



# General Assembly

Seventy-second session

## First Committee

**17**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 18 October 2017, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Bahr Aluloom ..... (Iraq)

*In the absence of the Chair, Mr. Sparber (Lichtenstein), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### Agenda items 52 (b) and 90 to 106 (continued)

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

**The Acting Chair:** In accordance with its timetable, the Committee will first hear a briefing by His Excellency Mr. Farukh Amil, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and international organizations in Geneva, who will make a presentation on behalf of the President of the fifth Review Conference of the 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, Her Excellency Ms. Tehmina Janjua, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan.

I take this opportunity to warmly welcome Ambassador Amil to this meeting and invite him to take the floor.

**Mr. Amil:** It is with great pleasure that I brief the Committee regarding the fifth Review Conference of the 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 — the CCW Convention. Pakistan had the honour of presiding over that Review Conference. My predecessor, currently the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Ambassador Tehmina Janjua, fulfilled that responsibility. She was the first woman, as well as the first representative of a State member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to have acted as the President of a CCW Review Conference.

The fifth Review Conference was held in Geneva from 8 to 12 December 2016. It was preceded by a Preparatory Committee meeting, held from 31 August to 2 September 2016. A review conference is an important milestone in the life of any treaty. It provided an opportunity to look back over the past five years and review the operation of the Convention and also to look ahead and identify new areas that require the attention of the States parties.

The achievements during the previous five-year period were significant. First, there was an agreement on the Declaration on Improvised Explosive Devices, with concrete actions to work collectively to prevent the development and use of improvised explosive devices. Secondly, practical cooperation was undertaken to both prevent and alleviate the suffering caused by explosive remnants of war. Last but not least, a comprehensive examination of lethal autonomous weapons systems was undertaken through the holding of three informal meetings of experts on that matter, with the last one agreeing on a set of consensus recommendations.

However, there remained issues of concern on which further work is required. With ongoing armed conflicts in different parts of the world and the rapid pace of

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

17-33293 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



technological developments, the CCW must remain at the forefront of efforts to prevent humanitarian suffering caused by conventional weapons, maintaining an appropriate balance with the legitimate military utility.

The substantive work of the fifth Review Conference was undertaken in two main committees. Main Committee I was responsible for reviewing the scope and operation of the Convention and its annexed Protocols. Main Committee II considered proposals for new protocols. That Committee was almost exclusively focused on the issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems.

The Review Conference managed to undertake a comprehensive review of the Convention, and we were able to achieve a robust outcome document. The Review Conference's outcome would strengthen the Convention and its Protocols and also help us keep pace with the contemporary developments. That was a once-in-a-five-year opportunity, which was utilized effectively.

I would like to acknowledge the critical role played by Ambassador Matthew Rowland of the United Kingdom, Chairperson of Main Committee I. He provided sterling leadership and showed great diplomatic skill in steering the work of the Committee. I would also like to recognize the outstanding contribution of Ambassador Tudor of Moldova, Chairperson of Main Committee II. He displayed immense dedication in helping us reach a good outcome for a future mandate on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), building on the excellent work done by Ambassador Michael Biontino of Germany as Chairman of the 2016 informal meeting of experts on LAWS. Other office holders, the members of the General Committee, also provided valuable support.

We also express our deepest appreciation for the sound support provided by the Secretariat, including Ms. Mary Soliman, then Acting Director of the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, as well as Mr. Bantan Nugroho and Ms. Hine-Wai Loose of the CCW Implementation Support Unit. Apart from their substantive support, they helped us immensely in overcoming the financial hurdles.

We were pleased to see the participation of a large number of representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society and other organizations at the Review Conference. Their valuable input and close engagement with the review process were appreciated.

The Review Conference took important and far-reaching decisions on several substantive contemporary issues. We put in place the building blocks for the formal and detailed consideration of key issues, including, first, lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), which will now be considered in a dedicated Open-ended Group of Governmental Experts under the chairmanship of Ambassador Amandeep Singh Gill of India. The issue of LAWS has emerged as one of the most prominent issues in the context of CCW and beyond. The debate on LAWS has identified a number of legal, ethical, technical, humanitarian and peace and security-related concerns. We hope that those concerns will be addressed in the Group of Governmental Experts to the satisfaction of all Member States.

Secondly, three issues — science and technology-related developments relevant to the Convention, Protocol III on incendiary weapons, and mines other than anti-personnel mines — will be discussed as stand-alone agenda items at the 2017 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

Thirdly, the Chairperson of the 2017 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, Ambassador Matthew Rowland of the United Kingdom, is holding informal consultations to determine the desirability of and format for addressing concerns about the use of conventional weapons in areas with a high concentration of civilians.

The successful conclusion and substantive outcome of the Review Conference was a welcome development on the multilateral arms control landscape. At a time when polarization is increasing and the challenges facing the international disarmament regime are multiplying, the success of that instrument is a very positive sign. Its strength lies in its ability to balance shared humanitarian concerns with the States parties' security imperatives.

The Review Conference put in place the foundation for addressing the financial issues affecting the Convention in a meaningful manner. The Review Conference was at serious risk of being postponed due to the unpaid financial contributions and previous years' arrears that had accumulated over time. We were forced to adopt some drastic cost-cutting measures in order for the Conference to be convened. A similar situation is being faced now, and the financial situation is becoming increasingly acute. I take this opportunity to call on all High Contracting Parties to meet all of

their financial obligations under the Convention in full and on time. We hope to find a sustainable and effective solution to the problem.

I would like to say a few words on promoting the universalization of the Convention. Since the fourth Review Conference, more States are gradually joining the CCW. The number of high contracting parties increased from 114 at the end of 2011 to 123 at the end of last year. Pakistan, as the President of the fifth Review Conference, followed up with States not yet party through bilateral meetings. Those individual approaches were enhanced by working closely with the sponsorship programme and approaching States both on joining the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and on facilitating their participation in CCW meetings and conferences by sponsoring the representatives. I take this opportunity to invite and encourage those States that are yet to join the Convention to consider acceding to it.

Looking ahead, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Rowland of the United Kingdom on his designation as Chairman of the 2017 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties. Given his commitment and close engagement with the review process, he is ideally placed to lead our work this year, when we consider many of the issues that were agreed at the fifth Review Conference.

However, it is regrettable that the meetings of experts of the Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, as well as the first session of the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapon systems, were cancelled due to the lack of funding. However, I am pleased to note that the CCW meetings and conferences scheduled for November this year, including the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapon systems will go ahead as planned.

Lastly, I would like to highlight that, in its capacity as the President of the fifth Review Conference, Pakistan is submitting the traditional draft resolution on the CCW in the First Committee. We have carried out extensive consultations to bring all the high contracting parties on board in a consensus text. We look forward to its smooth adoption with the Committee's continued valuable support and cooperation.

**The Acting Chair:** In keeping with the Committee's established practice, I will now suspend the meeting to give delegations the opportunity to have an interactive discussion on the briefing we have just heard through an informal question and answer session.

*The meeting was suspended at 10.15 a.m. and resumed at 10.20 a.m.*

**The Acting Chair:** The Committee will now take up the cluster on conventional weapons.

**Mr. Rahdiansyah** (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

NAM continues to affirm the sovereign rights of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and relevant parts, components and ammunition for their self-defence and security needs. NAM expresses its concern about unilateral coercive measures in this area and emphasizes that no undue restrictions should be placed on the transfer of such arms and relevant parts, components and ammunition.

NAM remains deeply concerned about a wide range of security, humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences arising from the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons. NAM calls upon all States, in particular major producing States, to ensure that the supply of small arms and light weapons is limited only to Governments or to entities duly authorized by them. NAM also underlines the need for a balanced, full and effective 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 of the International Tracing Instrument and, in that regard, stresses the urgent need to intensify efforts to promote international cooperation and assistance.

Recognizing the adverse humanitarian impact caused by the use of cluster munitions and expressing solidarity with the countries affected by cluster munitions, NAM calls for the provision of the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance for unexploded cluster munitions clearance operations, the social and economic rehabilitation of victims and the assurance of full access of affected countries to material, equipment, technology and financial resources for unexploded cluster munitions clearance.

NAM 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 (CCW) and its Protocols encourage other States to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols.

NAM continues to deplore the use, in contravention of international humanitarian law, of anti-personnel

mines in conflict situations aimed at maiming, killing and terrorising innocent civilians. NAM calls upon all States in a position to do so to provide the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to landmine clearance operations, and the social and economic rehabilitation of victims, as well as to ensure full access of affected countries to the material, equipment, technology and financial resources for mine clearance.

NAM States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction reiterate their commitment to the full implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan.

Regarding the explosive remnants of the Second World War — particularly in the form of landmines, which continue to cause human and material damage and to obstruct development plans in some NAM countries — the Movement calls on the States primarily responsible for laying those mines and leaving explosives outside their territories during the Second World War to cooperate with affected countries and provide mine action support, including information exchange, maps indicating the locations of mines and explosives, technical assistance for mine clearance, defrayal of the costs of clearance and compensation for any losses caused by mines laid.

NAM is of the view that lethal autonomous weapon systems raise a number of ethical, legal, moral and technical questions, as well as questions related to international peace and security, which should be thoroughly deliberated and examined in the context of conformity to international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. NAM States parties to the CCW support the establishment of an open-ended group of governmental experts related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention.

NAM States parties to the CCW welcome Pakistan's leadership as President of the fifth Review Conference of the Convention, held in December 2016 in Geneva.

NAM recognizes the significant imbalance in the production, possession and trade in conventional weapons between industrialized and non-aligned countries and calls for a significant reduction in the production, possession and trade of conventional

weapons by industrialized States, with a view to enhancing international and regional peace and security.

The Movement notes that the Arms Trade Treaty, which aims at regulating trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, entered into force on 24 December 2014. NAM calls for its balanced, transparent and objective implementation by its States parties, in strict accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the inherent right of each State to security and to individual or collective self-defence. The Movement also underscores that its implementation should in no way affect the sovereign rights of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs.

Finally, NAM stresses the importance of the reduction of military expenditures by major arms-producing countries, in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, and urges those countries to devote those resources to global economic and social development, in particular the fight against poverty.

**Ms. Paasilinna** (Finland): It gives me great pleasure to address the Committee on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Finland.

Disarmament and control measures in the field of conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, continue to be of great urgency. These weapons, and especially their uncontrolled spread and accumulation, can undermine both peace and development and cause devastating humanitarian harm and civilian casualties. Every year, a staggering half a million people die owing to armed violence. It is high time that we did our utmost to curb the misuse of conventional weapons and stop their illicit and unregulated trade.

The Nordic countries have been staunch supporters of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) from its very beginning. The ATT represents a significant milestone of the international community in its efforts to regulate global arms transfers. We welcome the substantive outcome of the third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, which was held in Geneva in September. The third Conference made progress in ensuring the effective implementation of the Treaty, but we still have a long way to go. We encourage all



members of the international community to join that important Treaty.

The ATT exists alongside a range of previously established international instruments. The United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons continues to provide a valid and effective strategy to cope with the threat posed by the illicit flows of small arms and light weapons. The Nordic countries are looking forward to a substantive third Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons next year. We will engage actively in its preparations and render our support to France in its role as President of that important Conference.

Our efforts in the field of small arms and light weapons and conventional weapons disarmament must also be seen as a crucial factor in the achievement of the wider goals of the United Nations, not least when it comes to conflict prevention and, ultimately, realizing sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda. Let us not forget that the Sustainable Development Goals set as our objective the significant reduction of illicit arms flows by 2030. We believe that the ATT and the Programme of Action are absolutely central instruments in achieving that goal.

We also remain strongly committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols. We are very pleased that the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems will begin its work next month under the able chairmanship of India. The Nordic countries believe that humans should always bear the ultimate responsibility when dealing with questions of life and death. We urge all States to use that Group as an opportunity to engage in a concrete dialogue on the obligations we all face when assessing the use of new weapons, means and methods of warfare.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions has succeeded in reducing human suffering caused by those indiscriminate weapons and has set a strong norm against it. The Nordic countries remain deeply concerned about the reported use of cluster munitions, which gravely affects civilian populations.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the signature of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The promise of the Convention will be fulfilled when the norm against the use of anti-personnel mines is universal and when States parties to the treaty have fully implemented their key obligations. One important

theme of the most recent Review Conference in Maputo was that it is possible to achieve the goal of a mine-free world if efforts are sustained.

Unfortunately, numerous conflicts around the world are creating new areas where mines, improvised explosive devices and other explosive hazards create havoc for civilian populations. In Iraq and Syria alone, millions of people continue to face that deadly threat every day. The Nordic countries are strong supporters of humanitarian mine action. Mine action and victim assistance is currently being funded in more than 20 countries. That work not only significantly improves the daily lives of civilians and contributes to social and economic development, but can also help stabilize entire regions. We welcome Security Council resolution 2365 (2017), the Council's first-ever stand-alone resolution on mine action, which was unanimously adopted in June.

Finally, the linkages between disarmament, development and gender perspectives are clear. We, the Nordic countries, believe that the equal participation of men and women in disarmament analyses, negotiations and decision-making processes would increase the legitimacy, quality and effectiveness of disarmament as a whole, as well as the United Nations overall objectives of conflict prevention and sustaining peace. Improving gender aspects in disarmament is not soft policy — it is smart policy.

**Mr. Ten-Pow** (Guyana): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Crime and insecurity rank high among the threats and obstacles to social and economic development in the Caribbean. In that context, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons poses significant security challenges for our region. We do not manufacture, export or re-export these weapons and ammunition, neither do we import them on a large scale, but the extent of their impact in the region remains a source of major concern.

Certain realities in our region — such as our porous borders, our limited capacity to detect, intercept and seize illegal arms at ports of entry, and unfavourable socioeconomic conditions in some parts of our countries — make it particularly challenging to stem the illicit arms trade, which operates in tandem with the illicit drug trade and other organized criminal activities. The convergence of those factors has a

destabilizing effect on our societies and undermines our economies.

It is for those and other reasons that CARICOM remains a strong advocate for the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as the framework for regulating the international trade in conventional weapons and for preventing and eradicating their illicit trade and preventing their diversion. We are pleased with the progress made since the Treaty's entry into force in 2014, and we welcome the decision of the third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty to establish the Working Group on Treaty Universalization as a standing working group. CARICOM supports the Group's initial work plan. We are convinced that the eradication of the illicit trade in conventional arms will be possible only if the international community works as a collective bound by the common obligations set out in the Treaty.

CARICOM was pleased to see the inclusion of a special thematic debate at the third Conference of States Parties with a timely focus on the links between the Treaty and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We note that while target 16.4 of the SDGs explicitly speaks to reducing illicit arms flow, there are also linkages between the gender-based provisions of the Treaty and target 5.2, which speaks to eliminating violence against women and girls. Going forward, the region believes that greater value could be derived these from focused debates if Member States aimed to generate as many practical measures as possible to inform our work under the Treaty.

CARICOM shares the view that the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty is a long-term endeavour. We are fully committed to the process, and we will support all initiatives to this end. We also wish to underscore the need for continued assistance and support to developing countries in particular to facilitate the full implementation of the Treaty.

As we approach the convening of the third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2018, CARICOM intends to remain fully engaged on the issues identified for focus during the Conference and to participate actively in the deliberations. We look forward to the Conference building on the consensus outcome document adopted by the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of

the Programme of Action on Small Arms (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2).

The region wishes also to acknowledge its ongoing partnership with the United Nations through the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean — a partnership that is aligned with the CARICOM Strategic Plan and that has resulted in many concrete achievements in keeping with our obligations under the United Nations disarmament agenda. Measurable outcomes from that partnership include improved security in over 120 stockpile facilities across the region; the destruction of more than 54,000 weapons and 67 tons of ammunition; increased capacity of almost 800 security sector personnel in destruction techniques, stockpile and armoury management and port security; and the development of various CARICOM small arms and light weapons strategies resulting from direct collaboration between the Regional Centre and the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security. We look forward to continued and enhanced cooperation with the United Nations as we strengthen our capacity to fulfil the disarmament objectives.

I conclude with a special call to States that manufacture and export conventional arms. Those States have a special responsibility to work with the rest of us in ensuring that adequate controls are in place to safeguard against the diversion of those arms from legitimate uses to illicit markets. We have to work together to completely remove those weapons from the wrong hands, as they are the fuel for so many conflicts around the world — conflicts in which thousands of lives are lost and many more people injured and maimed. CARICOM is committed to doing its part and will work with all partners to that end.

**Mr. Hassan** (Egypt): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

The African Group aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on this cluster.

The flow of illicit small arms and light weapons across national borders in the past decade has had grave security implications for the continent and has become a destabilizing force, resulting in untold suffering, armed rebellions and violent insurgencies. In that regard, the African Group remains deeply concerned over the illicit trade, transfer, manufacture, possession and circulation of these weapons and their excessive

accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, particularly in Africa.

The Group recognizes that the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is one of a number of key instruments for addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and the Group remains committed to its balanced, effective and full implementation at the global, regional and subregional levels.

The Group welcomes the sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms in June last year and looks forward to actively participating in the forthcoming third Review Conference, in 2018. The Group urges all States to continue to fulfil their obligations regarding reporting and technology transfer by ensuring an unhindered flow of international cooperation and assistance, as mandated by the Programme of Action.

The Group views the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument as vital elements in promoting long-term security and creating conditions for security and sustainable development in Africa. African States have indeed been guided by the efforts to address the menace of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on the continent within the framework of the Programme of Action.

The Group wishes to highlight the extensive work done to address the subject of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons since the Bamako Declaration in 2000, the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in 2002, the Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy in Sirte 2004, the Nairobi Protocol, the Southern African Development Community Protocol of 2004, the Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials of 2006, efforts in the framework of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States and the Arab Maghreb Union, the African Union Agenda 2063, the African Union initiative "Silencing the Guns by 2020" and other relevant subregional initiatives aimed at addressing the issue in Africa. Also, on numerous occasions African Heads of State and Government have expressed concern about the impact of the illicit proliferation of small arms

and light weapons in undermining peace and security and fuelling conflicts in Africa.

Despite such efforts, the Group continues to stress that international assistance and cooperation on a broader scale remain an essential ingredient in the full implementation of the Programme of Action. In view of that, the African Group wishes to call on States Members of the United Nations that are from developed economies to render cooperation and more technical and financial assistance to developing countries in the realization of the overall objectives of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument, with a view to eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Group believes that such efforts will promote national and regional initiatives and assist global efforts.

The actual reduction of military expenditures by major arms producing countries, in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, is a veritable confidence-building measure. We urge those countries to devote their resources to global economic and social development and in particular to the fight against poverty and disease.

The African Group acknowledges the efforts of States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty since its entry into force, as well as the third Conference of States Parties, held in Geneva in September 2017. The Group urges States parties to the Treaty to implement it in a balanced and objective manner that protects the interests of all States and not just the major international producing and exporting States.

The full implementation of the Treaty remains achievable with the cooperation of all. The Group acknowledges that the unregulated transfer of conventional arms to unauthorized recipients fuels illicit trade, and it urges major arms suppliers to ratify the Treaty and promote its implementation. The Group reaffirms the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms, their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The Group continues to highlight the efforts of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa in the context of its contribution to disarmament issues and in providing the requisite

assistance to States members of the African Group in addressing disarmament, peace and security issues. The Group wishes to stress the importance of further strengthening all United Nations Regional Centres to fully discharge their mandates.

In conclusion, the African Group wishes to restate the critical importance of political will and transparency in addressing international disarmament and security issues. The Group believes that deliberations in the coming days should be guided by the need to advance the work of the First Committee and enhance the cause of peace.

**The Acting Chair:** I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Ms. Körömi** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

During this twentieth anniversary year of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the EU and its member States reiterate their full support for that important Convention and for the Maputo Action Plan in order to fulfil the goal of achieving a world free of anti-personnel mines, without new victims, by 2025. The humanitarian impact of the Convention has been remarkable, and more than 51 million anti-personnel mines have been destroyed.

The EU continues to provide significant assistance for the clearance and destruction of mines, booby traps and explosive remnants of war to victims and for mine-risk education in the most heavily affected countries and regions, including Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Iraq, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Myanmar, Syria and Ukraine. In 2016 alone, the EU and its member States committed more than €100 million to mine action worldwide. A new EU Council decision, worth €2.3 million, was adopted on 4 August to promote universal adherence to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and to support the efforts of States parties to implement the Maputo Action Plan. We are committed to international cooperation and assistance and, in that regard, support the individualized approach.

The EU supports the humanitarian goal of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We are deeply concerned about the reported indiscriminate use of cluster munitions affecting civilian populations in different parts of the world and the increasing number of victims. The EU calls upon all actors to refrain from such use and to fully observe the principles of international humanitarian law. We recall that at the 2016 Meeting, States parties agreed by consensus to implement their outstanding obligations before 2030. We note progress on implementing the Dubrovnik Action Plan. We welcome the country coalition concept, which aims at enhancing national ownership and donor coordination in affected States.

The EU supports efforts to universalize and strengthen the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). We recognize the challenges associated with the use of explosive weapons and munitions in densely populated areas and their potential impact on civilians. We call on all parties to armed conflict to fully comply with international humanitarian law. We stress the importance of compliance with all CCW provisions and its annexed Protocols, and therefore remain concerned about allegations of air-delivered incendiary weapons against targets located within a concentration of civilians in Syria.

The EU supported the decision at the fifth Review Conference of the CCW to establish the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. Regrettably, outstanding financial contributions by some States prevented the Group from undertaking its task earlier this year. The Group should enable discussion on a range of issues, including a working definition of lethal autonomous weapons systems and the application of and compliance with international humanitarian law, while taking into account that such fully autonomous systems do not exist at the moment.

We express our concern about the increasing global impact of improvised explosive devices attacks worldwide and their indiscriminate use and effects, in particular in the perpetration of terrorist acts, which have increased dramatically in recent years. We welcome Security Council resolution 2370 (2017), which calls for more stringent national measures to prevent the supply of weapons and explosive precursors to terrorists. All EU member States have supported the General Assembly resolution and the political



declaration on improvised explosive devices in the context of Amended Protocol II to the CCW.

Furthermore, we express our concern about the humanitarian impact and heavy consequences on social and economic development caused by the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of mines other than anti-personnel mines, while acknowledging that they can be used as legitimate weapons, provided appropriate safeguards are present to ensure the protection of civilians in accordance with international humanitarian law.

The EU and its member States firmly support the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and call on all States to join it. The ATT is a robust, balanced and effective international instrument with the objective to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and ammunition, preventing and eradicating the illicit trade in conventional arms and ammunition, and preventing their diversion from the licit international trade.

The EU underlines the importance of stepping up substantive work on universalization, transparency and reporting and the effective implementation of the ATT, as well as encouraging further contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund. A new EU outreach programme worth more than €7 million was adopted by the European Council on 29 May 2017 in order to provide further support to States to strengthen national export controls and successfully implement their ATT obligations. Within the EU, every request for an arms export licence for an item listed in the EU Common Military List has to be assessed against risk criteria such as human rights and humanitarian law violations, including gender-based violence, diversion and internal or regional instability.

The diversion, illicit trade and unauthorized use of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition constitute serious impediments to peace, security and development. The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument provide the only universal and consensual framework to tackle the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The EU has supported their implementation through a whole range of assistance projects, including support for the collection and destruction of surplus small arms and light weapons; physical security and

stockpile management; and capacity building for arms export control, marking, record-keeping, tracing and law enforcement, including the provision of equipment. We also support Security Council resolutions on small arms and light weapons and on women and peace and security.

Several EU member States have taken up important offices over the past year, notably Austria on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention; Finland on the Arms Trade Treaty; France on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons; Germany on the Convention on Cluster Munitions; and the United Kingdom on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Their leadership has helped to address the dire financial situation of the Geneva-based conventions, which remains a matter of serious concern and must be resolved. We urge all parties to ensure that those conventions can operate in an effective and efficient manner. The presidencies held by EU member States have also provided the possibility to further explore cooperation and synergies between various instruments, bearing in mind the importance of coordinated mine action and effective arms export controls for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Mrs. Dallafior** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The illicit trade in and excessive use of conventional weapons are a daily threat to peace, security and sustainable development in many regions of the world. Tackling those challenges requires measures to deal with the transfer, management and the use of conventional weapons.

The 2018 Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will enable us to address the challenges related to such weapons in a comprehensive manner. We welcome the early consultations led by France. The strengthening of national implementation — including safe and secure stockpile management, transparency, sustainable cooperation and assistance, as well as technological advances — must be given special attention at the Conference.

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) plays a vital role in the establishment of common rules on the transfer of arms and in the fight against the illicit trade in weapons. The universalization of the ATT is essential to its effectiveness and should be a major objective. Switzerland encourages all States to promptly accede

to the Treaty. Above and beyond its universalization, focusing on its implementation must be a priority. The working group tasked with addressing that issue should now identify more specifically how to address implementation-related challenges and the possible approaches that could be taken to assist States parties in that area.

Switzerland wishes to underscore the need to address the issue of ammunition as a problem in its own right. Improperly managed ammunition stockpiles often fuel conflict and violence and cause accidental explosions at ammunition depots. The proper management of ammunition is a key response to those humanitarian and security challenges. It also assists in combating the increased use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Switzerland pursues its initiative on safe and secure ammunition management by emphasizing the importance of regional ownership while continuing to support the implementation of existing standards. Those efforts are aimed at raising awareness about the issue and better discerning challenges and possible responses to them. On the basis of that exchange at the regional level, we intend to resume an inclusive global dialogue in 2018.

The fifth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) was particularly fruitful. It is now important to make progress in the implementation the decisions taken at the Conference.

It is regrettable that the first session of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems was cancelled owing to financial difficulties. Nonetheless, that should also encourage the other high contracting parties to focus discussions in November on achieving concrete results. Two issues should be given particular attention. The first is to reaffirm the applicability of international law and spell out how its provisions apply to autonomous weapons, and to define measures to strengthen and promote compliance with them. Secondly, a working definition must be developed. To us it seems essential for the GGE to base its work on the outcome of the informal meetings and the key concepts identified during discussions.

For the first time in November, the GGE will address the challenges posed by scientific and technological progress. Although such progress is generally beneficial to societies, it can also lead to new methods and means

of warfare. We welcome the fact that that CCW meeting will discuss the need for such a dialogue.

The protection of civilians during armed conflict and respect for international humanitarian law are of great importance for my delegation. It is important for the CCW to take full ownership of the problem of armed conflicts in areas with dense concentrations of civilians or civilian goods in order to strengthen the implementation of international humanitarian law.

In conclusion, I wish to touch on the concerns about the growing number of victims of improvised explosive devices. That humanitarian challenge should be the focus of special attention. All efforts in that area should be based on existing international humanitarian law and be aimed at strengthening it. In particular, Switzerland underscores that the designation of non-State actors as illegal actors or terrorists in no way affects their status under international law, in particular international humanitarian law. With regard to operations, the elimination of improvised explosive devices in post-conflict situations is gaining greater attention. That activity should be fully anchored within international mine action standards.

**The Acting Chair:** I give the floor to the representative of Austria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.40.

**Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria):** Austria aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the observer of the European Union. I would also like to add some points of particular importance to my country.

The past two decades have brought success in the area of conventional weapons disarmament, from the impressive progress made towards freeing the world of anti-personnel mines to the adoption of legal instruments spanning from cluster munitions to the trade in arms. The international community has achieved what many viewed as long-term, if not almost unrealistic, aspirations. We need to maintain the momentum and push towards the full implementation of existing instruments, and keep our eyes open to face emerging challenges arising from developments in science and technology and changes in warfare.

By putting the protection of civilians at the centre, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention upon its adoption fundamentally changed how we perceive disarmament and its humanitarian benefits. Secretary-General Guterres calls for disarmament that actually

saves lives. The Convention is outstanding in that regard. With 162 States parties, more than 49 million mines destroyed and tens of thousands of lives spared, the norm against anti-personnel mines has been firmly established.

We are deeply concerned about reports of the recent use of mines in Myanmar, which is not a State party. As the President of the Convention, I have asked the Government of Myanmar to clarify the situation and to consider an independent fact-finding mission with international participation into that matter.

Despite the successes, there are worrying trends, such as a decade-high number of casualties in 2016, most of them due to the strongly increasing use of improvised anti-personnel mines. But it is worth remembering that the Convention's success rests on fruitful cooperation among States, civil society and international organizations. Austria wants to use its presidency of the Convention to re-energize the international community in order reach the 2025 goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. Austria, together with the next presidency, Afghanistan, and the previous presidency, Chile, has submitted the annual draft resolution on the implementation of the Convention (A/C.1/72/L.40), and we invite all States to support it.

*Ms. Raadik (Estonia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

Data from multiple sources clearly demonstrate the devastating short-term and long-term impacts of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas on civilian populations. In 2016, more than 32,000 civilians were killed or injured by explosive weapons. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas results in civilian casualty rates of more than 90 per cent — that is, 9 out of 10 victims are civilians. Most of today's refugees and internally displaced populations have been forced to flee due to the humanitarian impact of those weapons and the devastation that they cause.

Awareness of the indiscriminate effects of explosive weapons in populated areas has led to renewed international attention, and we welcome the fact that the matter is now increasingly being discussed in the relevant forums, such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

The current and previous Secretaries-General have encouraged all States to engage in such an initiative and proposed the elaboration of a political declaration. It is our moral obligation to raise awareness on a matter

of grave concern and to strengthen the observance of existing international humanitarian law. My country will continue, together with like-minded countries, as well as representatives from United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and civil society, to explore a multilateral way forward. Following a recent meeting in Geneva hosted by the ICRC, Austria invites members of the Committee to a side event on that issue today at 1.15 p.m. in Conference Room A.

As a State party to Protocol III of the CCW, we are deeply concerned about the negative humanitarian impact of both air-dropped and ground-launched incendiary weapons by any actor. We hope that the CCW November meetings will provide the opportunity to assess the current status of implementation of the Protocol to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

As we are pressed for time, the Committee will find our remarks on cluster munitions and the Arms Trade Treaty on the Intranet, but I want to finish my statement with an appeal. We have made impressive progress over the past 20 years through a network of ground-breaking treaties. In view of the progress achieved, and as science and technology advance, it is important to ensure that the instruments that the international community has put in place continue to meet their objectives and maintain their relevance.

We cannot turn a blind eye to scientific progress. Therefore, my country considers that action on emerging military technologies is urgently needed. We regret that we have lost precious time because the first session of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems had to be cancelled. We need a sound financial basis, and we are all called on to honour our financial obligations. We are looking forward to discussions in November to ensure that the application of such new technologies is consistent with ethical, political and legal imperatives.

**Mr. Mati (Italy):** Italy aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union. I will read a condensed version of my statement, which will be posted in its entirety on the United Nations website.

Italy firmly supports all international instruments restricting or prohibiting the use of weapons that are contrary to international humanitarian law. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols are crucial in that regard, and their

universalization and full implementation remain fundamental goals. We regret that, due to financial issues, no CCW meeting could be held in 2017 until now, but we look forward to the upcoming Convention meetings, particularly on lethal autonomous weapons systems and improvised explosive devices.

Italy is extremely concerned about the indiscriminate humanitarian and socioeconomic impacts of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions, especially on civilians. The universalization and full implementation of the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines and the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions are among our priorities. I am proud to announce that, on 3 October, the Italian Parliament, building upon strong support from Italian civil society, approved a new law prohibiting all Italian financial institutions from investing in and/or providing any form of support to Italian or foreign companies performing a range of activities, including the production, use, sale, import, export, stockpiling or transport of anti-personnel mines, as well as cluster munitions and explosive submunitions.

At the international level, since 2001 we have devoted nearly €50 million to mine action programmes for recipients that include Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Gaza, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Somalia and the Sudan, among others. Our assistance programmes rely on partnerships with the relevant stakeholders, including the United Nations, other international and regional organizations, civil society and representatives of survivors. Italy attaches particular importance to assisting survivors and their families. Furthermore, in our capacity as co-Coordinator of the Oslo Convention's Committee on Victim Assistance, we promote the implementation of an integrated approach to that topic across all relevant instruments. Italy also finances initiatives aimed at promoting good practices for gender- and diversity-sensitive victim assistance. As Chair of the Mine Action Support Group, Italy has made great efforts to strengthen cooperation between mine action donors and affected States.

Italy is committed to the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the International Tracing Instrument, and the Palermo Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms. We continue to call on all States that have not ratified the ATT to do so as soon as possible. We also look forward to the third Review

Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2018 as a key opportunity to take stock of progress and elaborate a road map for concrete work in the next cycle.

Civil society plays a key role in all our common efforts in disarmament and arms control, and we reiterate our support for increased partnerships with civil society institutions at all levels. We also remain committed to the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and to the realization of its transformative potential in the area of disarmament, as well.

Lastly, let me express Italy's satisfaction with the increasing recognition of the connections linking disarmament and development. We strongly support identifying ways in which our work on disarmament and arms control can contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Mr. Watson** (Australia): Illegally traded, poorly managed and misused conventional arms and ammunition fuel both armed conflict and other forms of armed violence.

Armed violence is a serious impediment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including poverty reduction and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The SDGs recognize the impact that an unregulated arms trade has on sustainable development. SDG target 16.4 calls expressly for the reduction in illicit arms flows by 2030. Preventing instability and promoting security and economic development, especially in our Indo-Pacific region, are high priorities for Australia.

Australia remains strongly committed to advancing the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We realize that States currently outside the Treaty have legitimate questions about what is in the Treaty for them. Why should they bother joining and taking on the obligations that that will entail?

At lunchtime on Friday this week, in conference room 11, Australia will host the New York launch of a compendium on the broader benefits of participation in the Arms Trade Treaty, which include how the Treaty can support efforts to promote human, national, regional and international security and can facilitate the implementation of the SDGs and collaboration on other global challenges. We hope that the compendium, entitled "Reinvigorating the Narrative: The Broader



Benefits of the Arms Trade Treaty”, will be a useful tool in demonstrating to all States the advantages of participation. We encourage States that have not done so already to ratify or accede to the Treaty.

Australia is also committed to strengthening the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons at its third Review Conference, in 2018. Australia is a leading donor to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) and also to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund, which support the implementation of the ATT and the United Nations Programme of Action, as well as conventional arms regulation initiatives around the world.

At the same event at which we will launch the publication on the broader benefits of the Arms Trade Treaty on Friday, we will also host the launch of a guide on the implementation of the ATT and the United Nations Programme of Action, produced by the Centre for Armed Violence Reduction, with the support of funding from UNSCAR and from the Australian Government.

The Australian Government remains committed to mine action and to supporting the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and Amended Protocol II and Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. This year Australia provided 5 million Australian dollars in funding for demining activities in Iraq, Afghanistan, Colombia, Cambodia, Laos and Palau, but there is still much to be done to achieve the goals of completing clearance and stockpile destruction efforts by 2025 and 2030 under the Mine Ban Convention and Convention on Cluster Munitions respectively.

There also remain significant challenges in countering the indiscriminate use and effects of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). We support continuing efforts to develop national and international measures to combat IED production and use. We have also supported the development of IED threat-mitigation guidelines for peacekeeping operations and the IED Disposal Standards. We hope that Member States will support this year’s IED draft resolution, put forward by Afghanistan, Australia and France (A/C.1/72/L.15).

We encourage States to address the needs of the victims of those munitions, which remain long after conflicts and clearance cease. Affected States and

donors alike should put measures in place to ensure the sustainability of victim assistance.

The annual meetings and review conferences of the Mine Ban Convention, Cluster Munitions Convention and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons provide vital opportunities for ensuring that the momentum of these Conventions is sustained. These Conventions do not cost huge sums to run, but the work they promote makes an enormous difference to the lives of people and communities affected. We therefore urge all States parties meet their financial obligations under these Conventions so that the substantive work of implementing them is not affected. As sponsorship coordinator for the Mine Ban Convention, we also encourage States parties in a position to do so to contribute to sponsorship programmes to enable all States parties to attend relevant conferences and meetings.

Finally, we encourage States to redouble their efforts towards universalization and implementation of international instruments in the field of conventional weapons.

**The Acting Chair:** I give the floor to the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.27 and A/C.1/72/L.56.

**Mr. Takamizawa (Japan):** Japan welcomes the successful outcome of the third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), held this September. Japan appreciates the establishment of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation, the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting, and the Working Group on Treaty Universalization as standing working groups. They are the major vehicles to take the work forward for the fourth Conference of States Parties.

Japan has assumed the presidency of the fourth Conference, to be convened in 2018. We are determined to pursue effective and robust implementation, as well as to promote transparency, confidence-building and universalization, while making best use of the Working Groups. With respect to universalization, currently, less than 50 per cent of Member States have become parties to the ATT. As President of the Conference of States Parties, I am committed to promoting universalization and engaging with non-States parties. I am also mindful that the number of States parties in the Asia-Pacific region remains low.

Japan this year has submitted to the First Committee a draft resolution on the ATT (A/C.1/72/L.27), and I call on all member States for their support.

Small arms and light weapons in the wrong hands continue to inflict suffering upon humankind in various parts of the world. The third Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons next year will be yet another opportunity to redouble our efforts on that issue, building upon the outcome of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, in 2016. Japan will continue to work closely with other States and civil society to tackle the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, I call on Member States to extend their support to the annual draft resolution on small arms and light weapons, drafted by Colombia, South Africa and Japan (A/C.1/72/L.56), so that it will be adopted again by consensus this year.

Japan attaches importance to mine action programmes and has donated approximately \$710 million in 51 countries and regions since 1998. Japan will collaborate with States parties to achieve the objectives set out in the Maputo Action Plan and to meet the completion of the Maputo Declaration's aspirations by 2025.

Japan welcomes the successful outcome of the seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in September. We attach particular importance to the universalization of the treaty, as well as to international cooperation and assistance. We welcome Germany's initiatives, in its capacity as President of the seventh Meeting of States Parties, on universalization, including military-to-military dialogue.

We recognize the growing interest in the international community regarding the issue of lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS). Regarding LAWS, there are still many technological, military, legal and ethical questions to consider. We welcome the convening of the Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS this year. Despite the cancellation of its meeting scheduled for August, which is regrettable, we have to intensify the discussions and address some of the challenges at the Group's meeting in November in order to achieve substantial progress.

The Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures met

this year to review the operation and to further the development of that mechanism. Japan believes that the reporting mechanism is conducive to building trust and confidence and therefore actively engaged in the Group's discussions on how to broaden participation. Japan would like to call on Member States that have not yet done so to utilize this mechanism.

The Geneva-based disarmament conventions have faced a troublesome financial situation as debt continues to mount from States that continue not to pay their assessed contributions year after year. We are deeply concerned about the financial status of such disarmament conventions. It is regrettable that not only was the meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS, scheduled for August, cancelled, but that the sixteenth meeting of Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines will be shortened due to a lack of funding. This situation puts at risk the functioning and the future of the implementation of the conventions. Furthermore, the financial situation of the ATT is also a matter of concern. We therefore call upon all States that have not yet paid their contributions to do so in a timely manner.

The full text of my statement will be available online.

**Mr. Bayyapu (India):** India associates itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is a significant instrument of international humanitarian law within the United Nations framework. The Convention and its annexed Protocols, while stipulating measures to mitigate humanitarian concerns arising from the use of specific weapons and weapons systems, also take into account the military necessity of such weapons, thereby striving to strike a balance between the two concepts. Over the years, the Convention has evolved dynamically and demonstrated its continued relevance through the successive adoption of its five Protocols.

India remains fully committed to the Convention and its annexed Protocols, as well as to the humanitarian principles that they embody. We have ratified all five Protocols annexed to the Convention and amended article 1 of the Convention. India firmly believes that the universality of the CCW is critical for the success of the Convention and its annexed Protocols. We note with satisfaction that steady progress has been made

towards that goal, with the number of high contracting parties reaching 125 with the accession of Lebanon and Afghanistan this year.

India welcomes the outcome of the fifth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW, which was held in 2016, including the decision to establish an open-ended group of governmental experts related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention. We look forward to a good discussion at the meeting of the group in November, which should lay the ground for further progress. A continued substantive mandate, adequate financial resources and the participation of all stakeholders are essential in that regard.

The illicit transfer of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to terrorists and non-State actors remains a major threat to international peace and security and an impediment to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Though there is no global and comprehensive instrument to address that challenge, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects outlines a realistic approach to addressing it through cooperative efforts at the national, regional and global levels. We look forward to actively participating in the third Review Conference, to be held in New York in June next year, to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action and its International Tracing Instrument.

India supports the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and is committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel landmines. India participated as an observer at the fifteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in Santiago in 2016.

We support the approach enshrined in Amended Protocol II of the CCW, on anti-personnel land mines, which addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States with long borders. India has discontinued the production of non-detectable anti-personnel landmines and observes a moratorium on their transfer. We are also contributing to international demining and rehabilitation efforts.

Amended Protocol II is a useful framework for addressing the issue of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, which are increasingly being used by terrorists

and illegal armed groups. We welcome the adoption of the Declaration on Improvised Explosive Devices at the fifth Review Conference of the CCW, as recommended by the eighteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II. We also commend Afghanistan for having taken the initiative in 2015 to introduce in the First Committee a draft resolution on countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices, which the Assembly adopted as resolution 70/46.

India supports the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures and has submitted its national reports regularly. India has strong and effective national export controls governing the transfer of conventional weapons, which conform to the highest international standards.

India continues to keep the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) under review from the perspective of our defence, security and foreign policy interests. During the negotiations, India had raised concerns, including on the imbalance in the obligations of exporting and importing States, as well as its shortcomings in curbing the flow of arms to terrorist and non-State armed groups. Nevertheless, India subscribes fully to the objective of the Treaty, and our export control system is broadly aligned to the requirements of the ATT. As part of its commitment to international transparency measures, India submits an annual report under the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms for the same categories of conventional arms that are regulated under the ATT.

**Mrs. Guitton** (France) (*spoke in French*): France fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add the following comments in my national capacity.

The deterioration of the international security situation leads to the persistence of conflicts and crises, the aggravation of terrorist threats and the increase and diversification of trafficking beyond borders. Those alarming developments should lead us to strengthen the universality, respect and efficiency of our disarmament and conventional arms control instruments.

Conventional weapons represent a major security challenge for all regions of the world and call for adapted and concrete measures that take into account everyone's security concerns for the benefit of all. The past year has shown us that we must do more to deal with the

risk of the acquisition and use of conventional weapons by terrorist groups. The international community must not waver in its mobilization. On the contrary, we are all affected.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to fuel conflict, armed violence, terrorism and organized crime and to threaten international peace and security. Small arms and light weapons are today responsible for far more casualties than any other type of weapons. We can respond effectively to that challenge only if we respond together. That is why France took the initiative in 2016 to issue a political declaration on this subject, supported by a cross-regional group of 63 countries. This effort by all the countries must continue. The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument remain the cornerstone of our efforts. Yet we can do better.

My country will have the honour of chairing the Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in June 2018. That occasion will be an opportunity to take stock of the outcome of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action and to look to the future and work to strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of our actions. The French presidency is already fully committed to pursuing an inclusive, transparent and robust preparatory process to facilitate an ambitious outcome that will make a substantive contribution to international security. The conference will be a unique opportunity to move forward in the fight against illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. I invite all representatives to open informal consultations, which will be held on the margins of the meetings of the First Committee on 20 October.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is unique because it brings together political, legal, military and diplomatic expertise and allows for the understanding of current and potential challenges. The fact that States parties to the CCW have become seized of the issue of lethal autonomous weapon systems, on the basis of a French proposal of 2013, is an important development. France is pleased that the Review Conference agreed, in November 2016, to establish a governmental group of experts and hopes that substantive progress can be made.

The threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) is also a global concern. The mobilization on that issue was usefully relaunched by the adoption by consensus two years ago of the first resolution on IEDs in the First Committee. That resolution (resolution 70/46) should serve as a guide to strengthen the consistency and efficiency of international action against IEDs.

France is also mobilized on those issues within the CCW, where we coordinated the group of experts on IEDs and proposed a political declaration, which was adopted in 2016 by the high contracting parties to Amended Protocol II. The informal consultations of 31 August in Geneva, which we co-organized with Colombia, also highlighted the interest in extending its efforts, especially by exploring the role of the private sector.

By establishing a partnership of responsibility among exporter, importer and transit countries, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) should allow for better regulation of the legal trade and prevent the illicit flows of arms. We must move forward in the substantive discussions to implement the Treaty. Priority should be given to making the ATT fully universal, based on the cooperation and support initiatives. That is why France contributed to the Arms Trade Treaty Voluntary Trust Fund and is participating in the implementation of the European Union's programme to support the ATT.

France also completed the destruction of its stockpiles of weapons and munitions in 2016, and it continues to push for the universalization of the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Ottawa Convention on Landmines.

Financial difficulties prevented the holding of several important meetings this year. That must not happen again. Lasting solutions must be identified and implemented, and France will fully support them.

**Mr. Carrillo Gómez** (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the great honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Paraguay, expressing its thanks for the report of the President of the fifth Review Conference of the 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, and welcoming the recent adoption by the Disarmament Commission of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.



The regulation of conventional weapons is a multidimensional matter and as such requires a holistic and coherent response from the international community. Certainly, the primary responsibility for addressing it lies with the Governments of the Member States. The delegation of Paraguay urges the establishment of a common regulatory framework for conventional weapons through the universalization of the various international instruments that regulate them, in particular the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The application of the provisions of the ATT is a useful tool for preventing conflicts and armed violence and violations of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights. However, the Treaty's provisions must be complemented by a regulatory framework that governs production and tackles the reduction of existing conventional weapons.

With regard to small arms and light weapons, the delegation of Paraguay emphasizes the importance of 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 urges Member States to promote it in a decisive and coordinated manner and to incorporate explosives and ammunition in their frameworks for the regulation of small arms and light weapons. The delegation of Paraguay encourages those of other Member States to reflect on the possibility of including in their respective regulatory frameworks references to the production and marketing of different ballistic calibres.

At the national level, Paraguay has begun implementing the Integrated Ballistic Identification System on a test basis. It continues to incorporate female personnel into disarmament activities, such as in arms tracing and monitoring, at various locations around the country. With the assistance of the United Nations, Paraguay periodically destroys surplus and obsolete military materiel as part of its commitment to controlling and eliminating illicit trafficking in weapons and to reducing risks in their storage. Likewise, firearms and surplus ammunition collected or seized that may otherwise find their way onto secondary markets are periodically destroyed.

The delegation of Paraguay highlights the value of this thematic debate as a forum for exchanging experiences on good practices and lessons learned by Member States regarding various aspects of conventional weapons. The participation of delegations

in this debate contributes significantly to building confidence among States and is conducive to the development of initiatives of normative harmonization and political coordination among them. Moreover, it facilitates interaction between delegations and representatives of civil society.

In the experience of Paraguay, forums of this type at the regional and subregional levels, such as those of the Organization of American States, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, Union of South American Nations and, especially the Common Market of the South, have laid the foundations for constant exchanges between Paraguay's arms-control authorities and those of neighbouring countries and has facilitated international cooperation in this area, both regionally and subregionally.

In conclusion, the delegation of Paraguay reiterates once again the importance of redeploying resources allocated to modernize arsenals to efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals — to echo the representative of Italy — in particular Goal 16.4, to significantly reduce illicit arms flows and combat all forms of organized crime

**Ms. Saggese** (United Kingdom): I would like to align my comments with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union and add some remarks in my national capacity. In the interests of time, I will read an abridged version; the full text will be posted on the United Nations website.

The United Kingdom remains committed to playing a leading role in international efforts on conventional arms control across the full range of issues and in support of various instruments and arrangements. For those instruments to function effectively, it is vital that they receive the necessary support, especially financial. We therefore encourage all participating States to pay their contributions at the earliest opportunity, as the United Kingdom has done.

The United Kingdom is a strong supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty as the primary means to achieve a legal trade, globally well regulated, in arms, and reduce the diversion of arms to the illicit market. Universalization, especially getting the right States around the table, must remain a priority until the Treaty is truly global. Greater participation will increase the Treaty's influence, strength and reputation, allowing it to achieve its principal aims.

We welcome the participation of non-States parties at the Conferences of States Parties as a signal of their interest and potential involvement in this important discussion. However, the Treaty cannot make an impact unless and until it is effectively and widely implemented. That is why the United Kingdom will continue to offer technical expertise and financial assistance, where possible, to States looking to implement the Treaty and develop their export control systems.

The United Kingdom strongly believes in the fundamental humanitarian goals of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We are concerned that the number of new cluster munitions casualties in 2016 was more than double that recorded for 2015, and we therefore call on all states to abide by international humanitarian law.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. To mark that milestone, the United Kingdom has tripled its financial support for mine action, providing £100 million over the next three years. Furthermore, the United Kingdom strongly upholds its obligations under the treaty, as demonstrated by the ongoing work to remove anti-personnel mines from the Falkland Islands. We will provide an update on this work at the Meeting of States Parties in December.

Just as the United Kingdom works hard to repair the legacy of past conflicts, we are ready and willing to discuss potential future challenges. The United Kingdom attaches great importance to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and underscores the importance of its universalization and full implementation to prevent further harm to civilians. The Convention plays a key role in bringing together States with differing national security needs and concerns and in balancing military necessity with humanitarian concerns. Hence, the CCW is the right forum to continue to respect and reinforce the principles of international humanitarian law. As Chair of the Convention this year, the United Kingdom will do its utmost to ensure a successful and forward-leaning outcome at the Meeting of High Contracting Parties in November.

I turn now to lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS). The United Kingdom believes that LAWS do not and may never exist and, under our definition, any such system would fall foul of international humanitarian law. We support the mandate given by the

CCW to the Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS and look forward to further discussions in November.

The United Kingdom remains fully committed to the fight against illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. We look forward to the third Review Conference on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument next year.

The United Kingdom fully recognizes the growing challenges we all face, and the threats posed to life and security. We also recognize that international cooperation and the effective operation of a rules-based international system are our best hope of tackling those threats. Universalization and implementation are therefore a core means of building a safer world.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): The United States is a high contracting party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and all of its Protocols. We view the CCW as an important instrument that has brought together States with diverse national security concerns.

We are deeply disappointed that a lack of funding has prevented high contracting parties from convening all the meetings scheduled for 2017, pursuant to the decisions of the fifth CCW Review Conference in December 2016. In particular, we have lost the opportunity to continue our expert discussions on improvised explosive devices under CCW Amended Protocol II, and had to reduce the length of the meeting of the planned Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems from 10 to 5 days. We encourage all high contracting parties to pay their share of the assessed costs in a timely fashion to ensure that we can continue that important work.

The United States continues to urge all Member States to fully implement the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Tracing Instrument. We must continue to focus on the technical implementation challenges of existing commitments if the international community is to be successful in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We look forward to working with Member States as we prepare for the 2018 Review Conference.

Man-portable air defence systems, also known as MANPADS, continue to represent a global threat. Continued instability in the Middle East and Africa has

given terrorists unprecedented access to shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, which pose a serious threat to civil and military aviation around the world. The United States is cooperating with partners around the globe to secure those missiles, prevent their smuggling by extremists and protect the targets that terrorists seek to attack. The United States has also worked with partners to establish strict export controls over the transfer of all MANPADS. Additionally, since 2003 the United States has cooperated with countries around the globe to destroy more than 38,000 excess, loosely secured or illicitly held at-risk MANPADS missiles and thousands more launchers in more than 40 countries.

The United States strongly supports the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The Register pioneered international discussion of international transfers of conventional arms, and it remains the cornerstone of international efforts to address the problems arising from irresponsible transfers of such arms. The United States urges all States to report data on their international transfers of conventional arms and to include data on transfers of small arms and light weapons alongside the traditional categories of heavy weapons.

The United States remains committed to ensuring that conventional arms are transferred in a responsible manner. The Arms Trade Treaty held its third Conference of States Parties from 11 to 15 September in Geneva, under the able presidency of Finnish Ambassador Klaus Korhonen. In 2016, the Arms Trade Treaty began the important shift from administrative to substantive work. We look forward to continuing work next year under the guidance of Japanese Ambassador Nobushige Takamizawa, the President of the fourth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

The United States has been the world's single largest financial supporter of humanitarian mine action, and we remain committed to eliminating loosely secured or otherwise at-risk conventional weapons and munitions. Since 1993, we have provided more than \$2.8 billion to more than 100 countries for conventional weapons destruction, including clearance of landmines, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance, for the disposal of excess small arms and light weapons and munitions, and for improved security for conventional weapons storage.

**Mr. Hassan** (Egypt): Egypt associates itself with the statements delivered earlier by the representatives

of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement under this agenda item, and wishes to make the following remarks.

Egypt remains committed to engaging in any balanced and credible multilateral endeavour that aims to tackle the multiple challenges and threats arising from the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, provided that such an endeavour is consistent with the Charter of the United Nations. Egypt continues to fully support the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons as an essential multilateral tool that contributes to the eradication of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Egypt also reiterates the importance of the International Tracing Instrument as a valuable tool in that connection. We look forward to engaging constructively in the third Review Conference of the parties to the Programme of Action in 2018, and we assure all Member States and the French presidency of the Conference of our full cooperation.

The regions of the Middle East and Africa face severe threats due to the increasing flows of small arms and light weapons to terrorist and illegal armed groups. It is obvious that that significant and unprecedented flow is conducted with the direct support of a number of States that resort to arming terrorists as a part of their foreign policy — in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international norms and a number of Security Council resolutions, the latest being resolution 2370 (2017), submitted by Egypt in August 2017, on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons.

Some argue that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is the solution that would stop flows of conventional arms to illegal actors. In that regard, it is important to reiterate that the ATT's lack of clear definitions largely undermines its effectiveness, even if its membership is universal. Unfortunately, the ATT was designed mainly as a tool to manipulate the legitimate trade in conventional weapons and obstruct their supplies to States in a politicized manner, rather than to truly eradicate illicit trafficking or prevent the supply of weapons to unauthorized recipients. We reiterate our call on States parties to the ATT to ensure that its implementation is consistent with the United Nations Charter.

The possession, production and stockpiling of conventional weapons are legitimate sovereign rights that rest entirely in the hands of each State, according

to its national security needs and threat assessments and without prejudice to any possible arms control arrangements that the relevant State wishes to engage in on the basis of agreements freely arrived at. The transfers of conventional weapons also remain perfectly legitimate as long as the recipients are duly authorized by the Government of the relevant State.

It is important to highlight that most of the problems that we face today with regard to the possession of conventional arms by terrorists and illegal armed groups are due not to the lack of proper export controls or inadequate stockpile security, but mainly to the fact that certain States continue to deliberately supply weapons to those terrorists, militias and illegal armed groups. That phenomenon requires the immediate attention of the United Nations.

Egypt continues to live in a highly volatile and extremely unstable region, characterized by chronic conflicts and arms races. That is mainly because of the insistence of one State of the region on blocking any effort to rid the region of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), which is a necessary step towards any further confidence-building or arms control measures. Until such a WMD-free zone is materialized, a massive imbalance in the region's security architecture will persist, limiting the possibilities of further progress in the area of conventional weapons.

Egypt is one of the States that have suffered the most from the use of landmines. Twenty per cent of the world's landmines were planted on Egyptian soil during the Second World War. There is a continuing need to intensify international cooperation to tackle that major problem. Fully aware of the relevant humanitarian considerations, since the 1980s Egypt has imposed a moratorium on the production and export of anti-personnel landmines, long before the conclusion of any conventions in that field, including the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines, which fell short of addressing many key elements associated with the threat of landmines.

Finally, Egypt acknowledges the need for the United Nations to launch, as soon as possible, objective discussions on the ethical, humanitarian, legal and technical aspects surrounding the issue of lethal autonomous weapons.

**Mr. Sene** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal associates itself with the statements made earlier

by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Egypt, on behalf of the Group of African States, and is gratified by the opportunity to participate in this thematic debate on conventional weapons, the control of which is without question of crucial importance to the maintenance of international peace and security.

This meeting, we stress, is timely with regard to the persistence of multiple hotbeds of tension throughout the world, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, which shows that the maintenance of peace and security is far from being won. That is the situation in West Africa and the Sahel, which still face threats of many sorts, such as the proliferation and illicit trafficking of conventional weapons and drugs and the activities of terrorist groups.

To address those threats, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has undertaken several initiatives to synergize actions and harmonize their legislation to combat the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons. In 2006, ECOWAS adopted a convention against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons — a category of weapons that, fortunately, is included in the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Senegal signed the Treaty on 3 June 2013 and ratified it on 25 September 2014. That international legal instrument entered into force on 24 December 2014, 90 days after the depositing of the instruments of the fiftieth ratification. To date, 130 Member States have signed it and 92 countries have ratified it, including 19 in Africa.

Nevertheless, the success of universalization efforts is mixed. The level of membership in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean is high, while membership remains weak in Africa and Asia. Senegal reaffirms its commitment to that instrument — the first international convention that specifically seeks to regulate the international trade of weapons in order to put an end to the disastrous consequences resulting from conventional arms transfers between countries. My country, committed to the effective implementation of the ATT, will continue to promote its universalization, including through regional cooperation in the interest of sharing best practices while involving civil society in efforts to raise awareness about the Treaty.

Moreover, true to its commitments, Senegal has issued its initial report and its 2016 annual report. Additionally, thanks to its partnership with the European



Union, it has drafted a law incorporating the relevant provisions of the ATT into its national legislation.

In the framework of the universalization of the ATT, Senegal, with the help of the EU and in partnership with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, organized a professional training course in Dakar from 26 to 30 September 2016 on building capacity on effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty for civilian and military officials of francophone African countries that have signed the ATT. The success of the course, which participants solemnly suggested be held again, led the relevant Senegalese authorities to request funding from the Voluntary Trust Fund of the secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty for a professional training workshop on the ATT for 50 participants from francophone African countries actively engaged in the practical implementation of the ATT. The workshop will be held from 11 to 15 December in Dakar, and will review of the relevant provisions of the ATT through the use of exercises, simulations, case studies and sharing experiences and good practices.

Proliferation, illicit transfers, accumulation and the diversion of small arms and light weapons continue to imperil international peace and security and to have devastating effects on populations in conflict and post-conflict situations. Civilians, particularly women and children, are the primary victims. That is why we must pay more attention 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. The same is true of the 2005 International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The key to the success of that Instrument lies in the ability and willingness of Governments to implement the commitments undertaken.

With regard to the fight against anti-personnel mines, Senegal remains convinced that the implementation of the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines must remain a priority if we are to rid the world of those devices, which sow indiscriminate death. It is also prudent, in the framework of technical and financial assistance provided to countries that need help with mine clearance programmes, to ensure the socioeconomic rehabilitation of victims.

The non-possession or destruction of cluster munitions is, in our view, the best way to respect the norms established by the Convention on Cluster

Munitions, whose entry into force constituted significant progress toward the protection of civilians and the strengthening of international humanitarian law.

**The Acting Chair:** Before proceeding to the next speaker, I would like to convey a request from the interpreters for the representatives to kindly read their statements at a reasonable pace in order to ensure proper interpretation.

**Mr. Benard Estrada** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Small arms and light weapons and their proliferation and illicit trafficking cause the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people every year worldwide. They fuel conflicts and exacerbate violence, as weapons left over from previous conflicts are often diverted to the black market and remain a threat for decades. In my country, like in many others, trafficking in illicit weapons fuels armed violence and insecurity and victimizes the entire society. The fight against that scourge is one of our Government's top priorities, since its impact on Guatemalan society is apparent.

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is an historic response of the international community to the human suffering caused by widespread availability of weapons during and after conflicts. For the first time in an international treaty, we recognized the importance of States not transferring weapons or ammunition if they know such materials will be used to commit war crimes. That is why Guatemala is firmly committed to the letter and the spirit of the ATT and to its full implementation. Guatemala signed the Arms Trade Treaty in July 2003 and deposited the instrument of ratification on 12 July 2016.

My country is Vice-President of the third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. During the Conference's negotiations, Guatemala pushed for strong Treaty provisions that would include ammunition, parts, components and devices, as well as for strong criteria relating to human rights and international humanitarian law. We called for a treaty that would be as robust as possible, so as to make a real difference in its implementation.

Moreover, Guatemala emphatically condemns the use of cluster munitions by any actor in any circumstances, as it is a violation of the principles

embodied in international law and international humanitarian law. We reaffirm our commitment to contributing to the effective implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. My country is also very proud that Central America was declared the first cluster-munition-free zone — an example that should be implemented in other regions of the world.

We also wish to express our concern over the use of explosive weapons in populated zones. As recent events have shown, its humanitarian consequences are devastating and its odious effects are often indiscriminate. We recall the importance of respecting international humanitarian law, as well as the responsibility of States to protect its people. This issue merits greater attention in this forum. Guatemala condemns the use of any weapon with indiscriminate effects, as it constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law.

We believe that the efforts of States towards nuclear disarmament and those achieved with the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and the follow-up 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 and other, regional instruments on small arms and light weapons are tremendous strides towards total and complete disarmament. We also reaffirm that the three pillars and the synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and sustainable peace, as well as the link between humanitarian actions, development and peacebuilding, are solid and comprehensive steps towards the implementation of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mrs. García Guiza** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Small arms and light weapons are used in almost half of all violent deaths in the world. Likewise, every day approximately 500 people are killed by firearms and thousands more suffer from their indirect effects. In addition, the production of millions of weapons and munitions is not decreasing. Such weapons and ammunition continue to fuel conflicts or to be diverted to the illicit market and contribute to the spread of transnational organized crime and terrorism, as well as to exacerbating armed violence.

Given that serious situation, the effective control of international transfers of conventional weapons is a humanitarian imperative and an essential requirement for development. For Mexico, the way established by

the Arms Trade Treaty to ensure a responsible trade in weapons is increasingly linked with international, regional and national efforts to prevent and counter the illicit trade.

The main axis of our actions is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 16 gives us the platform to act for the sake of peaceful societies, in which sustainable development is a general condition. In accordance with target 16.1 of the Agenda, we must close ranks to reduce all forms of violence and the corresponding mortality rates throughout the world, which will certainly require reducing illicit arms flows, in line with target 16.4.

To achieve those objectives, it is necessary to effectively control international arms transfers. However, we must also go further and start discussions aimed at lessening the production and inventories of weapons in order to reduce the illicit flows and, at the same time, the diversion to the illicit market. This Committee can help by providing practical elements for the development of comprehensive indicators for the fulfillment of Goal 16, which will subsequently contribute to measuring progress in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Mexico will continue striving to strengthen the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The third Review Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action is an opportunity to agree on additional commitments in the area of munitions control and the prevention of cross-border illicit trade, with a focus on shared responsibility and preventing terrorist activities.

It is also necessary to strengthen exchanges and to promote synergies among the various international instruments, mechanisms, forums and regional conventions that, in one way or another, deal with the global arms and ammunition market. In that connection, convinced of the usefulness of that multilateral and comprehensive approach, I am honoured to share the fact that Mexico has called for the convening in February 2018 of the first international conference of secretariats and governing bodies of the different instruments and mechanisms related to the control, trade and illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition.

Strengthening the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is in our common interest. That framework instrument was developed so that we

could continue to develop norms for disarmament and humanitarian issues. Likewise, we will continue to contribute to humanitarian initiatives that require urgent attention, in particular the adoption of commitments on the use of explosives in densely populated areas.

We must also bear in mind that scientific and commercial progress in the area of artificial intelligence and the increasing use of exponential technologies in the arms industry for the development of means and methods of war are unprecedented. The application of new technologies in that field poses technical, legal and ethical challenges that we must discuss. The developments in the industry require legal strategies and political action consistent with the objectives of the Organization and the Charter of the United Nations. The General Assembly is the ideal forum to chart the way and to make progress in that very direction. In any case, aspects related to universal access to technology, cybersecurity and malicious software should also be viewed in the context of topics of the Committee.

Given the many deaths and suffering, damage and instability caused by conventional weapons, Mexico will continue to be a relevant actor in the discussions and processes on such weapons in the light of both its national interests and the ultimate goal of our collective well-being.

**The Acting Chair:** I now call on the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.41 and A/C.1/72/L.43.

**Mr. Biontino (Germany):** Germany aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

We are proud to see our partnership with the African Union on small arms and light weapons control prosper at both a technical and at a policy level. As the Committee will recall, Germany launched an initiative of the Group of Seven Plus, co-chaired by the African Union, on the physical stockpile management of small arms and light weapons. We are currently broadening that initiative to include measures against the transborder illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons to support the African Union in implementing its strategy *Silencing the Guns by 2020*. We have supported those activities with approximately €14 million in the past two years.

Motivated by the Sustainable Development Goals, especially target 16.4, Germany is actively promoting a global alliance against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We feel that better coordination is crucial for progress, so we try to partner with other interested States, regional bodies and the United Nations, as well as non-governmental organizations and research institutions.

Besides small arms and light weapons, we also need to acknowledge that the diversion of conventional ammunition is a driver of armed conflicts. Every two years, we review the newest developments related to problems arising from conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. Almost 10 years after the previous Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on that topic, which led to the formulation of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, we call upon all States to support our proposal to convene a new GGE on ammunition in 2020. In our proposal (A/C.1/72/L.43), we also suggest that an in-depth consultation phase take stock of the concerns and priorities for action of all States in the field of ammunition.

Furthermore, Germany remains committed to promoting the universalization and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Germany encourages eligible States to make best use of the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund and encourages all States parties in a position to do so to contribute to that invaluable instrument.

The work done in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) on lethal autonomous weapons systems has been extremely useful over the past years. In order to contribute to an informed debate of the GGE, we established an independent scientific international panel on the regulation of autonomous weapons. We invite parties to a second briefing on the panel's work on 25 October here at the German House.

Explosive weapons have huge humanitarian consequences in populated areas. To discuss the legal, technical, military and humanitarian aspects of explosive weapons in populated areas, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross, we organized an event in Geneva. We feel that the right framework for further discussions on that topic is the CCW. That is why we suggested including the topic on the agenda of this year's Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to

the Convention. As a first step, we have submitted two working papers on the issue.

Germany held the presidency of the Convention on Cluster Munitions for the past year, until September, when we handed it over to Nicaragua. As President of the Convention, we focused on two initiatives with the potential to promote the implementation of the Convention: one on a country-specific strategy, and the other on a dialogue with States not party to the Convention. Through both initiatives we aim to further increase the humanitarian purview of the Convention.

To reflect the progress achieved, Germany is introducing this year's draft resolution on the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (A/C.1/72/L.41) and will hold a side event on the Convention on 26 October, again in German House.

**Mr. Castro Córdoba** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): The most recent Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) highlighted the importance of synergies between the Treaty and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizing that there was a crucial link between development and disarmament. It is necessary to step up efforts to fully consider the complex regime of conventional weapons. Doing so will enable us to take concrete actions to achieve target 16.4, and thus to significantly reduce the illicit trade in such weapons. That will help to reduce armed violence, to the benefit of more peaceful and inclusive societies.

For Costa Rica, the Treaty is unique and important because it combines the technical goals of arms control with the humanitarian aspect. That is why my country sought to establish binding criteria for all transfers of conventional weapons so as to prevent such weapons from aggravating conflicts and armed violence and from fuelling organized crime and terrorism, which inevitably lead to human rights violations and to breaches of international humanitarian law. We have also been working with the region, the international community and civil society to ensure that the provisions and commitments under the Treaty are implemented effectively and transparently. That aspect is essential, because as we move towards the universalization of the Treaty, it is necessary to also work towards its correct implementation.

We continue to witness many and very serious acts that violate the objective of the Treaty. Such violations are unfortunately being experienced in the flesh by

civilian populations around the world, in particular women and children. In our own subregion, we have lived through the painful reality of societies affected by armed violence, which are vulnerable to the illicit trade in such weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. We must reduce the demand for the acquisition and stockpiling of weapons, as well as their supply to countries involved in hostile activities, thereby reducing the impact on the civilian population, particularly those in situations of armed conflict, with the ultimate goal of ensuring the stability of our societies.

It is essential to strengthen synergies between the ATT and other, complementary instruments, such as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We must also adopt legally binding instruments to combat the trade, marking and illicit brokering of such weapons. Furthermore, it is necessary to work to develop robust and mandatory standards for the management of arsenals so that we can address the excessive levels of arms production.

In that regard, Costa Rica has been working on the effective management and establishment of institutional capacities for the implementation of the ATT. In a few weeks, we will have a national control system, known as the Governing Body for the Implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, enacted by executive decree. We will also conclude training for more than 500 officials in the areas of licensing, customs and compliance, which we have achieved with the valuable help of international cooperation.

We welcome 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. Even as the illicit trafficking, excessive accumulation and uncontrolled proliferation of such weapons persist, fuelling armed violence and terrorism in many parts of the world with significant humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences, we welcome the measures adopted in the final document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2), which will help to implement the Programme of Action, in line with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We must also address the ethical, legal and technical concerns raised with regard to lethal autonomous



weapons systems, which in our view contravene international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We look forward to substantive discussions on the challenges in that regard at the next meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts in the context 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.

We also believe that it is time to take concrete decisions on the use of armed drones outside areas of active hostilities. We share concerns over the use of armed drones, which has often been characterized by a lack of transparency, accountability and reparation for victims, eroding democratic control and international scrutiny of the use of force.

**Mr. Rattray** (Jamaica): I welcome the opportunity to speak on the cluster “Conventional weapons”. I align my intervention with the statements made earlier on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Caribbean Community.

The global security landscape continues to be significantly impacted by the changing nature of conventional weapons. More advanced technologies and the increased number of non-State actors have resulted in the growing use of ever more sophisticated conventional weapons in conflicts and situations of armed violence across the globe. Such weapons have become more pervasive and destructive, and they have a devastating impact on the lives of ordinary citizens who fall victim to their wanton and often indiscriminate use. We therefore have a duty to ensure the effectiveness of the frameworks that we develop to curb the illicit proliferation and use of such weapons.

To that end, my delegation looks forward to the convening in 2018 of the third Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Review Conference presents a prime opportunity to build on the important progress made at the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, which was held in June 2016.

We are pleased that the consensus outcome document of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2) addressed several key areas that will feed into the third Review Conference on the Programme of

Action, including the life-cycle management of small arms stockpiles, new forms of small arms trafficking and the gender aspects of the implementation of the Programme of Action. It also makes an important link between the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 16 and target 16.4, which speaks to significantly reducing illicit arms flows. As part of the process going forward, we hope that there will be deliberations on the issue of ammunition that culminate in its inclusion in the proposed outcome document of the third Review Conference.

Strengthening cooperation and ensuring that sustained international assistance continues to underpin the implementation of the Programme of Action will also be a priority for my delegation. We therefore look forward to the updated comprehensive study to be provided to the Conference by the Secretariat on the adequacy, effectiveness and sustainability of financial and technical assistance for the implementation of both the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

The recently concluded third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) represented an important milestone towards the universalization and full implementation of the obligations of the ATT. We congratulate Finland on its successful presidency of the Conference and look forward to the fourth Conference, to be presided over by Japan.

The significance of the ATT lies in its potential to curb the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. For us, it therefore represents an important mechanism that assists the security and crime strategy of our subregion. We are pleased to report that Jamaica has been making steady progress towards improving its policy and legislative framework for the implementation of the ATT. For example, we have proposed amendments to our Firearms Act to satisfy the minimum requirements of the Treaty to better define several key terms, to incorporate an in-transit provision and to provide for a transit and transshipment permit.

In recognition of the synergy between the ATT and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), Jamaica has been taking a more comprehensive approach to preventing and eradicating the diversion of weapons to illicit trade. Several representatives of ministries, departments and agencies have benefited from capacity-building exercises and technical assistance. Efforts are

also being made to introduce new provisions for the operationalization of a competent national authority and the implementation of a national control system.

A great deal of what we have been able to achieve would not have been possible without the valuable partnerships from which we have benefited. I speak, for example, of the support rendered by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC). We are pleased to note that technical training has been provided by UNLIREC to more than 600 personnel of national authorities across the region. Jamaica has been a beneficiary of UNLIREC assistance, most recently through a project that supports private security providers in stemming the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons.

**Mr. Saint-Hilaire (Haiti)** (*spoke in French*): My delegation associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Guyana on behalf of the Caribbean Community. I will now make some brief observations in my national capacity.

The Republic of Haiti attaches great importance to issues relating to conventional arms control. It shares the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General and by a number of delegations on the dangers of the excessive accumulation and spread of such weapons. Indeed, the human suffering and instability caused by the excessive use of conventional weapons are a cause for great concern. They have exacerbated certain conflicts and are behind the commission of attacks, destruction, aggression, abduction and violence — especially violence against women. Their uncontrolled spread is a major obstacle to the promotion and defence of basic rights, a threat to peace and security and a damper on growth and sustainable development.

My country has not, unfortunately, escaped the disastrous effects of the spread of small arms and light weapons. The Government of the Republic is fully aware of that fact. That is why it has placed the improvement of its security environment at the heart of great, indispensable transformations in the country. Efforts at the national level seek to effectively protect life and property, ensure the defence of the territory, ensure stability and promote the creation of a security environment conducive to investment and the improvement of living conditions for all sectors of the population.

In that regard, the Government is working to set up a national defence force with strategic priorities focused on development and to steadily strengthen the capabilities of the Haitian National Police. It is in that institutional framework that the Government strives to implement concrete measures of conventional arms control and to restore State authority throughout the national territory. It is also taking the necessary steps to achieve target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which, *inter alia*, seeks to significantly reduce illicit financial flows and the trafficking of firearms.

In that same vein, the Haitian Government actively supports collective international action to advance the quest for concrete solutions to the illicit trafficking, uncontrolled spread and use of conventional weapons. It insists that such action be carried out at all levels. 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. It will gladly contribute to the success of the third Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, to be held next year.

My delegation welcomes the recommendations adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its April session on confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons. Their application should allow us to strengthen collaboration among all States in order to limit those agents of insecurity, death and destruction.

The Republic of Haiti wishes to reaffirm the importance of the Arms Trade Treaty. That Treaty offers a suitable framework for regulating and controlling conventional weapons with a view to significantly reducing feelings of insecurity and the human suffering resulting from their spread and use. My country, which has signed the Treaty, is working to contribute more concretely to its implementation and universalization. The Haitian Government has already submitted for parliamentary approval two instruments of ratification — one for the Arms Trade Treaty and the other for the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

In order to abide by my time limit, I will conclude by underlining that the ultimate goal of our collective commitment to conventional arms control is to promote peace and security at the regional, subregional and international levels. In order to effectively do so, we must all — import, export and transit countries — fully

assume our responsibilities. The Government of the Republic of Haiti is intensifying its efforts to rigorously control the spread of firearms at the national level. It will also continue to play an active role in international action in order to reduce human suffering linked to the proliferation and illicit use of those weapons. In the final analysis, what is at stake is human security, sustainable development and global stability.

**Mr. Kazi** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement on this thematic discussion delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Bangladesh appreciates the outcome of the fifth Review Conference 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 (CCW), held in Geneva last year. We welcome the decision to establish of an open-ended Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems in the context of the objectives and purposes of the CCW. We look forward to substantive outcomes from the GGE's deliberations.

As a State party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Bangladesh participated in the fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, held in Chile last year. In our statement during the general debate in this Committee (see A/C.1/72/PV.8), we expressed our grave concern over the reported laying of anti-personnel mines inside Myanmar's Rakhine state along our border, which the Myanmar delegation denied in its right of reply.

We share some pertinent observations from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights rapid response mission team report, based on the team's visit to Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh from 13 to 24 September 2017:

“The Team received credible information that an estimated 11 Rohingya victims had suffered severe injuries including missing limbs following mine incidents. The defused landmines have been identified as anti-personnel mines.

“On the basis of the information received, the Team believes that the mines were deliberately

planted by the Myanmar security forces after 23 August 2017 along the border in an attempt to prevent the Rohingya refugees from returning to Myanmar. Information received by the Team referred to the use of landmines and to incidents of people stepping on mines whilst fleeing, or attempting to return to Myanmar to check on other missing family members from 25 August onwards. They were either killed instantly, or suffered serious injuries.”

We would once again underscore the need for proper and independent investigations into those serious allegations, for urgent clearance of any anti-personnel mines laid along our border, for ensuring appropriate support for the victims and their families and for holding those responsible accountable.

We remain preoccupied with that concern, since, contrary to the official Myanmar narrative, the influx of Rohingya continues unabated on a daily basis. Only yesterday, 15,000 more entered, reportedly from further inside Rakhine state, and many more are waiting across the border. Bangladesh still awaits responses or reactions to the proposals put forward from our side during the last high-level bilateral meeting, held on 2 October 2017 in Dhaka, on facilitating the safe, secure, voluntary and sustainable return of all forcibly displaced people in and from Rakhine state.

As a signatory to the Arms Trade Treaty, Bangladesh believes that the Treaty's provisions would help put an end to the illegitimate use of and illegal trade in conventional weapons that continue to cause untold human suffering around the world. The international community has a legal, moral and humanitarian obligation to ascertain that arms transferred to any Member State are not used for gross and systematic violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including indiscriminate attacks against civilian targets.

In the words of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Myanmar security forces' operations in Rakhine state since 25 August 2017 can be termed “a textbook example of ethnic cleansing”, which, he said, appears to be “a cynical ploy to forcibly transfer large numbers of people without possibility of return”. We wish to remind concerned members of the international community of their obligations under such telling circumstances and take note of the symbolic measures announced by

some Member States to limit their engagement with the Myanmar security forces.

In order to be credible to those suffering, our lofty pronouncements here should match our actions in terms of concrete deliverables.

**Mr. Broekhof** (Netherlands): The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (EU) and would like to make a statement in its national capacity.

Allow me to start with a somewhat quintessential Dutch remark. The Geneva-based conventions on conventional weapons have been in difficult financial circumstances. We welcome the fact that finances have been discussed in the annual meetings of these conventions. Transparency and other measures are helping to address the financial issues, but we need to do more for a sustainable financial system. We therefore believe that additional efforts should be made towards improving the efficiency of the contribution process, discouraging non-payment and reducing the costs of meetings. Without financially sustainable conventions, we cannot do the work to implement them.

We welcome the establishment of a group of governmental experts (GGE) on lethal autonomous weapons systems as a next step in the ongoing deliberations on this topic. We regret that the first week of the GGE meeting could not take place due to a lack of funding. However, we hope that the progress made during the previous three expert meetings will provide a good basis for structured discussions. As before, we will actively participate and further contribute by submitting working papers.

The threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) is a growing concern. In many conflicts, IEDs harm civilian populations in particular. We need to continue to address IEDs in all the various forums, such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the First Committee and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, as many IEDs fall under the definition of an anti-personnel mine. Additionally, we are involved in the Working Group on Improvised Explosive Device Disposal Standards for United Nations Operations, led by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and chaired by Belgium and China. Those standards will continue to be developed in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, and they should supplement the current

framework of the International Mine Action Standards, which guides humanitarian mine action.

We strongly believe that it is possible to make cluster munitions a thing of the past. We were appalled to learn that the number of victims of cluster munitions more than doubled in 2016 as compared to 2015. We continue to condemn any use of cluster munitions by any actor. We commend the German presidency for their extensive efforts last year as President of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Further universalization of the Convention is crucial if its success is to be ensured, and we therefore call upon all States to join the treaty if they have not yet done so.

Since its entry into force, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has set an international norm against irresponsible transfers of arms. States parties will have to address substantive issues related to the implementation and universalization of the Treaty. We remain fully committed to those goals and are proud to share with Sweden a seat on the Treaty's Management Committee for the 2018-2019 term. The Netherlands contributes to assistance and outreach, via the EU and nationally, to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund, the sponsorship programme run by the United Nations Development Programme, Control Arms' ATT Monitor project, and the Stimson Centre's ATT-Baseline Assessment Project.

We stress the importance of transparency in reporting. In that respect, we would particularly like to underline the continued relevance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, as not all States are States parties to the ATT. We strongly encourage States to keep using that valuable instrument in particular, and to fulfil their reporting obligations, in general.

On the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, we are making progress towards our common goal of implementing all outstanding commitments under that Convention before 2025. We strongly believe that a more individualized approach for cooperation and assistance can be helpful in that regard.

The Netherlands is willing to do its part. We have committed €45 million for mine- and cluster-munition-related activities in 13 countries for the period between 2016 and 2020. Moreover, we contribute €3 million annually to the UNMAS Voluntary Trust Fund.



Small arms and light weapons continue to be responsible for most arms-related casualties worldwide. We fully support the French presidency 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 we believe that discussions on that topic should focus, inter alia, on stockpile management and synergies with other instruments.

I wish to conclude by taking note of the international discussion on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. We view the challenges posed by that topic in the light of international humanitarian law and compliance therewith, and we believe that it is of the utmost importance to promote compliance and ensure that the principles of international humanitarian law are respected.

**Ms. Seo Eunji** (Republic of Korea): Small arms and light weapons continue to be the weapons of choice in destructive armed conflicts and violence around the world. More often than not, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons fuels and prolongs armed violence, giving way to illegal activities and the emergence of violent groups and hindering long-term peace and development. We support the various initiatives undertaken to address this situation.

First, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument have played a vital role in equipping the international community with various national and multinational tracing systems and promoting the importance of stockpile-management efforts. Focusing on illicit brokering, the Republic of Korea and Australia have been submitting the draft resolution "Preventing and combating illicit brokering activities" biennially since 2008. We have also readily cooperated with international authorities in tracing conventional arms in conflict and post-conflict situations.

We actively participated in the open-ended meeting of governmental experts on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action in 2015, and we take this opportunity to reaffirm our support for the outcome document of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States, in 2016. We expect the third United Nations Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of

Action, to be held in New York next June, to be focused on more effective and practical implementation efforts.

Secondly, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) contributes to a more responsible arms trade and thereby to enhancing international peace and security and protecting human rights. With domestic regulations on the conventional arms trade already in place to reflect the goals and objectives of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Republic of Korea, one of the original signatories of the ATT, ratified the Treaty last November. Based on our relative strengths in export and border control, we will work with other Member States and regional and international authorities for the effective implementation and universalization of the Treaty.

Thirdly, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has played an instrumental role in bringing together States with various legitimate security concerns by taking into account both military necessity and principles of international humanitarian law in a balanced manner. A total of 124 countries have joined the CCW, and we welcome the recent accession of Lebanon and Afghanistan. With its flexible and modular structure, the CCW has been able to address the humanitarian impact of conventional weapons, while keeping the discussion within the CCW framework. We welcome the establishment of the Open-ended Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons and the adoption at the Conference of the Declaration on Improvised Explosive Devices. We also recognize the importance of the draft resolution submitted by Afghanistan on countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices (A/C.1/72/L.15).

Last year's fifth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW provided us with an important opportunity to take stock of our achievements and prepare for the next five-year review cycle. It is highly commendable that the final outcome document was adopted by consensus. Without undermining those significant achievements, my delegation feels compelled to point to the financial situation of the Geneva-based international disarmament conferences. In particular, owing to the CCW's poor financial situation, the important meeting agreed to at the last Review Conference was not convened this year. We must find a way to generate the financial capacity for the proper functioning of the Geneva-based conventions.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the twentieth anniversary of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban

Convention. The Republic of Korea is fully committed to the objectives and purposes of the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and to addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by the use of landmines and cluster munitions. We take an active part in related discussions and in efforts to contribute further to international cooperation to assist those affected by landmines and cluster munitions. The Republic of Korea looks forward to continuing the joint work of addressing our common concerns.

**Mr. Langeland** (Norway): Norway aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier today by the representative of Finland on behalf of the Nordic countries.

Conventional arms control has a profound impact on international, regional, national and human security. Small arms and light weapons kill more than half a million people each year. We must therefore intensify efforts to combat the irresponsible and illegal trade in, and use of such weapons including ammunition. Norway is a firm supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). It establishes fundamental norms for responsible trade in conventional arms, including assessing the potential for gender-based violence before arms exports are authorized. We also believe that the Treaty contributes substantially to global security and stability. Acts of terror often 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. We are pleased that the ATT is gaining ground. Norway appreciates the constructive way that Ambassador Klaus Korhonen chaired the most recent intersessional period, and his dedication to universalizing the Treaty.

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 the programme was adopted 16 years ago, a number of steps have been explored to further enhance its relevance. We must continue such efforts, particularly in the run-up to its third Review Conference next year.

This year is the twentieth anniversary of the adoption in Oslo of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. In those 20 years, 51 million landmines have been destroyed and countless civilian lives have been spared. Our vision is still for the world to be mine-free by 2025.

Sadly, over the past few years we have seen an increase in the use of improvised landmines as tools of war. The number of civilian casualties they cause is once again increasing. Next year, the global community will commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which is another instrument that has made a substantial difference to human security. However, such weapons are also still being used in a number of conflicts.

The Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions have established norms that are widely respected, and not just by the parties themselves. They have demonstrated their value in enhancing human security. We must continue to support those two vital instruments, while at the same time being aware of new and emerging threats to our security. The main challenge in the years to come will be the widespread use of homemade devices produced and planted by non-State actors. Addressing large-scale contamination by improvised mines, and the suffering they cause, will require coordinated efforts and dedicated resources from the international community. The areas of Iraq and Syria that have been liberated from terrorist control must be cleared of all explosive remnants of war so that internally displaced people can return and the population can resume normal life. Mine action is no longer something that we do long after a conflict is over. It is relevant in ongoing conflicts in ways never seen before.

We would like to see a greater number of countries participating in the ongoing discussions on how to enhance the protection of civilians in conflict and thereby improve compliance with international humanitarian law. There is a clear obligation to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants in conflicts. In Syria, Yemen and Ukraine, we have witnessed the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas, which results in extensive loss of civilian life. The use of such weapons is clearly disproportionate and in violation of international humanitarian law. The destruction of critical infrastructure, such as housing, schools and hospitals, affects the prospects for post-conflict rehabilitation, peacebuilding and reconstruction long after the actual fighting is over.

New and rapidly evolving technologies for conventional weapons may create new dilemmas and raise a number of legal and ethical questions. For example, there are frequent discussions about lethal

autonomous weapons systems and in particular about whether such systems, once activated, will be able to select and engage targets without further human intervention. Such questions will have to be pursued within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. As new weapons technology continues to be developed, it will be absolutely essential to ensure that the basic rules and principles of international law are upheld.

**The Acting Chair:** I shall now call on speakers who have asked to exercise their right of reply. I would remind delegations that the first statement in right of reply should be limited to 10 minutes and the second to five minutes.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I apologize for slightly delaying the Committee's lunch break, but this issue definitely deserves attention.

I would like to respond to the statement made by the representative of the United States at the end of yesterday's meeting (see A/C.1/72/PV.16). We would once again like to thank our partners, including the United States of America, for helping to implement our State programme to eliminate our chemical-weapon stockpiles. As we have already noted, that is an epoch-making event. However, we must point out some inaccuracies in the United States budget information with regard to the destruction of chemical-weapons in Russia. Regrettably, for many years now our American partners have for some reason stubbornly continued to cite highly exaggerated and completely unsupported figures. We certainly do not dispute the possibility that the sum of \$1 billion could have been designated in the budget of the United States, but it may be correct only for American internal use. In our view, however, trumpeting such figures in an international context is simply inappropriate, since in fact the amount contributed by the United States to the Russian budget for its destruction of its chemical weapons was set at not more than 20 per cent of that beautifully broadcast number.

In general, as a State that has already fulfilled its obligations under the Convention on Chemical Weapons, we would advise our American partners to give more careful and responsible consideration to the question of how the process of destroying its chemical weapons is going in the United States itself. After all, we all remember that during the discussion on the text

of the Convention, it was the United States that insisted on setting a fast-track schedule for chemical-weapon destruction. If we take a look at the text of the Convention the deadline for the final destruction of chemical weapons is April 2007. Even back in the mid-1990s, we pointed out that a single decade was simply not a realistic amount of time for the United States and Russia to destroy such large stockpiles of chemical weapons. Our American partners did not listen and said that they would get it done and would help us as well, and at the time we believed them. Now here we are in 2017 and the upshot is that Russia has indeed managed to eliminate its chemical-weapon arsenal. But what is going on with our American partners? Perhaps it is time for all of us to think about giving the United States international assistance in eliminating its chemical-weapon stockpiles, under strict international control.

Russia has all the experience and technology needed for this. Perhaps our Polish colleagues, who are the traditional sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.26 on the destruction of chemical weapons, should think about how to refrain from concocting any more confrontational and totally unfounded statements with regard to Syria and instead include constructive provisions, acceptable to all, in support of the American programme for the elimination of its chemical weapons, which has been delayed for more than 10 years now.

**Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina feels obliged to exercise its right of reply with regard to the reference to the Malvinas Islands in the statement by the representative of the United Kingdom.

Argentina would like to reiterate its position on the special situation of the Argentine territory of the Malvinas in accordance with the statement that Argentina made on 14 September 1999 when ratifying the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines, which so far has not been changed and forms the principal basis of my country's extension in implementing article 5 of the Convention.

The only part of Argentina's territory that is affected by anti-personnel mines is the Malvinas Islands, but Argentina is unable to access those mines in order to fulfil its obligations under the Convention because that territory, together with the South Georgia Islands, the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, is illegally occupied by the United Kingdom of

Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the subject of a dispute over its sovereignty. The General Assembly has acknowledged the existence of the dispute and has urged both Governments to resume negotiations in order to find a peaceful and definitive solution as soon as possible. The Special Committee on Decolonization has also adopted a resolution every year stating that this special and particular colonial situation must be ended through peaceful negotiation, and has asked both Governments to resume negotiations to that end. The most recent version of that resolution was adopted on 23 June (A/AC.109/2017/L.26). However, despite repeated statements at the United Nations and other regional and international forums, the United Kingdom continues to refuse to resume negotiations.

At the time of its extension request on 1 October 2009, Argentina presented a schematic plan for implementing article 5 of the Convention in the contested areas during the 10 years of the extension, in case the negotiations on sovereignty between the Republic of Argentina and the United Kingdom should be resumed and an agreement reached on demining that included unexploded munitions. The Republic of Argentina reaffirms its right of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of its national territory.

**Mr. Pye Soe Aung** (Myanmar): My delegation is taking the floor to exercise its right of reply in response to the statements made by the representatives of Austria and Bangladesh.

I would like to reiterate that the authorities of Myanmar and Bangladesh have agreed to set up a working group for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of displaced persons on the basis of the 1993 agreement between the two countries as a result of the recent visit to Bangladesh of the Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor of Myanmar's. The Home Affairs Minister of Bangladesh will also be visiting Myanmar for further cooperation.

On 12 October, in a statement to the people of Myanmar, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi announced the establishment of a mechanism entitled "Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine", for the development of Rakhine state and the implementation of projects in every sector. We will use this programme to demonstrate practical and progressive results as we

work to create a peaceful and developed Rakhine state. Besides involving our own people, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil-society organizations and business leaders in developing Rakhine state, we have also invited those who wish to assist, such as United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, friendly countries and international NGOs, to join hands and cooperate with us. At a time when sincere cooperation is needed, we reiterate that unsubstantiated allegations that mines have been laid to prevent people from returning will not help to resolve the issue. Myanmar remains committed to working in a spirit of good neighbourliness with all regional and international partners to address the issue of displaced persons.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I am taking the floor to exercise my right of reply to the comments made by the representative of the Russian Federation.

As I think many people here know, the United States and Russia have requested extensions to the destruction deadlines of the Chemical Weapons Convention, as the two countries have the world's largest chemical-weapons stockpile. As we all know, those extensions have been approved in the past. The projected United States completion dates have changed over time owing to technology challenges, but a lack of funding has never been cited as contributing to delays in the programme. I would therefore just like to say to my Russian colleague that if we need any assistance from Russia we will certainly ask for it, but I would not wait up for that request.

My last point is that as I said yesterday (see A/C.1/72/PV.16), the United States has provided more than \$1 billion in financial and technical assistance for the Russian chemical-weapon destruction programme. That is \$1 billion. I think that is significant. I am happy that my Russian colleague noted that we provided assistance. The United States continues to make considerable and steady progress towards reaching the destruction of our stockpile by 2023.

**Mr. Broilo** (Poland): I am taking the floor to exercise my right of reply. We were not going to take the floor in this part of the debate, but I feel obliged to react to the intervention of the representative of the Russian Federation.

I would like to thank my Russian colleague for the interest shown today in draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.26, on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,



Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. I would like to assure the delegation of the Russian Federation, as well as other delegations, that Poland, as the sole sponsor of the draft resolution, attaches great importance to its fact-based text. These facts are confirmed by the authorized bodies of the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We are going to act in accordance with them.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): I am obliged to respond to the remarks made by our colleague from Argentina.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. The United Nations has not said that the right of self-determination does not apply to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. In 2003, Argentina attempted to qualify the right of self-determination in cases where there was a territorial dispute, but it was not accepted by the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, which reiterated that the right of self-determination was a universal right.

The principle and the right of self-determination, as set out in Article 1.2 of the Charter of the United Nations and Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, underlies our position. The United Kingdom is clear that the future of the Falkland Islands should be determined by the people of the Falkland Islands, in accordance with our obligations under the Charter.

**Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I feel compelled to take the floor again to reply to some elements mentioned by the representative of the United Kingdom.

First, I want to reiterate each and every one of the terms of what I said previously. I also reiterate that the principle of the self-determination of peoples,

which is the only element on which the United Kingdom's position is based, is completely and clearly inappropriate and inapplicable to the dispute between the two countries on the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas.

We must remember that in 1985 the General Assembly rejected two amendment attempts, which sought to incorporate a reference to the principle of self-determination in resolution 1514 (XV) on the question of the Malvinas Islands. Furthermore, Argentina recalls that the interests of the inhabitants of the Malvinas islands and their way of life are properly underscored by the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the Constitution of the Argentine Republic.

The Argentine Republic reaffirms its legitimate sovereignty rights over the Malvinas, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of the national territory of Argentina.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): I too am sorry, but I must take the floor again.

The United Nations has not said that territorial integrity is more important than self-determination. In 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said,

“The world's 16 remaining territories that still do not govern themselves must have complete freedom in deciding their future status. It is essential for the people concerned to understand the options regarding their political status and to be able to exercise their right to freely to choose their future.”

In March 2013, the Falkland Islands referendum reaffirmed the Islanders' overwhelming wish to maintain their political status as an overseas territory of the United Kingdom, with 99.8 per cent voting in favour. The United Kingdom shall always defend the right of the Falkland Islanders to determine their own political future.

*The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m*