highlight our commitment to their national, regional and global implementation and to the related agreements on their implementation adopted at the Programme of Action's second Review Conference, in 2012. In that context we have taken note of the final document of this year's sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Ecuador is also party to the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which complements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

My country believes that the international community must continue its discussion of unmanned combat aerial vehicles and lethal autonomous weapon systems. The use of such new military technologies raises serious humanitarian, legal and moral concerns, which is why the various regional and universal forums of the international community must continue to look deeper into their implications for international humanitarian law, including considering banning such weapons altogether. In that regard, we welcome the recommendations adopted in April in Geneva at the Informal Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous

Weapon Systems. We therefore support the work to be undertaken on the issue at the December Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and reiterate our belief that simply calling for regulating the international trade in such weapons is not enough and could actually be used to divert attention from more intense discussions of their use that could lead to the conclusion that a ban on them is in fact essential.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): Violence using conventional weapons constitutes a fundamental threat to peace and security in a number of countries and several regions. It is a serious threat to human security. In Syria, Yemen and Ukraine we have witnessed how the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons with wide effects in populated areas has led to numbers of civilian deaths that are clearly disproportionate and in violation of international humanitarian law. There is a clear obligation to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants in conflicts. We therefore need more dialogue on how to enhance the protection of civilians in conflicts and thereby improve compliance with international humanitarian law.

In the past few decades, we have developed legally binding instruments in the field of conventional weapons with indiscriminate effects on civilians. We must sustain those instruments and refrain from any initiative that might undermine them. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the Convention on Cluster Munitions have established norms that go beyond their memberships. Norway reiterates its condemnation of any use of such weapons.

Norway is pleased to to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.4, on the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We welcome the fact that 100 countries have ratified the Convention. We must continue our efforts to reach our target of 125 States parties by 2020. Our universalization efforts should be focused particularly on countries that are affected by such weapons, which will also enable us to move faster on clearance and victim assistance. Norway is currently providing humanitarian mine action and victim assistance in 20 countries. Along with the United States, we will be leading a global demining initiative for Colombia. Our goal is achieving a Colombia free of landmines and other explosives. Unless action is taken, the legacy of

the armed conflict in that country will continue to kill and injure innocent people for decades to come.

Small arms and light weapons have often been characterized as weapons of mass destruction in slow motion. They kill more than half a million people each year. We must therefore intensify efforts to combat any irresponsible and illegal trade in or use of such weapons, including ammunition. Norway is a firm supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which, while it was designed to provide norms for responsible trade in conventional arms, does much more. If applied to its full potential, it can make a substantial contribution to global security and stability. Acts of terror rely on access to arms.

The illicit arms trade is often a key factor in transnational organized crime and in financing international terrorism and the activities of non-State armed groups. Every aspect of the lives of people living with armed violence is affected, so the ATT deals with a fundamental humanitarian concern. In addition, it is the first international treaty that includes an obligation to assess the potential for gender-based violence before authorizing arms exports. That is a great achievement and will hopefully contribute to enhancing the focus on measures to prevent gender-based and armed violence against women and children. We welcome the substantive outcome of the second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Geneva in August. It provides a solid foundation for the functioning of the ATT regime going forward and for continued universalization efforts.

Lastly, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects has made important contributions to national, regional and international security. Since its adoption, 15 years ago, a number of steps for further enhancing its relevance have been explored, and we should continue those efforts, especially in the lead-up to the third Review Conference, in 2018.

Ms. Seo Eunji (Republic of Korea): The debate on conventional weapons poses a unique difficulty, since conventional arms per se have never been illegal, even though they claim more human lives than any other type of weapon. In particular, small arms and light weapons continue to be the weapons of choice in armed conflict and violence around the world, with devastating humanitarian consequences.

The international community can and must work harder to prevent their illicit transfer and reduce their accumulation and misuse.

Against that backdrop, the Republic of Korea supported the joint declaration on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons initiated by France on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects. In 2016, the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action strengthened the foundation for more substantive efforts to prevent illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Republic of Korea welcomes the Meeting's outcome document, which is consonant with the Programme of Action and the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which entered into force in 2014, marks an important milestone in our collective efforts to curb illicit trade in conventional weapons and is the first international legally binding instrument in that regard. Its full and effective implementation by States parties is crucial if we are to prevent illicit arm transfers, defuse violence and foster peace in various parts of the world. Now that it is in full effect, we should work to strengthen synergies between the Treaty, Security Council resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015) and the Programme of Action in order to launch a quick and effective global regime on conventional arms control.

The Republic of Korea is fully committed to working with other Member States to achieve that goal. As one of the original signatories to the ATT, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its strong commitment to its goals and objectives, and in order to facilitate the Treaty's universalization has completed the necessary revision of its national laws on the conventional arms trade to reflect those goals. We are currently at the very last stage of the ratification process.

The Republic of Korea is of the view that an enhanced level of transparency where armaments are concerned contributes greatly to confidence-building and security among States. In that regard, the Republic of Korea participated this year in the Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation and further development of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and we are pleased to welcome its report (see A/71/259). We believe that

the recommendations contained in the report, which include promoting information on the international transfer of small arms and light weapons, will greatly contribute to enhancing transparency.

Over the past three decades, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has continued to accommodate itself to a changing environment while maintaining a balance between the principles of international humanitarian law and the legitimate security concerns of States parties. The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to its universalization and was pleased to join a sponsorship programme this year designed to contribute creatively to encouraging the nine contracting parties to participate in the relevant meetings. We would also like to highlight the importance of addressing the humanitarian effects of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In that regard, we heartily welcome the adoption of a declaration on IEDs at the eighteenth Meeting of High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the CCW, and we recognize the value of draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.68/Rev.1, on countering the threat posed by IEDs, which was also submitted this year.

The Republic of Korea also welcomes the recommendations of the Informal Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems on convening open-ended meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts in 2017. We believe that the CCW framework is the most pertinent forum for the further discussion of such weapons and for striking the necessary balance between humanitarian concerns and security requirements. We would like to highlight once again the importance of the upcoming fifth Review Conference of the CCW in December. Thoughtful deliberations aimed at adequately addressing emerging issues of conventional arms control will be one of the keys to its successful outcome. The Republic of Korea looks forward to continuing constructive discussions with the States parties to that end.

Mr. Denктаş (Turkey): Turkey aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union under the cluster on conventional weapons (see A/C.1/71/PV.16). I will deliver a shortened version of our national remarks.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is an indispensable part of international law on conventional weapons with indiscriminate effects. Turkey has fully implemented its provisions and

encourages adherence to its fundamental international regime. We expect that the fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, to be held in December, will take into account the discussions we have had during the past five-year cycle, thereby preparing the basis for the next intersessional cycle, particularly on issues such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and lethal autonomous weapon systems. We wish to add that we welcome the Review Conference's proposed adoption of a political declaration on IEDs.

We support furthering efforts on lethal autonomous weapon systems, and we see the CCW as the right forum for that in its quest for a balance between humanitarian actions and military utility. As a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Turkey is committed to its obligations under that Convention, too. We have fulfilled our commitments under article 4, destroying a total of approximately 3 million anti-personnel mines, and we are in the process of meeting our article 5 obligations. While fully engaged in those efforts, we also continue to give modest financial assistance to clearance efforts in third countries and to make voluntary contributions to the Implementation Support Unit and the sponsorship programme.

The increasing proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) is of great concern to us. As the Security Council recognized in its resolution 1540 (2004), they are a threat to international peace and security. With that understanding, Turkey welcomes the advancement of the universalization of The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and has once again become a sponsor of the relevant draft resolution (A/C.1/71/L.5) in the Committee this year.

The threat posed by the proliferation of illicit conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, is no less important than that of WMDs. Turkey remains committed to effectively implementing and further strengthening 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 Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We welcomed the successful conclusion in June of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action. The Programme of Action's

third Review Conference, to be held in 2018, will be an opportunity to come up with improved mechanisms for assistance and cooperation, as well as for countering the threat posed by new weapon-related technologies, with an eye to developing them into concrete elements for a tailored work programme for the next cycle.

The entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), in December 2014, was an important milestone in setting common international standards for the international trade in conventional arms and preventing their illicit trade and diversion. Turkey has supported it from the outset and has actively participated in the process after signing it. Pending the Turkish Parliament's approval of ratification, we would like to reaffirm our eagerness to accede to the Treaty in the near future. We welcomed the successful conclusion in August of the Second Conference of States Parties to the Treaty. Together with Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) on small arms and light weapons, the ATT will complement and reinforce the Programme of Action.

Finally, we regard the inclusion of target 4 of Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, on significantly reducing illicit arms flows, as a big step in global efforts against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Turkey joins the large group of States subscribing to a cross-regional declaration on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as proposed by the representative of France. Before concluding, I would like to reiterate my country's commitment to international cooperation in taking on the challenge caused by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Saudi Arabia wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

My country would like to express its deep concern about the very serious humanitarian, economic and social impact of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, and we urge the international community to make every possible effort to cooperate in addressing this dangerous problem. We reaffirm our ongoing commitment to 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 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to welcome the final document of the sixth Biennial

Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in New York in June. We hope that the international consensus that emerged from the Biennial Meeting will continue at the third Review Conference of the Programme of Action, to be held in 2018.

Saudi Arabia has suffered the consequences of the Gulf War and the various armaments that have circulated in its northern and north-eastern regions of the country, owing to the huge numbers of weapons smuggled across the southern border and designed to be used in terrorist attacks aimed at destabilizing the country and killing innocent civilians. Nevertheless, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has worked to deal with the issue, in cooperation with governmental experts who have helped to remove them. We recently arrested a number of Iranian terrorists who were smuggling weapons and explosives not only into Saudi Arabia but also into Bahrain and Kuwait.

Iran continues to foment religious violence in our region. It supports religious militias and terrorist groups, proof of how it has chosen to respond to the destruction and sectarian conflicts between communities in various countries. That leads me to ask whether Iran is a State that respects international law or, rather, if it is trying to defend its revolution by exporting it to other countries, of which efforts there are many instances.

First, Iran has supplied weapons to a well-known terrorist organization, Hizbullah in Lebanon, which is how Hizbullah has become the armed hand of Iran in Lebanon and has thereby been able to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs. Its militias are also helping to destroy Syria and murder Syrians, as well as killing Yemenis by using the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Secondly, Iran has welcomed a number of leaders of Al-Qaida and supplied that terrorist organization with weapons, which has resulted in much destruction and sabotage in my region. Iran has profited from the difficult humanitarian situation of the Afghan refugees on its territory by recruiting them against their will and sending them to areas of conflict, especially Syria, in order to kill Syrian civilians under sectarian slogans. Through its Revolutionary Guard, Iran has thus directly recruited militias and sent them to Syria to help slaughter the Syrian people. Those terrorist groups include the Fatimid, Zainab and Abul Fadl Al-Abbas brigades, all of which have butchered the Syrian people. Sectarian

militias have also been used in similar ways in Iraq to create tensions among the various communities there.

Thirdly, Iran has supported the Houthi rebels in Yemen in their attempt to achieve a coup d'état by supplying them illegally with material, military assistance and weapons. We have seen ships numerous times arriving in Yemen loaded with weapons from Iran, in a very clear violation of Security Council resolutions 2216 (2015) and 2231 (2015). In that regard, we would have liked to cite some examples of how Iran smuggles weapons to terrorist groups, but there are too many to provide an exhaustive list. The fact is that Iran has been carrying out destructive policies through its continuing support to terrorism. In that context, we condemn Iran's attempted attack on United States ships in Bab-Al-Mandab as well as the attack on an Emirati ship at the beginning of this month.

In conclusion, Saudi Arabia would like to reiterate its sovereign right to protect its national security and its borders against repeated violations by Houthi militias and their Iranian allies. Many rockets have been fired at us and some have penetrated as far as 600 kilometres inside our territory. We know that Iran supplied and shipped those weapons. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia therefore stresses the importance of adhering to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international legitimacy. Above all, my country would like to strengthen the role of the United Nations, particularly with regard to international peace and security, disarmament and controlling the flow of weapons to terrorist groups.

The Acting Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to remind delegations that they should limit their statements to five minutes when speaking in a national capacity and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of a group.

Ms. Dris (Malaysia): Malaysia associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/71/PV.16).

My delegation believes that initiatives undertaken to halt the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons should be conducted in a holistic manner, taking into account arms control and disarmament, post-conflict peacebuilding, conflict prevention and socioeconomic development. As such, we would underscore the need to address the root causes of the illicit transfer of small arms and light

weapons — which includes the supply of such weapons to armed groups whether by Governments or through the black market — the excessive accumulation and surpluses of small arms and light weapons in post-conflict situations and the growing demand for them by armed groups and non-State actors.

We see the value of capacity-building for meeting Member States' requirements and capacities in their quest to help effectively implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In that regard, Malaysia welcomes France as President designate of the third Review Conference of the Programme of Action, to be held in 2018, and commends Jamaica for its exemplary leadership of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, earlier this year.

In connection with the Programme of Action, we welcome efforts to expand the facilitation of technology transfers on physical security, stockpile management and marking and tracing capacities to countries that request it. To that end, we urge Member States with the relevant expertise and experience to play a larger role in developing capacities so as to enable them to comply with the Programme of Action's accepted guidelines and parameters on managing proliferating small arms and light weapons, since that will significantly boost its implementation at the national level.

Malaysia remains committed to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as an important instrument for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in conventional weapons. We believe that the ATT will help to strengthen existing national policies on conventional weapons while respecting States' inalienable right to possess such arms for national defence and security purposes.

We recognize that the second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Geneva in August, was a step forward in continuing efforts to ensure effective control over the import and export of conventional arms and their potential misuse. As Malaysia continues to take the necessary steps to ratify the ATT, we emphasize the importance of ensuring that the Treaty is implemented in a consistent, objective and non-discriminatory manner. Collectively, all of us have a part to play in working together to close any gaps or loopholes and bring implementation closer to

the ultimate goal, of an instrument with the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms. Malaysia stands ready to support international endeavours to avert the misuse of arms. We are committed to continuing to work with our fellow Member States to achieve that.

Malaysia remains supportive of the primary objective of the Convention on Prohibitions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. We believe that it makes an important contribution to ensuring the protection of civilians and combatants suffering from the effects of conventional weapons used in ways that exceed what is necessary to attain a legitimate military objective. As we work to accede to the Convention, we have continued to participate in the Meetings of its States parties and have contributed to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapon systems.

Ms. Šorytė (Lithuania): Lithuania's position on conventional arms is fully reflected in the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union last week (see A/C.1/71/PV.16). I would like to underscore a few aspects of the issue in my national capacity.

The massive illicit flows of arms and ammunition and the lack of effective control over them fuel conflicts, exacerbate violence and impede development. Easy access to conventional weapons helps armed and criminal groups to spread terror. We must stop those dangerous trends immediately, as a first step through the universal application and responsible implementation of the various instruments of control already at our disposal. Lithuania continues to advocate for the importance of increasing transparency in the arms trade, and firmly believes that the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) could mark a turning point in ensuring a more transparent and responsible international arms trade. We call on States parties to the Treaty to make their reports public and welcome the decisions taken at the second Conference of States Parties to the Treaty. The establishment of the ad hoc working groups on implementation, transparency, reporting and universalization was an important step towards advancing the aim and purpose of the ATT. Nevertheless, a lot more remains to be done, as the Treaty's full potential can be reached only when it is applied universally and implemented vigorously.

With today's security challenges, ongoing armed conflicts and the spread of violent terrorism, we need to work in close partnerships and build trust. Lithuania is convinced that, if applied in good faith, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) could serve as a model for regional cooperation in conventional arms control and in confidence- and security-building measures. With the right political will, OSCE participating States could benefit from existing instruments to achieve concrete results in areas such as lowering thresholds; increasing the opportunities for verification, modernizing and updating the exchange of military information; strengthening risk-reduction mechanisms; and enlarging the scope of confidence- and security-building measures.

We believe that the modernization in 2016 of the Vienna Document of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and the non-selective implementation of the Open Skies Treaty could be indispensable assets to ensuring stability and security in Europe.

Landmines, unexploded remnants of war and improvised explosive devices continue to be part of our reality, heavily affecting civilian populations. In that connection, Lithuania welcomes the Global Demining Initiative for Colombia and is glad to announce its contribution to the European Union Trust Fund for Colombia.

Let me conclude by assuring the Committee of Lithuania's commitment to remaining actively involved in working with its partners to further strengthen international cooperation and thus promoting stability and security in our world.

The Acting Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.25.

Mr. Diaz Reina (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of the Union of South American Nations (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

We once again reaffirm our country's steadfast commitment to the main international, political and legal instruments on disarmament, non-proliferation and conventional arms control. These instruments set out to establish common rules for regulating international

conventional arms trade and for preventing, combating and eradicating their illicit trafficking. Colombia has been deeply affected by the problem of illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and its connection to the global problem of drugs, terrorism, common crime, organized crime and other delinquency. The issue is of fundamental importance to Colombia, which is why it has led efforts at the global, regional and subregional levels to combat it. In that connection, any measure that is taken to limit and put an end to the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons is of value, as it contributes to preventing weapons from illegally reaching people or groups that have benefitted from the scant regulation to acquire such weapons, which threatens international peace and security.

Colombia recognizes the significance of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, its continued implementation and the need to continue to see positive results on the ground. Since the Programme of Action was adopted, in 2001, Colombia has led efforts to combat illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and has encouraged such efforts within the Organization. We attach the greatest importance to the Programme, which is considered to be a vital tool for promoting transparency, cooperation and responsible action for those States that are willing to take on the illegal arms trade.

In my country's view, the development of the Programme of Action should adapt to advances in arms production and technology. In that regard, we believe that States should not only pursue the implementation of the original Programme but rather must make efforts to adapt it to the new realities on the ground. We also believe that international, regional and national efforts must set up mechanisms to fluidly exchange information with one another regarding issues relevant to the Programme of Action with a view to encouraging the development of tagging technology, the consolidation of registry systems and the implementation of technologies to track arms that supplement existing systems, such as that used by INTERPOL. In that connection, my country will readily share its experience and offers its training in research techniques, identification and tracking procedures and its protocols.

In seeking to promote the implementation of the Programme of Action, Colombia, South Africa and Japan have submitted draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.25, on the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons

in all its aspects — a proposal that is introduced to the Committee every year. Colombia attaches the greatest importance to the draft resolution, primarily because it highlights the need to prevent, combat and eliminate the illicit production, transfer and circulation of such weapons so that we can curb the disastrous consequences that we see almost every day in almost every country, and because of the value its implementation would add to national, regional and global plans.

As this session's facilitator of the draft resolution in question, Colombia takes this opportunity to thank all States for their support, and especially the 72 countries that have sponsored it. We urge the rest of the Member States to also become sponsors because, aside from the traditional and important spirit of consensus behind the draft resolution, it also represents a clear and resounding message to the international community of the need to prevent, combat and eliminate the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons.

Colombia's reiterates its unwavering commitment to international instruments on mine action, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We have prioritized the full implementation of the obligations under each element of comprehensive mine action, ensuring comprehensive assistance, reparation and rehabilitation to victims, teaching safe behaviour to affected communities, implementing marking systems in line with international standards, and adopting a targeted approach to education and care, especially for boys, girls and adolescents.

Colombia has consolidated a model of humanitarian demining that combines the knowledge and training of its military forces to decontaminate and demine lands, with the help and experience of civil humanitarian demining organizations that have joined the Government's efforts in demining 199 high-risk municipalities by 2021, which represents 60 per cent of our country's minefields. International cooperation has been vital to our efforts to bolster State capacities in comprehensive mine action. The ongoing support of several countries in the region, the recent launching of the Global Demining Initiative for Colombia and the exchange of good practices and lessons learned with similarly affected countries have allowed our country to gain experience and build capacities to fight against the scourge.

Countering improvised explosive devices is a priority for Colombia, given that the anti-personnel-mine contamination of our national territory was essentially a response to their use by illegal armed groups. Colombia applauds the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on improvised explosive devices, formed in 2009 under Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

Colombia supports the provisions aimed at strengthening measures for the monitoring, control and surveillance of diverted materials and measures to combat armed actors that utilize such materials. In that regard, we stress the importance of addressing the issue in a comprehensive manner, incorporating assistance to victims, education about the relevant risks and a targeted inclusive approach to a multidimensional strategy for addressing the problem of improvised explosive devices.

Finally, on 10 September 2015, Colombia deposited its ratification instrument of the Convention on Cluster Munitions before the Secretary-General. As we have reiterated on several occasions, Colombia is committed to disarmament, the non-proliferation of weapons and arms control. We note that although the Convention on Cluster Munitions has not yet entered into force, Colombia has worked to promote the principles of the Convention and implement its provisions steadfastly and voluntarily, totally eliminating our stock of such weapons as of 2009.

Ms. Fofana (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Burkina Faso would like to reiterate its warm congratulations to the Chair on the quality of the debates and the dexterity with which he has conducted the work of the present session. In that regard, we have high hopes that the results we attain will undoubtedly contribute to making progress on the topic of conventional weapons.

In a highly challenging security environment, characterized by an upsurge in acts of terrorism and violent extremism, our consideration of the problem of international control over conventional arms transfers is highly relevant. Indeed, the illicit trafficking and accumulation of small arms and light weapons continue to pose a real threat to world peace and security by fuelling not only a number of conflicts but also the

activities of transregional criminal organizations and terrorist groups.

In the context of controlling conventional arms transfers, Burkina Faso is a party to all subregional, regional and international legal instruments on small arms and light weapons and their related materiel. In that dynamic, Burkina Faso continues to strengthen its domestic legal arsenal by reviewing its civilian arms regime and integrating the Arms Trade Treaty into its domestic legislation.

In terms of institutions, in 2001 the Burkina Faso Government established a high authority to control the importation of arms and their use, whose mission is to regulate the trade in all categories of arms and to combat the illicit trafficking of arms in Burkina Faso. It is also charged with implementing the Arms Trade Treaty, with the technical assistance of the European Union. I take this opportunity to acknowledge this dynamic and beneficial cooperation.

In addition to the action of the high authority to control the importation of arms and their use, the national commission to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons works every day to foment real awareness within the population and the defence and security forces of the consequences of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The delegation of Burkina Faso rightly commends the tireless efforts of all Member States that promote multilateralism in the management of arms transfers, the peaceful settlement of conflicts and the strengthening of peace and collective security.

The humanitarian and socioeconomic impact of anti-personnel mines is terrifying and highly motivating. We therefore call for the universalization of the Ottawa Convention and its effective implementation in order to end the harm they have caused to innocent victims, especially children. In the meantime, however, my delegation invites the international community to support the necessary assistance to countries affected by landmines.

In addition, no consideration of contemporary issues can overlook the question of cluster munitions. Those weapons, like anti-personnel mines, plunge thousands of families into mourning, destroy important building and highway projects in several regions of the world, undo innumerable development efforts and compromise the full development and well-being of populations. It is in the light of that sad assessment that

my country recommends the universal implementation of the Convention.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Burkina Faso's commitment, alongside those of other Member States, to ensuring effective control over conventional arms transfers so as to ensure peace and security to present and future generations.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.15).

Illicit and unregulated trafficking in small arms and light weapons represents a threat to international peace and security because of its socioeconomic and humanitarian consequences. My country knows the grief that it brings in its wake. We therefore ask all Member States to combat and eliminate this dangerous phenomenon so as to ensure that these weapons do not end up in the hands of non-State actors, who could then use them for terrorist purposes, as is the case in my country, Yemen.

My country and its neighbours are well aware of this danger because the Iranian regime provides the Houthi rebels with conventional weapons and ballistic missiles that have consequences not just on regional peace and security, but also on international maritime routes in the southern Red Sea. The vessels of the United Arab Emirates and United States naval ships can attest to this.

My country supports legitimacy and seeks to ensure that weapons do not end up in the hands of terrorists. The members of the Security Council have investigated this issue, and it has been proved that Iran provides weapons to the Houthis. My country therefore supports the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Convention on Conventional Weapons. We ask all States, particularly our neighbour Iran, to abide by these international instruments and not to undermine regional and international peace by providing weapons to armed groups.

The Acting Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker on cluster 4, "Conventional weapons".

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply on cluster 4, "Conventional weapons". I remind members that

statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second.

Mr. Robotjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The representative of the Saudi Arabian regime made some laughable and unfounded allegations against my country. Those allegations represent the manufactured fiction of a regime that is known as the mother of terrorism and violent extremism in the Middle East region, and for being the main sponsor of dangerous terrorist groups, such as Da'esh and Jabhat Al-Nusra, and all the mischief that they have been doing in the region. The terrorist acts sponsored by Saudi Arabia are not limited to the Middle East. Suffice it to take a look at the links between the perpetrators of the 11 September terrorist attack in New York and Saudi Arabia.

The representative of the Saudi regime cannot create a smokescreen by inventing fictions and unfounded allegations against others to hide the crimes that it is committing against the innocent people of Yemen and its destruction of Yemeni infrastructure through its aggression against that country. I want to point out some facts that have been established not by Iran but by the international community. Saudi Arabia has been engaged in a 20-month-long aggression against Yemen and the Yemeni people and the process of destroying the entire civilian infrastructure in that country.

On 10 October, the Secretary-General said that the funeral bombing that took place on Saturday, 8 October, was "a heartless attack on civilians and an outrageous violation of international humanitarian law". He added that,

"Aerial attacks by the Saudi-led coalition have already caused immense carnage and destroyed much of the country's medical facilities and other vital civilian infrastructure... A man-made catastrophe is unfolding before our eyes... there must be accountability for the appalling conduct... of the entire war [in Yemen]".

According to well-documented evidence provided by international organizations and relevant bodies of the United Nations, the Saudi regime, in its 20-month-long aggression against Yemen and the Yemeni people, has bombed 3,000 civilian sites. It is responsible for 60 per cent of the civilian victims directly affected by the deliberate aerial attacks by the Saudi-led coalition. Those facts point to the undeniable violation of international humanitarian law by Saudi Arabia

and constitute war crimes. Saudi Arabia must be held accountable for them.

Finally, I would also like to exercise my right of reply with regard to the comments made by the so-called representative of Yemen. It is a shame that, instead of defending his country's innocent civilian population and speaking about the unfolding catastrophe in that country, he has become a puppet of Saudi Arabia and raised baseless allegations against others.

Mr. Odisho (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to make several remarks on the statement made by the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Iraq is focusing its efforts on combating terrorism, in particular Da'esh. We are not interested in making accusations, and I am astonished to hear the representative of Saudi Arabia say that Iraq is despatching terrorist groups. That is untrue. I do not know on what that is based. My country has always maintained good-neighbourly relations with other countries in the region, in particular Arab countries, and respected their sovereignty. While our brothers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia might have their differences with their counterparts in Iran, it is through no fault of ours. We call for a peaceful settlement of all disputes, especially at the current critical juncture in the region, which requires consolidating international efforts to combat terrorism and eliminate its sources in the region.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): There is an Arab proverb that says if you commit a crime, then hide yourself. It is important that other speakers understand this saying. The representative of Saudi Arabia mentioned my country in his statement, which is unacceptable. The Saudi regime, among others, is responsible for the killing of Syrians. That regime has allocated large sums of money from its budget, to the detriment of the Saudi people, in order to destroy the Syrian State, people and civilization.

We were surprised by the representative of the Saudi regime's call on the international community to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We wonder how it can call on the international community to fight that phenomenon when it is itself one of the most prevalent users of small arms and light weapons, as well as all others, in its efforts to undermine security and support terrorist groups throughout the world.

Furthermore, the Saudi regime indiscriminately buys all sorts of arms and munitions from Eastern European countries, the names of which I shall not mention on this occasion, and other Western countries, as well as from countries of the region. Those arms are subsequently moved through countries neighbouring Syria to terrorist groups. The Saudi regime has always trained and provided arms and safe haven to terrorist groups. At the beginning of the crisis in Syria, numerous criminals and terrorists earned their release from Saudi prisons by agreeing to fight with terrorist groups in Syria.

Syria has allies and friends. They are our partners and support the Syrian Arab armed forces in their fight for Syria. They are in the country at our request to help us eliminate Da'esh and other terrorist groups supported by the Saudi regime.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country would have preferred the First Committee to give its attention to regional conflicts and concentrated on questions of disarmament and security. However, our colleague the representative of Iran has spared no effort in deepening our ongoing disputes. Iran and its representative are crying crocodile tears.

First and foremost, it is Iran that is responsible for what is happening today in Yemen. It has long supported the Houthi rebels by providing them with small arms and heavy and ballistic weapons. Iran provides them with experts to gather military information, which is not only a threat to Yemen but also a clear violation of all international laws and customs. It is a clear threat to the security of our region and international shipping routes.

We should have liked to have seen Iran play a key role in promoting security in the region instead of inciting terrorism and undermining all opportunities to restore peace. I do not wish to delve into the dossiers of all the murders, lies and destructive plans of Iran in the region. I shall stop here, but I would advise our Iranian colleagues to be satisfied with discussing subjects that are appropriate to this Committee.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall not go into the details of futile speeches that have no basis in reality or evidence. I shall try to speak rationally and about matters that are clearly recognized.

Is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the list of terrorist countries? It most certainly is not, whereas

Iran most certainly is. This is fact, not a debatable question, and we need not make lengthy speeches on this matter. It is a clearly established fact.

Have any Saudi ships bearing weapons been sent illegally to any other country? They certainly have not. On the other hand, Iranian ships have been loaded with weapons for the Houthis in Yemen. This has been documented by the United Nations and is also an established fact. Iranian weapons have been sent to Yemen in clear violation of the decisions and resolutions of the Security Council. We are therefore surprised to see the international community remain silent in this connection.

Another fact is that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has no wish to support a despotic, authoritarian Head of State who is responsible for the deaths of thousands of Syrians, whereas Iran does indeed support that individual. These, as I say, are facts that cannot be contested. There is no need for a longer speech on this subject.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Committee has just heard a very aggressive statement from the representative of the Saudi regime. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the Saudi regime plays a destructive role by supporting religious extremism and terrorism in our region and, indeed, throughout the world. It is well known that it was the Saudi regime that contributed significantly to the organization, training and financing of Al-Qaida in the 1980s. That regime gave approximately \$600 million dollars to Al-Qaida, which was able to begin its operations thanks to this money. The Saudi regime today continues to destabilize the region by supporting terrorism and religious extremism, not only there but in many other countries of the world.

Mr. Robotjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Again, we have heard some fictional allegations by the Saudi regime representative, who believes that Iran has the ability to do anything in our region. This is a fiction that belongs only to Saudi Arabia. I do not wish to dwell on it or respond to such laughable allegations.

I just want to point out that comments about the political system and democracy of other countries from Saudi Arabia, whose citizens have not experienced a single election, are not credible. No one can take such comments to be reality. They are reflective of the nature of the Saudi representative.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): As I said earlier, I do not wish to be involved in the debate that our colleagues from Iran and Syria are trying to draw us into. I would just like to make a single comment.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has real national cohesiveness. Ours is a region where most of the inhabitants are Shiite. They are our brothers, and we care about their needs. I have studied with them and

eaten at the same table with them, and I have never felt any discrimination or segregation whatever towards them. I would like to say to our brothers in Iran that they are playing a losing game. We in Saudi Arabia have genuine cohesiveness, and all the population's components have equal status with regard to education, health and every other sector.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.